

Rivers' close season means another 90 day ban from the banks! But why?

WHAT a lousy winter's fishing that has been – with rivers more often than not out in the fields and running like sewage coloured trains.

Barely a soul has been able to get near them...yet in three week's time (March 14) the legal river close season begins: and anglers get BANNED from wetting a line in them for another three solid months!

I used to be a die-hard defender of the break...but with changing weather patterns and cultures, do river fish really need it anymore?

They've already had pretty much six months rest from most anglers' attentions; it doesn't leave wildlife undisturbed because anyone can let their dogs crash through the reeds all year.

And if 'resting' spawning fish is an issue, keepnets could be banned for 90 days, and or major spawning areas shut for that period.

Dumping the break would also help the sport and the trade AND keep genuine anglers on the banks to help deter scumbag fish thieves.

I'm normally an Environment Agency fan, but: despite its insistence that 'many' anglers don't want change, it refuses to canvas anglers' real views with a rod licence questionnaire.

Does that sound like trying to dodge the big issue...or what?

What do you think?

■ WHEN Alders open series re-started, Sunday, the carp were waiting. Matt Brayfield won with 110-6, Nick Darke had 82-7 and John Welham 77-1.

■ CALVERT's Claydon lake do saw Les Smith win with 14-4 of bream as Tony Richardson had 4-11 and Dave Lewis 4-4.

■ TOWCESTER Vets' midweek Astwell match went to Graham Martin with 8-9 of roach. Mick Reed 6-11 and Grenville Read 5-4.

■ A 3lb Tove perch helped Mick Goodridge to 5-14 and top spot in Towcester's Broadwater sweep. Tosh Saunders and John Broughton had 5-3 each.

■ PUNCH roach for 5-13-8 from the Black Horse cut saw Mark Haynes win DATS' do. Paul Chapman had 5-1 and Kevin Osborne 3-14-8.

■ THIS week's tale of woe was MK vets match which saw 13 turn up (sounds unlucky for a start) to face a bitter wind and mini ice-floes on Linford's boatyard cut.

Chalky White had a 1-2-8 perch, Austin Maddock an eight-ouncer minutes from the end, and John Harvey five for 0-3-8...and everyone went home hoping nothing had dropped off due to severe wind chill!

■ BEACON have stocked a score of low double figure carp into Mount Farm this winter. Last week's AGM pegged the full ticket at £25 – but increased the third rod tariff from £12 to £15. Steve Cooper – 07446 935635 – is the new secretary, Brian Haynes is president, and Steve Emerton said this will be his last year as chairman.

■ FIXTURES: Saturday (probably) Olney charity open, 01234 240061; Sunday, Stony Ouse closed for match; Wednesday Feb 27, Pulman AC AGM, Bletchley Con Club, 8.00pm; March 29, 'Bucko' open, Wold Farm, Poddington, 01327 351780.



● What is now the point of the 'close season' on rivers? The Ouse as it so often was at Stony this winter – five foot up and still rising!

Matches, catches, even rough patches? If there's a tale to tell call Trevor Johnson on 01908 270000 (office) or 07801 183381 or email angling@intermediauk.com (click link to email)