

Tagging along 'just to keep mate company'...

Lead to **73 lb** 5-hour CANAL catch!

SEVENTY THREE pounds! Yes you read that right – 73lb – to one man in five hours on the canal...and not a carp in sight!

And in making what is almost certainly the biggest reported local Grand Union catch of all time – Alan West landed some 70lb of that in just THREE frantic hours.

Yet the veteran had started the trip with few expectations, only going to Nene's Yardley section to keep travelling companion Ron Coles company.

A regular behind Webster Tackle's Irthlingborough counter, Alan said: "I stopped fishing canals four years ago, and now spend all my time on commercials."

Feeding chopped worm and caster, he fished worm fragments on a 16 and had a couple of pounds of small fish in two hours...and then the biggies just 'switched on'.

He landed 38lb of perch – best 3-0-8 – before bream to 4lb moved in to give him another 33lb, and a 73lb total. He said: "I didn't know canal perch could go like that. It was unreal. I was using a number 8 hollow elastic and a puller, and still had a job to get the biggest ones off the bottom."

Ron had 17lb, mainly skimmers, fishing a few yards further along the bank.

● THE Ringers' teams of three series got off to a flying start on Meadowlands with Steve Ringer, fishing for 'the family firm', well clear with 16 carp for 111-12. Swan Gold-man James Hipkiss had 81-8 followed by Swan Baits' Carl Barnfield on 67-13.

With 16 teams on the bank Ringers swept all before

them to finish with 6 points on the day as Guru totalled 13 and Swan Baits 19.

● SUNDAY also saw the start of the Makins pole-only individual league with Chris Harrison top on 59-12 ahead of Andy Ingleson 53-6 and Adam Rooney 52-10.

● BISHOPS Bowl owner Shaun Smart kicked off the venue's pairs league by taking top weight of 68lb followed by Steve Martin 58lb and Mark Skeggs 37lb. Rob Bassett and Kevin Follwell were top pair.

● CASTLE Ashby opens: Brickyard, Sat, Dick Rogers 31-12, Mick Hewlett 28-4, Baz McNicholl 24-4; Grendon, Sun, Richard Dunkley 35-12, Chris Garratt 15-4, Dave Martin 12-12.

● MKAA 'hangover' open, Stony Ouse: Myles Phillips 13-2 (3 chub and bits), Paul Hamilton 10-4, Ernie Sattler 7-1.

● FLORE & Brockall teams of 3 silverfish opener, Barby Mills: Rob Rawlins (Regulars) 9-4, Jim Tanser (Dolphins) 7-11, Gareth Abrahams (Regulars) 5-7. Top teams Regulars 11, Dolphins 10, Tony's Trio 5.

● TOWCESTER, Astwell Mill: Mick Goodridge 6-9 (inc an unseasonal 2lb tench), Kevin Nightingale 4lb, Paul Keele 3-4.

● BIG bream were feeding for Paddy Wheat at Stanwick where he had four to 8lb ■



■ **PROBABLY the biggest local canal haul of all time – Alan West with just part of his five hour 73lb catch**



■ **ADAM Lester with a 23-5 pike – one of a run of 20s from Bishops Bowl**

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