

## END OF SEASON NEWSLETTER - SEASON 2008-09

Dear members,

I am writing this letter at the start of January, still in a grip of sub zero weather that has lasted since Christmas day. Two visits over the festive period to Thamesmead, the first on a very mild day on Christmas eve, the next on a semi-frozen "A" lake, both Pike fishing and the last, a short visit on our stretch of the Thames, which although surrounded by frozen lakes, the river was clad in bright sunshine, perfect flow with interesting winter features, sadly all have brought "not a sniff", only plenty of welcome fresh air, good company, peace and some excellent bird spotting. What of your rewards over the winter since my half season letter? The weather has played a considerable part in causing some almost un-fishable conditions, to the second Pike match and (on a commercial water with a reputation for "bagging up") for the Christmas match, a morning welcome of freezing conditions devastated the results of the fish catch. Hopefully AKAC has something that attracts you to keep turning out as it will undoubtedly be for me as we still have up to June 15<sup>th</sup> before our memberships will run out.....Good luck!

This season we have new lease holders at Keynes Park, namely leisure operators "Watermark". We will still be answerable to the Cotswold Waterpark Society, whom we pay our rental to, but we must respect the new holders and their staff at the Keynes Country Park and shop. Under no circumstances should any angling grievances be addressed to the shop staff, angling issues should be directed to either the Secretary (myself), your committee or bailiff's of AKAC or the Head Ranger, Ali Swainston who will be contactable on a new number that will be found in next season's membership cards.

Much has been heard of the introduction of a cable ski course facility, of which I have heard planning permission has been granted for the Top pit. We have not yet seen any plans but will be doing our utmost best to ensure we get the best of fishing possible on the lake.

I am hoping to re-install a notice board at Keynes Park, similar as that at the old day ticket station to give Day Ticket anglers as much information as possible. Well with the Cotswold Water Park Society offices and their Rangers having moved out of their premises at the park to new, there have been obvious changes. The barrier gate is now a card operated facility, not the coin as previous, but the cards can still be obtained from the shop on display of your current season membership card.

This season's support of the GWR FM Christmas Appeal where we pledged five half season memberships, resulted in two persons coming forward who had made successful bids.

After numerous attempts to organise the committee match and meal, this year the match was fished on its own and at a later date those officers and committee members, who could attend, were treated to Sunday lunch at the Royal Oak in South Cerney during October.

### **Bailiffing:-**

Last March we agreed at the AGM to install Senior Bailiffs, persons who would require a high level of commitment to bailiffing and reporting with the reward being a free membership. Well with both members Carl Burt and Steve Drewett installed into these positions I have to say that a review of the bailiff reports between mid April and mid December show that it has been a very creditable huge success. I have been able to state that during this period they have checked almost 1500, either member or day ticket anglers and with each operating on either week end or week day visits bailiff presence has been continuous. We must not forget the number of other members who carry bailiff badges, but do so randomly with little or no written reporting, This number would be made up of committee members and a few voluntary members totalling about twenty three, so you can see how we have made huge improvements to the task of bailiffing our waters, which I hope you will have found contributed to better control on the bank side, whether from illegal fishing, rule breaking, marshalling to make people act appropriately to the club rules or the owners requirements, or simply just to have someone to make your complaint to or to hear the latest catch information. I have also received complimentary remarks from our owners when bailiffing is required at times of potential problem time; these guys have turned out to check the situations. This is a far cry from last season when I was reminded constantly that "no one turns up" etc etc.

Next season I hope we continue to improve; those who walk the banks will gain invaluable experience in both people management and social skills that will prove invaluable to the existence of our club. Incidentally from my received bailiff report information, Keynes Park is still, by a long way the most popular water being visited with Neigh Bridge next and Cokes and the A Lake being a tie for third popularity.

Our committee meetings took a fair amount of time over discussions about some members transgressing our rules on “barbed hooks. This came about because a good few anglers were found using barbed hooks, and that could result in positive actions from our bailiff’s challenging many anglers, and asking them to reel in to show their terminal tackle was acceptable. These actions are not designed to cause unnecessary harassment of our members but stem from incidents brought to our attention, such as the case in April where we were shown a Carp rig with trailing line. It had been retrieved from a Tench, by an angler who had snagged up on the trailing line. The rig contained a barbed hook. This particular rig, I was informed is described as a “chod rig”.

### **Match Reports:**

The match secretaries run a “Golden Peg” option at the matches which when a match anglers peg is that of the drawn golden Peg they will if they win the match collect an accumulative sum of money, or it’s carried over to the next match till there is a winner.

This seasons “Golden Peg” was won on three occasions. First winner was Sharon Selby who took the prize money with a 91lb bag of Tench on Cokes Pit in the Tench Cup, following this Vince Bowles won at Ridgeway Fisheries with a 24lb Carp bag and the third winner was Dave Pikett in the Roach Cup at Thamesmead ‘A’ lake. Members paid an optional £1 Golden Peg fee, separate from the £2 standard entry match fee. The amounts accumulate from match to match or will carry over to the following season.

Many Tench have been taken on Cokes pit, During the season’s matches, 21 Tench were caught to win the Tench Cup with a weight of 99lb 9oz. Cokes also brought a Perch of 1lb 4oz and Roach to over 1lb. On the Thamesmead waters the ‘A’ lake brought a Mirror of 7lb 4oz, Bream to 7lb and Tench to 6lb 8oz... The Pike Cup in November was won with a fish of 17lb 4oz.

