



Current Affairs

Newsletter of Llandysul Angling Association

August 2010



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Letter from the Secretary

This season looks like being another in which the weather is a major factor on the river banks. We have seen a long period of very low rainfall, in fact no serious rain at all, which has lasted for months with some very hot weather and this has had a predictable effect on the river, with very low water from the start. But it is not all gloomy news since there are fish moving through and some good ones being caught.



Low water at the start of the season – the Dolgwm Mill beat

This, of course, was followed by heavy rain which is not good news after a long, dry spell. The message would seem to be as the song says ‘look on the bright side of life’ with early mornings and evenings probably offering the best sport.

There is good news regarding the use of rivers in Wales by canoeists and rafters. The Sustainability Committee of the Welsh Assembly Government has reported and has come down unambiguously against the free, unrestricted access these interests have been claiming as their right and has reasserted the rights of anglers, clubs and riparian owners. The recommended way forward is negotiation of local access and use agreements, which is what we have argued for all along. Any agreements will need to be carefully monitored and the terms observed. If you live in Wales contact your A.M. asking that she/he support these recommendations when the Report comes up for ratification in the Assembly.

One final note. Can I ask that members observe the beat limits and notices; it seems that there have been occasions when this has not happened. We do care for our good name and want to maintain our good relationships with landowners. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
Andrew Howell, Hon. Sec.



Arrangements for the Annual General Meeting

The 2010 AGM will be held on **Friday 3rd December, beginning at 8 pm in The Porth Hotel, Llandysul**. Our president, Dr David Roberts, will chair the meeting.

Agenda:

1. Minutes and matters arising from the 2009 AGM
2. Report on younger member activities and award of prizes
3. Chairman's report on local, national and international fisheries matters
4. Annual accounts and Treasurer's report
5. Secretary's report on the 2010 season, membership and correspondence received
6. Election of officers
7. Election of committee members
8. Membership fees for 2010
9. Any other business (to be notified to the secretary in advance of the meeting)

Nominations for committee membership

In accordance with normal procedure, three committee members are standing down; they are Gwilym Jones, Dewi Roberts and Raymond Jones. All three have expressed a willingness to continue to serve on committee if that is the wish of the AGM, and Committee is nominating them for re-election.

Any full member may nominate another member for a place on the committee. Nominations in writing, with a statement signed by the nominee confirming that they are willing to stand, should be sent to the secretary at Room 101, The Porth Hotel, Llandysul SA44 4QS to arrive no later than Friday 19th November 2010. If there are more nominations than vacancies, a ballot will be held during the AGM.

Membership Subscription Proposals

Committee is very aware of the present financial constraints that affect all Members, and so, subject to AGM approval, the membership fees proposed for 2011 remain unchanged at the following levels:

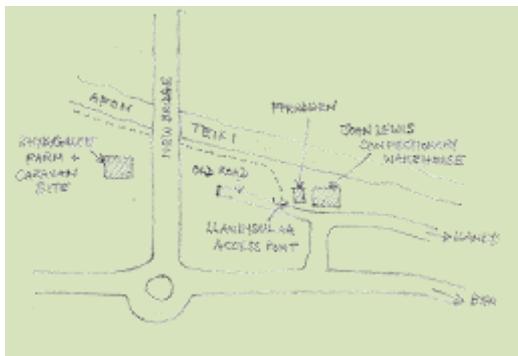
- | | |
|---|------|
| • Adult full membership | £149 |
| • Pensioner member (at least five years as a full member to qualify) | £74 |
| • Severely Disabled (Tyr Dref beat only) | £10 |
| • Joining fee (adults only) | £15 |
| • Student membership | £43 |
| • Junior (schoolchild) trout fishing membership | £2 |
| • Weekly permit up to 31st August | £67 |
| • Weekly permit, 1 st September to 17 th October | £77 |
| • Guest day permit (and introductory day visitor available to 31st Aug) | £18 |

