

PORTSMOUTH ROYAL NAVY & ROYAL MARINES
COARSE ANGLING ASSOCIATION
MID-YEAR NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2016

Chairman's Introduction

After 6 months at the helm as Chairman, and with a new Vice Chairman as well, I thought it appropriate to update the membership on our activities and plans for the Association. This includes a 2-rod trial at Southwick Park Lake (SPL), development plans for the Moat, a new (small) stretch of water, changed access arrangements for SPL, some safety issues, and a survey to gather your thoughts to ensure that we continue to develop and grow.

Before getting into the detail I want to reflect on what makes our Association unique because that is at the heart of some of the development plans. Fundamentally we have privileged access to the waters because we provide angling opportunities for Service personnel based in the area. For that reason: I am keen to encourage introductory days for novices; we have created a new class of temporary membership for Service personnel on courses; we continue to manage the Inter-Establishment matches; the RNRM AA is being given access to the waters for their 48Hr Carp matches; we are doing the 2-rod trial reflecting the large number of Carp Anglers in the Service; and, Service anglers continue to have cheaper membership. That said, the Association has not just been about Service anglers for some time now and much of the management of the waters and committee business is undertaken by volunteers who started as Southwick Park Lake Season Ticket Holders. I am therefore minded that all classes of membership need to be supported without losing sight of our core purposes.

A significant amount of committee time has been spent addressing the financial position of the Association. In recent years expenses have exceeded income, but you only have to see the outstanding work on the waters to see why. When drafting this newsletter I expected to announce annual fee increases but, because of the significant work on both waters and support to RN Angling, the MOD has agreed to reduce our annual rent. Discussion on appropriate fees continues with any change required being voted at the next AGM, to take effect from Apr 17.

New Stretch of Water at SPL

The licence has been extended to include a very short stretch of river just inside the perimeter of SPL, upstream of the lake. This area will be marked with new signs and 3-4 pegs will be created. Once ready this will be opened to members with access to it strictly via Pinsley Drive, then left along the bridle track. Access is not to be across the approaches to the 9th and 4th holes. This stretch will have the standard closed season applicable to all rivers.

Sultan Moat Development

The Water Manager has developed a detailed set of plans to divide the Moat, with barriers, in to 4 sections by Mar 17. These are 2 Match Sections where we have a plan to catch and/or net the pike and larger carp. One of the Match Sections (Pegs 1-12) will be focused on Crucians and Tench, whilst the other (Pegs 39-46) will be stocked with Rudd, Roach and Skimmers. We also have a plan to remove the Cormorants ahead of stocking the stretches such that we generate 2 stretches that, while not stocked to Commercial levels, provide many more bites in a match. The pegs in these sections will continue to be improved, mostly by installation of platforms.

The Pike and larger Carp that are taken from the Match Sections will be moved to the Specimen Section (Pegs 23-38). Five of the pegs in this stretch are already suitable for a bivvy and there are plans for a further 6 to be dug out, should demand warrant the effort and significant expense. The Pleasure Section (Pegs 13-22) will be left as is for now and will continue to have a mixed head of fish.

Pike Matches

In order to move the Pike from the Moat match stretches, and get some enjoyment in doing so, it is proposed to run a series of Pike Matches on the Moat between Oct 16 and Mar 17. The more of you that can attend these the better; we will make arrangements for SPL Season Ticket Holders that want to take part. The dates will be announced in due course.

Pedestrian Access of SPL Through Green Gates in Layby on B2177

Following negotiations with the MOD it has been agreed that we can enable pedestrian access through the gates on the layby on the B2177. For security reasons this is strictly limited to Life, Service and Associate members, and regular Working Party volunteers. The padlocks are being changed; once done, those eligible will be able to apply for a key using a bespoke application form (once ready it will be made available on the Association Website and Facebook page), and by paying a £50 deposit. These are high grade security padlocks with serial numbered keys that can only be cut by the manufacturer on instructions from the Committee.

Any member obtaining a key is to take care of it, never allow others to use it, and always lock the gates behind him/herself. Any infringement of these requirements will lead to the privilege being removed from that member – there will be no second chances.

Golf Club Concession

The Golf Club have invited our membership to use the clubhouse, and have extended the 10% discount at the bar applicable to their members to anglers on production of our membership card. Please make use of this if you wish, but respect the rules of the clubhouse.

Safety and Access Routes at SPL

Following the installation of the gravel paths around the lake by the Water Manager and his team, it is requested that anglers restrict their routes to the water when parking in the Golf Club Car Park. With immediate effect the only route to the water from this car park is down Pinsley Drive, and then right along the gravel path on the north or south bank. Anglers are not to proceed behind the club house and over the brow of the hill because there are blind spots for golfers that creates a hazard when using this route.

It has been brought to our attention that an angler suffered a nasty head injury when struck by a golf ball. Members are advised to erect brollies on pegs where balls could land; in particular, this applies to pegs 8 to 16, 60 to 65 and 69 to 73. Last year a very expensive rod was also shattered by a ball strike which further illustrates the risks attached to these pegs.

Southwick Park Lake 2-rod trial

For a trial period, on payment of an additional £20 membership fee, 2 rods may be used on some pegs at SPL. The trial is limited to members and current SPL Season Ticket Holders (at date of this announcement), and is from 1 Oct 16 to 31 Mar 17 following specific rules. The rule change has been proposed by the Chairman, agreed by the Committee and adopted by the Trustees (with immediate effect) to meet the desire of a number of members to use 2 rods at SPL. As with all rules, the Trustees have the authority to alter or repeal it at any time. In accordance with the constitution it is also subject to alteration or repeal at the next AGM. Any abuse of this rule will be dealt with in accordance with the constitution.