This surely was a season for Bream on the Large Lake; one match was won with 24lb of Bream. This seasons Christmas match was fished at “Walters Lake” just off the spine road in the Water Park. Early frozen conditions meant the match fished very hard, but those that fished were treated to a buffet lunch in the very clean and comfortable café facilities that this water has. Afterwards everyone was able to receive a prize. Slightly different to the results of the September Horse & Jockey match held in September on the same water, where the combined top three weights totalled 66lb 8oz.

### **Work Party reports:**

This winter we have been busy on Cokes Pit, although the turnouts have been very small we have made some good accessible fishable areas to both sides of the bird hide. By the time you read this we will have completed the four work party dates; however at the time of writing we will have just finished the third visit. With the winter temperatures as they have been, the work party bonfire provides a welcome attraction.

Remember the bigger the turnouts the more we can achieve, as we are well managed by head ranger Ali Swainston whose time given freely, we are indebted to, but also that he provides us with all the working tools. To gain some extra help we decided to offer an incentive after the first work party to enter those people attending the following three work parties an entry into a draw for a free membership for next season. This has resulted to date, in only one person who can possibly win the award.

**Water reports:** Further to reports given in our Half Season newsletter, the following Carp have been reported to me. Neigh Bridge brought a 26lb 6oz Common, a 17lb3oz Mirror in June, and a wonderful Common of 38lb in July. Over at Keynes Park the Top pit produced a 28lb Mirror in August, 32lb Mirror, with a specimen 33lb 8oz Common in September from the Large Lake. The Top pit produced numerous Tench, with the best reported of 7lb 12oz.

The Thamesmead waters, on the Manor Brook lake, the owner informed me of a large bag of Bream came out in the early winter.

There was an incident on the Top pit which caused problems with both member and Ranger staff concerning the locking of the low level bar that prevents vehicle access down the left hand bank. Locking of this bar, which was left until mid October, while the timing of locking is at the decision of the Park rangers and we have no agreement otherwise.

During January we were informed by the owner at Thamesmead that nuisance behaviour was happening at the lakes by excessive take away food wrapping being left strewn about and joy riding in cars. The owner opted to reinstate the lock on the entry gate to reduce the problem, as our club would still gain entry by the combination number in your club card. This we agreed to be kept in place till the end of March when the water-ski users return for the start of April. We all must endeavour to keep the gate locked at all times, and

report any sightings of unacceptable behaviour to, myself, committee or bailiff's. Please help by supporting the owner's request, our combined efforts hopefully will help to keep the waters for angling purposes only.

**E A Licence:** - Please remember that you will of course need to renew your Environmental Agency licence, which expires on **March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009**.

**Acknowledgements:** -

Malcolm Openshaw for his very committed support to managing the Day Ticket station at Keynes Park over many years. The removal of this Day Ticket station has meant Malcolm has no longer this task to do.

Mr D J Lidbury (Don). Special thanks must be forwarded to Don who had been a member of AKAC and also a committed committee member for many years. A very successful angler, especially shown by the considerable success he had in the clubs matches. Don has now left Wiltshire to live close to his family, we wish him well.

Mike Hatton and John Parker for their progress of the lease for Keynes Park. Peter Young for again collating all of the clubs membership cards. John Wagner and Hugh White for the organisation and running of the club match calendar. Karen Nash for overseeing the change over of the clubs finance account to the Nationwide Building Society after the closing of and take over of the Portman Building Society and David Riley for continually managing and providing us again with a website of very informative and important club information. Richard Watts for his commitment to the work parties which earns him a free membership for next season, a reward given for attending the required number of work party attendances.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & PRIZE PRESENTATION**

This years meeting will be held at the Village Hall, Ashton Keynes on **Sunday 29th March 2009**, starting at **10.15 am**, and Coffee and Biscuits will be served. Please can I ask that you are in your seats by this time? We will have vacancies on our Committee, if you would like to be more involved with your club please contact me, I can assure you it can be a very satisfying and enjoyable way to further your Angling interest. Meetings are held in ten of the months of the year for about a couple of hours at the clubs headquarters.

**The agenda will include:**

- Standing Item – Review of Subscriptions.
- Election of Officers: Vice Chairman  
Match Secretary/s  
Committee member to stand for re-election as per Committee rule No.2 <None>  
Committee members to stand for re-election as per Committee rule No.3  
A Nash, M Mills, J Slevin, D Drewett  
Acceptance of the 2009-2010 Match Calendar, (Fixture list can be viewed on our website, copies will be available at the AGM.).
- Nominations required for the positions of:-
- Vice Chairman, Match Secretary / s, Committee members, (at present there are 10 vacancies).
- Appeal for Official Bailiff (includes a free AKAC club membership of your choice).
- Appeal for Bailiff's
- Proposals received from the members. <None at present>.
- Proposals forwarded from the Committee:-
  - i) The maximum number of committee members to be 12, plus the Secretary and Chairman.

**Please note Club Rule 21 – ‘Any amendments to Club Rules to be forwarded 14 days prior to the AGM.’ It is also recorded that any proposals will not be accepted unless the Proposer is present at the AGM.**

- Only Club members will be admitted and “**all votes will be by a show of Cards only**”.

Please refer to the list of trophy winners at the back of this newsletter, all trophy winners are asked to attend if possible. Presentations will follow after the AGM. Friends and Relatives will be welcome to attend during the period of the presentation of trophies.

In conclusion may I wish you all continued success during 2009 with Ashton Keynes Angling Club and hope to see many of you at our AGM. ....Tight Lines

D J Whittle

AKAC Club Secretary.

March 2009