Chairman's Report



After the driest spring ever recorded in Wales the Teifi was not in the greatest condition, very low and with the water temperature rising, the few fish that are in the system seemed rather lethargic and were probably quite stressed. Consequently, it was not shaping up to be a good season - we do seem to be the victims of climatic extremes - but then came the rain. It seems it either rains constantly all summer or not at all! Anyway, as a result quite a few nice sewin have been caught and they seem to be present in reasonably good numbers if recent fishing results are anything to go by. Let's hope that the rain relents and that the river settles down to provide conditions suitable for night fishing for sewin during August, prior to the main salmon run.

On a very positive note I am pleased to announce that we have negotiated a new access to Rhydygalfe with Mr Gwynfor Davies, following the disruption caused by the bypass, and hope that this will now be a permanent arrangement. Gwynfor has been very helpful and so thanks to him and our bank maintenance team for doing an excellent job. The photograph and maps that follow should provide all the guidance you need.



Sketch map and picture: new access to lower end of Rhydygalfe Fishery (Beat 13)

Please use *only* the new access to the lower end of this beat. Use of the former access route and parking on the lane to Rhydygalfe Farm are strictly prohibited. Access to the upper end of this beat, via Llandysul Bridge, is of course unaffected by this change.

The Teifi Fisherman's federation continues to meet regularly and most of the recent discussions have focused on the possibility of developing a hatchery to augment fish stocks. While we know that the current science is not in favour of hatcheries the feeling up and down the river is that some urgent action is required to conserve what we have left,

and my own feeling is that as long as it is well done and on a fairly small scale basis, alongside the natural spawning process then it could be worthwhile. However, a great deal of work and discussion needs to take place before anything comes to fruition.

Canoeing has also been on the agenda and the Sustainability Committee of the Welsh Assembly has now reported on the canoeists' bid for open access. I must say that my first impression of this report is very favourable as it is clear that they have *not* been granted the open access that they were seeking. The Committee makes thirteen recommendations which I will do my best to summarise for you:

1. The Minister strongly encourages the setting up of voluntary access agreements with public bodies to pilot these agreements.
2. The Minister is to target 'Splash' funding at these pilots.
3. Access agreements are to be sought under the Glastir scheme.
4. Access agreements should be subject to the monitoring and assessment of the environmental quality of the water covered at regular intervals.
5. Legislation be introduced to identify a lead authority for the identification of areas of inland water where access agreements are appropriate and for the negotiation of these agreements. That body will be placed under a positive duty to facilitate more agreements including the power to finance associated works.
6. The legislation referred to in 6 would give the lead authority the power to impose an agreement compulsorily if no voluntary agreement could be reached.
7. There would be a right of objection and compensation for compulsory interference with property (including fishing rights) where such interference could be shown to have caused loss.
8. We recognize that the Welsh Assembly does not have the necessary legislative powers at present.
9. Organisations who make a profit out of water related recreation should pay a fee to be licensed and their craft should be registered and clearly marked.
10. A Licensing system for those using unpowered craft on inland water should be introduced
11. A National code of conduct for water users should be drawn up.
12. This code of conduct should make explicit the rights and responsibilities of all water users.
13. A national website should be set up showing all stretches of water where access has been granted with information on current water levels or events which may restrict access.

So, we now have the thirteen commandments relating to canoeing, and I will be writing to the Sustainability Committee to thank them for their sensible response to this troublesome issue. I think we have done as well as we possibly could on this and wish to thank everyone who contributed to the campaign. Although there are still some concerns among

the recommendations, we got pretty much what we asked for and I think it would be fair to say that we won – they did not get open access.