The Committee wishes to safeguard the interests of all anglers and keep SPL as a general coarse fishery. There are concerns that without session time limits, and restrictions on the area used, that prime pegs could be occupied by a limited number of carp anglers in bivvies for extended periods. Depending on the take up of the trial, the range of pegs open to 2 rod angling may be altered. Whilst there are no specific Association rules for the use of Spods and Bait Boats, nor any Bait Limits, should the water quality be threatened or the pleasure of other anglers interfered through these methods or excess bait entering the water then bans and limits will be introduced. Anglers should also only use bivvies or umbrellas, and are not to use tents.

The prime concerns of the Water Manager and Committee are the welfare of the fish (all species), maintenance of the water, and pleasure of the anglers. Over the last couple of years there have been unhelpful generalised comments made about unsafe angling practices of carp anglers (by match/coarse anglers), and of match/coarse practices (by carp anglers). It is impossible to write rules that make angling completely safe for all fish species and sizes because it largely comes down to the experience and care of anglers on the bank that makes any particular method safe or otherwise. Members are asked to be considerate of other angling styles; however, any deliberate infringement of rules and safe practices should be reported to be dealt with by the Discipline Committee. Where in doubt less experienced anglers are encouraged to take advice from those with more expertise or one of the bailiffs.

If the trial causes problems, especially with other users of Southwick Park, it will be cancelled. The types of problems that are likely to cause cancellation are: litter, human waste, blocking of footpaths, safety incidents, rod losses, bivvies and kit extending beyond 6 feet from the water's edge (the extent of the Association's licence), inconsiderate behaviour to other anglers (including fishing beyond the area allocated to the peg – for most pegs this is half way towards the next peg, and half way across the lake). If cancellation is prior to 31 Jan 17 then the additional payments made will be returned.

The Committee hopes that all members will give this trial a fair hearing so that at the next AGM it can be properly discussed and either rejected, or (modified and) accepted for future years.

The new rule for the trial is detailed here and, if voted in at AGM, it will be incorporated into the rule book for next year.

1. Members and SPL Season Ticket Holders who have paid the additional membership fee may use 2 rods at SPL, from 1 Oct 16 to 31 Mar 17, under the following specific rules:
 - a. The area is limited to Pegs 79 to 87 on the north bank and 63 to 78 on the south bank. This is the area from the boathouse to Pinsley Bridge. (Note that single rod angling is still permitted in this area)
 - b. Both rods are to be clipped into a ground-anchored rod-pod system, clipped securely, with free spooling reels (such as bait-runners) set to run, and with audible alarms on at all times.
 - c. Anglers are permitted to fish for a maximum of 48 hours in any one session, may not return for 48 hours, and the 'passing' of specific swims by prior arrangement between individuals is forbidden.
 - d. Anglers are strictly forbidden to leave their peg while rigs are in the water.
 - e. Braided hooklengths remain banned, as are all forms of fixed feeder except Guru X-Safe feeders.
 - f. A landing net of at least 42 inches is to be used so that, if necessary, 2 carp can be netted before unhooking and releasing.
 - g. A large unhooking mat or carp cradle is to be used; this must be of sufficient size to hold 2 carp.

Broadlands Concession

You are reminded that the Association's concession with Broadlands has been altered from last year. Members now have discounted single rod day tickets (£5) on production of our membership card. Broadlands are maintaining a record of usage by each of our members so that we can assess the take up.

Booking in for Matches

Following some confusion over the booking in for a match it has been decided to alter the rules to reflect what has been custom and practice for the last couple of years. For matches on SPL and SULTAN Moat the deadline for booking in is 1800 the night before. This will be added to the match programme details for next year.

Exchange Books

This is a reminder of the exchange ticket system with other local angling clubs which are available to Life, Full and Associate Members (this excludes guests of members, and also SPL Season Ticket Holders). Full details are in the Association web site. Exchange Tickets are available for the following angling clubs:

- Eastleigh & District Angling Club (4 Books). Principle waters are Stoneham lakes at Eastleigh with 3 well-stocked lakes, Rooksbury Park Lake near Wickham, some stretches of the river Itchen at Bishopstoke, and a short stretch of the river Avon near Fordingbridge.
- Portsmouth & District Angling Club (4 books). Principle waters are Funtley Brick Pond near Fareham, Sinah Warren Lake at Hayling Island, Brockhurst Moat at Gosport, and Carron Row Farm near Titchfield Abbey.
- Park Gate Royal British Legion Angling Club (2 books). Principle waters are a number of lakes on the National Air Traffic Swanwick site on the outskirts of Park Gate.
- Southmoor Angling Club (2 Books). The water is at Staunton Country Park Leigh Park.

Survey

A survey has been compiled that is trying to be as open as possible in order to gather details of the membership, and suggestions for improvement of the Association. These are available on the Association website and Facebook Pages, and have also been forwarded with this newsletter. I would be grateful if they could be returned to the Chairman by 15 Aug 16 so that the Committee can review the findings and commission any work arising ahead of the next AGM in Jan 17.

Closing Words

The Association is managed by volunteers and there is always a lot to do, both in Committee and also in managing the waters. In particular we are looking for someone to take over the Membership Secretary role. If anyone (including Southwick Park Season Ticket Holders) is interested in being involved please let one of the Committee Members know.

S A Mardlin
Cdr RN
Chairman Ports RNRM CAA