Teifi Rivers Trust is enjoying a much more active year than last. I am delighted to say that we have secured nearly £250,000 to fund habitat improvement work on the river. We currently have nine schemes on the Clettwr, Cerdin and Ceri to deliver this summer, and we also hope to undertake several projects in the Tregaron area later in the year. We recently met with Teifi Trout Association and are optimistic that they will at last come on board. The invertebrate monitoring continues successfully and the Trust's website should be reactivated soon, somebody forgot to pay the bill. On the down side, however, we are still awaiting planning permission for our car park at Llanfihangel ar Arth. The hassle has been immense even with an architect and cabinet member of Carmarthen Council working on our behalf, but it really is coming before long.

Catch Return Figures for 2009

	Salmon	Sewin
April	0	1
May	2	8
June	13	75
July	14	135
Aug	25	98
September	41	72
Oct	17	38
Totals	112	427

Fly	11	234
Spinner	64	173
Bait	37	20
Returned	49 (44%)	236 (55%)

So there were fish in the river last year! Let's all pray for rain and consequent tight lines.

Best wishes,

Ian Thomas, Chairman

Catch Return and Prize Draw

Please send in your club catch return promptly at the end of the season (17th October). Catch data are essential evidence in our submissions to Government on byelaw changes etc. Please remember that failure to submit a club catch return before 1st February 2011 results in an automatic £10 surcharge on next season's membership fee. On a more positive note, every catch return is entered into our annual Prize Draw. Why risk losing £10 when you could be £25 better off?

Junior Members' News and Events

The brothers Dafydd and Trystan Davies showed their consistency by coming second in Wales in their age groups at the Welsh Salmon and Trout Angling Association's fly-tying competition in Rhayader on the 28th of Feb. Well done to you both, and many thanks to Dafydd for tying flies in the Food Festival in the absence of Peter Jones.

It was disappointing to learn that Steffan Rees was unable to fulfill his duties in this year's National Youth flyfishing team. Another two also withdrew, giving joy to Trystan Davies who was next in line to join the team. The brothers will now keep the club's name on The International scene. Da iawn chi.



Dafydd Davies at the National Youth Fly-tying in Rhayader



Trystan (Dafydd's brother) also hard at work at the National Youth Fly-tying in Rhayader

Our summer flyfishing tuition programme was announced in the spring 2010 newsletter, and we will start our winter fly-tying classes on 4th November at The Porth Hotel from 7pm to 9pm. It is our intention that the classes will continue through to spring if there is sufficient demand. This year we have been given fly-tying materials and kit for our youth programme by Ieuan Evans of Lampeter and Peter Naylor of Hartlepool. Sincere thanks goes to these kind people.



Trystan Davies caught this specimen pike at Trawsfynydd during the Welsh Youth squad day. Trystan was afraid to hold it. (And who can blame him? – Ed)

I wish you all tight lines for the remainder of the Season; and I hope Santa will bring you what you want when the time comes around.

Hwyl Eric Davies.

Report on Welcome Day, Saturday 8th May 2010

Our Welcome Day was well attended and, although the weather was not particularly special, our new members and guests told us that it was a very useful and enjoyable introduction to the club, its fisheries and the many good people who turned out to make the day a success. Many thanks to our presenters, casting demonstrators, beat guides, fishermen's forum contributors and hosts Andrew and Louise James of the Porth Hotel for all your help.

We plan to arrange a welcome event for new members (although, of course, existing members and their guests are always most welcome to join us) next spring. Details will be published in the next edition of Current Affairs, and the help of members in publicising this event would be very much appreciated.

Wildlife Corner: The Auk(ward) Squad

Around the coast of Wales are several islands well worth a visit, particularly if you are keen on birdwatching. Quite close to the Teifi Estuary we have two islands that are so rich in wildlife and scenic beauty that they have earned the designation National Nature Reserve (NNR); these are Skokholm and Skomer. Boat trips from Martin's Haven (in Pembrokeshire) to each of these NNRs operate when the weather is suitable – Skokholm on certain Mondays during the spring and summer months, and Skomer on Bank Holiday Mondays as well as every Tuesday through to Sunday (with a few 'closed' days in May during annual bird counts). Three of the seabirds you are almost certain to see at close quarters there are puffins, guillemots and razorbills – all members of the Auk family.



The puffin is the clown of the seabird world, and few people can resist smiling when they see these colourful birds at close quarters.



Guillemots nest in dense colonies of cliff ledges, and so the best time to observe them at close quarters is between March and June.



Razorbills are very attractive seabirds, with distinctive pencil-line stripes from eye to tip of bill. They float higher on the water than guillemots, and their bills are much thicker; however, from a distance it's not always easy to distinguish them from guillemots, with which they often intermingle when feeding on surface-swimming shoal fish.

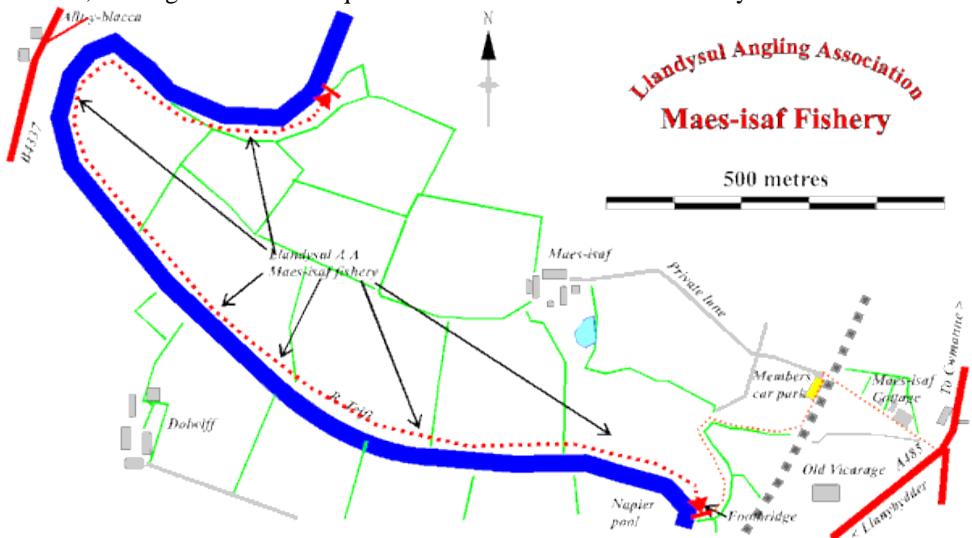
Fishing at Maes-isaf (Beat 7), by Sue Parker



Grayling on the Teifi? Not just a myth after all!

We are often asked whether there really are grayling to be found on the River Teifi and, until this year, I have always replied that rumour has it that they can be caught on the upper beats of Llandysul AAs water – up towards Lampeter. And so it was that Pat and I set off one lovely spring day to fish the Maes-isaf beat, more in hope than with any firm conviction that we would catch a grayling as well as an early trout or two.

As it turned out we were not the only people intent on finding out if Teifi grayling were anything more than a myth. Also tackling up for the challenge in the Maes-isaf car park was one of our top fly fishers, Steffan Jones, who told us that he had never even seen a grayling on the river, let alone connected with one. As I had not fished at Maes-isaf before, I was interested to hear how highly Steffan rated the beat, not just as a fine early season fishery for trout but also as a great place to go when the lower Teifi is in flood and impossible to fish. Maes-isaf is far enough up the river to fine down ahead of the lower beats following heavy rain – something that we have suffered much of in the last three seasons, although we have had quite the reverse to contend with this year.



The fishing at Maes-isaf extends to more than 2km, with easy wading for the most part.

Maes-isaf is a lovely place to fish: easy to access and with gentle wading for the most part. It is also a very pretty beat, with deep slow pools and riffles with lies likely to prove appealing to sea trout and salmon later in the season, as well as to our wild brown trout.



Steffan shares the (dirty!) secrets of his fly box with Pat.

On the downstream part of the pool the water is deep and quiet, whereas just upstream of the bend there is a lovely riffle ending in some really good back eddies on the far side of the river. Pat and I had fun there and landed a few nice little brown trout, which was good so early in the season.

Steffan began fishing on the downstream, calm part of the pool, and it was not long before a strangled cry of excitement alerted us to the fact that he had caught something that was definitely in need of photographic evidence – I guess it must be because of the tall stories he tells in the bar of the Porth! It only goes to prove that a fish doesn't have to be a monster to be a major triumph: the expression on his face tells how delighted he was to have finally caught a Teifi grayling. Even better, he emailed me later that evening to tell me that he had caught three more before leaving Maes-isaf.

The middle of the beat has a long slow pool, and it was here that we saw our first rises of the day which, given the nature of the water there, were far more likely to be grayling than trout. The stretch of river there was too deep to wade, and the casting from the bank, which is lined with tall trees, was definitely A Level standard and not for the faint-hearted.

We worked our way up the beat chatting and taking turns to cast, without too much success. Further up the beat there is a pool on a sharp bend in the river, and it was here that things really began to happen.



Steffan Jones with a small grayling caught at Maesisaf in early June 2010. (Specimen grayling in excess of 2 lbs have been recorded from this beat in recent years.)

NB to protect trout, sewin and salmon, the Maes-isaf fishing closes on 17th October.

Matching the Hatch on the Teifi – Pat O'Reilly

If you fish for trout (particularly wild river fish rather than stillwater stockies) or for grayling, it's not long before you encounter frustratingly difficult conditions. Fish that are rising freely to surface flies or are obviously feeding on something below the surface simply ignore your artificial fly or nymph. This is when people who say *'I never bother with matching the hatch; I just use the same fly all the time and I don't have any more blank days than the average flyfisher'* really struggle. Well, if you want to be better than average it's worth learning a bit about fly life and how to match the hatch. When the going gets tough, the competent flyfishers keep on matching and catching.

When I wrote *Matching the Hatch*, I didn't set out to show how many insects I could recognise and to suggest a matching artificial fly pattern for each one, but rather to show just how few flies you really need. (My *'Magnificent Seven'* cover most situations.) Several members have asked me to write a piece about hatches on the River Teifi and provide guidance on selecting suitable artificial flies, and because a two-page space has become available in this edition I am doing just that. So here goes...

Just because we get a hatch doesn't mean a close match (or even a general imitation) is really necessary. That's good news, because there are hundreds of natural fly species on the Teifi. What matters most are the abundance of the hatch and how clearly the trout or grayling see them. When hatches are sparse – as with large dark olives in early season, for example - fish will take just about any fly of approximately the right size (a 14 is ideal).

What about the grannom sedge hatch then? Millions of grannoms hatch each day during those ten days or so in April. The larvae live among the stones in fast, shallow stretches, and their pupae swim to the surface and eclose ('hatch' into winged adults) in tumbling torrents where trout get only a hazy view of them. Again, get the size right and any bushy fly will do perfectly.



Mayflies (rather scarce in recent years) live in silt-laden pools and glides, and when mayfly duns emerge the trout get a very good view of them, so you really do need a pretty good imitation in terms of size and shape. Even more critical is your imitation of the spent mayfly spinner, because the fish have all the time in the world to inspect each morsel: there's no risk of a dead spinner flying away!

Summer on the Teifi can be a challenging time. The yellow may dun (rather misnamed, as the main hatch is in June and July with plenty left for August too) is a great fly for the early part of the evening rise, and as the sun sinks the fly does not simply appear as a silhouette (as all dry flies in open water must do in the height of a bright summer's day). You really do need to have a yellow artificial, therefore. Size 12 is right for this big fly.

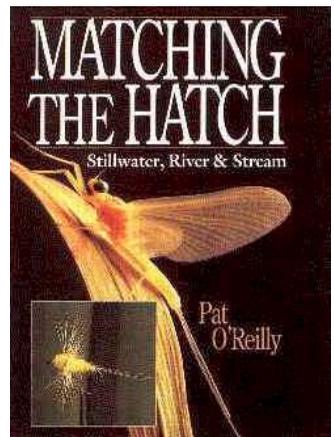
Later in the evening, summer sedge flies bring up some very big trout (and often a sewin or two). Caperer and cinnamon sedge are the main ones on the Teifi, and a size 10 sedge will do the business nicely; the colour is no longer critical now that the sun has set. What you really must match is the *behaviour* of these egg-laying sedges, and so your fly needs to skitter across the surface periodically. Don't make the movement too jerky, however, or the trout will miss your fly as often as they miss the natural skittering sedges!



Autumn duns (they used to be called August duns) are also very common on our river, and you might be tempted to try a matching artificial. It's worth it... but only on blustery days. This is because the autumn dun (like many other flies) does not hatch at the surface of the water; instead its nymph (shown left) crawls out onto a partly submerged stone or log, or up a reed stem, bridge pier etc, and sits there until its back splits and the dun can emerge and dry its wings. Wind-blown casualties *can* end up on the surface of the water... but they rarely do so in a flat calm!

In summary, match the most abundant hatches, not the trickles; the most important features to match are behaviour and size, with shape and colour much less critical most of the time; only a minority of flies hatch in open water; many spinners lay their eggs in dense vegetation well out of reach of any trout... but which?

If you want to know more I can recommend a good book on the subject. Signed copies of *Matching the Hatch* are available priced £14 (a discount of £2-95 on the publisher's price) + £2 P&P – total £16, cheque to First Nature – from First Nature, Bwlchgwyn, Rhydlewis, Llandysul SA44 5RE or via www.first-nature.com/books



Renewing your Membership for 2011

Please wait until after the AGM (on Friday 3rd December) before sending in renewal applications, as next season's membership, joining and visitor fees listed on page 3 of this newsletter are only proposals until agreed at AGM. You will receive a copy of the Spring 2011 Edition of *Current Affairs* in February together with an application form for renewal of membership. Renewal cannot be obtained without first sending in a catch return for the previous season. N.B. there is no need to send in another passport style photograph unless you have lost your Llandysul A A Member's I/D card. (New adult and student member applicants *are* required to send in a photograph, of course.)

Your completed applications form, with subscription payment, must arrive at one of the permit vendors (contact details below) not later than 28th February 2010. Application forms received after that date are treated as New Member applications and a £15 joining fee is payable subject to vacancies being available. Many members kindly enclose an SAE with their application. This really is a great help to our hard-working permit vendors at what is a very busy time of year. Many thanks!

Llandysul A A's Permit Vendors

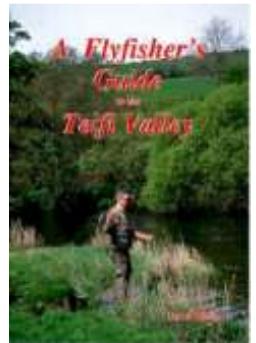
Club permits as well as Day Tickets and Week Tickets, may be obtained from:

- Andrew James, The Port Hotel Llandysul SA44 5QS - Tel: 01559 362202
- Alan Williams, 57 Bridge Street, Lampeter SA48 7AB - Tel: 01570 434313

Llandysul A A for Birthday and Christmas Presents

If you are wondering what to give to a special fishing buddy as a birthday or for Christmas present, what about a few days, a week, or better still (because they're worth it!) a full season's membership of Llandysul Angling Association? The fees are always set at the AGM, but it is established custom for the club fees to rise no more than in line with inflation – see page 3 for the fees proposed for 2011. Contact one of the permit vendors listed above and they will be pleased to help you make Christmas 2010 and the fishing season of 2011 very special for someone you care about.

What if they are already club a member? Well you could give them their own copy of our hardback book *A Flyfisher's Guide to the Teifi Valley*. All our fisheries, with maps, pictures, fishing tips, parking details etc are covered in full cover, with a wealth of other useful information to add to the pleasure of fishing on our river and in other stillwater and coastal fisheries in the Teifi catchment. The cost is £14 + £2 P&P. Make your cheque out to Llandysul A A Ltd, and post it, with your name and address details, to Room 101, The Porth Hotel, Llandysul SA44 4QS.



Competitions News

Here is an update on the competition results in the early part of the season. As usual, the full results will be published in the spring edition of *Current Affairs*.

Spring Competition, Tal y Llyn, Sunday 9th May 2010

Fifteen anglers caught 28 brown trout for 26 lb. It was a refreshing change to the usual stocked rainbow competitions. The weather was kind and the scenery was spectacular. The usual hot orange and fluorescent green flies were left at home and small imitative patterns had to be used to tempt the wild browns. All of the fish retained were over 12 inches, and a



large number of smaller fish were returned safely to the water. The competition results (Best 6 weights) were as follows: Dion Davies (4 fish; 3 lb 02 oz), Steffan Jones (3 fish; 2 lb 09 oz), Dewi Roberts (2 fish; 2 lb 04oz), Simon Jones (2 fish; 2 lb 02 oz), David Williams (2 fish; 2 lb 02oz), and Geoff Thompson (2 fish; 2 lb 01 oz). All competition anglers caught fish that day.

Dion Davies caught the heaviest brown trout (1 lb 06 oz). A number of ‘guest’ anglers were also fortunate to catch a good number of fish, including Dr Alan Edwards who accompanied David Williams and came in with 4 browns for a total weight of 4lb. It was considered likely, from the silvery condition of some of the fish caught, that they had travelled down to the Dysynni Estuary to feed on richer grounds before returning to the lake.

The autumn (Llys y Fran reservoir) competition has been scheduled for Sunday 5th September. Please contact me for further information regarding club competitions by emailing dewifr@dsl.pipex.com or by phoning 01559 362659 (evenings).

The 2010 Annual Competitions Dinner will be held in The Porth Hotel, Llandysul, on Saturday 16th October.

Best wishes, Dewi Roberts

Lost and Found Fishing Tackle

I had originally reserved this space to publicise the loss of a fishing rod, complete with reel and line. A club member had driven away from one of our fishing beats leaving his rod on the car roof. It didn't stay there very long, of course! However, I subsequently received the news that the tackle had been found... by a dog. The rod was obviously just too tempting, and the doggy chewed it into bits. Well, a high fibre diet may be good for dogs but it wasn't good for this particular Hardy rod. Still, the reel and line were recovered and should go well with the new rod, when eventually the insurance company pays up! (It's worth making certain that your insurance covers your fishing tackle, especially if you have a really good outfit that would cost a lot of money to replace.)

What if you lose or find tackle on Llandysul A A waters? In the first instance, please contact Andrew or Louise at The Porth Hotel (01559 362202), who are always pleased to help. They are in touch with the many club members and visitors who call in to The Porth.

Footnote from the Editor



Once again my thanks are due to contributors to *Current Affairs*: Eric Davies, Andrew Howell, Sue Parker, Dewi Roberts and Ian Thomas, all of whom have made time to contribute articles and/or pictures to this edition. As usual, any mistakes in design, layout or editing are all my own work!

If you would like us to cover a particular topic in a future *Current Affairs*, please let us know. We also welcome contributions from Members with, if possible a picture or two. And if you have email you can even save the postage and paper by sending files to us at:

laa-enquiries@fishing-in-wales.com

Best wishes for the remainder of your 2010 fishing season on the River Teifi.

Yours sincerely

Pat O'Reilly

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Current Affairs is published twice per year by Llandysul Angling Association. Copies are sent to club members and to people applying for membership.

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