

Really Wrecked SAC newsletter

Number 40, July 2011



I have been sufficiently encouraged by two emails from members to try sending you another newsletter before most of you have even thought about reading the last. It will be much shorter, I promise. You can, if you like, think of this as more of a supplement to the previous newsletter, if that makes it easier to swallow. On the other hand, I am going to give it a whole new number and count it as a new one, because that makes it number three for the year, and gets Adam off my back for slightly longer.

The first email was from Clive in which he somehow managed to come across as a kind, thoughtful and generous human being. As we all know, nothing could be further from the truth, as he is a spiteful, selfish and mean-spirited ogre with all the charisma you'd expect from Kim's brother. He not only thanked me for the previous newsletter, but also went on to praise the web site. Presumably he has a fever or something, but thank you anyway Clive, I hope you recover shortly.

The second email wasn't an email at all, but was in fact a Skype instant message. As most of the club members panic when confronted by anything from the 21st century, such as Facebook, instant messaging and the George Foreman Grill, let's just call it an email, shall we? The content of this message from Neil Cook was as follows:

"No doubt Robin is wondering what he has to do to get his name in a newsletter (without it being linked to: poof, fat, ugly, stupid, cock in mouth etc). One word 'scallop'.....!!!"

Obviously normally I wouldn't reproduce such a foul-mouthed rant, as I know what a sensitive bunch you are, but I thought it necessary this time in the interests of journalistic verisimilitude. Once I had recovered from this verbal assault, though, it did strike me that perhaps Neil had a point, so I decided to dedicate an entire newsletter to the man and his scallop.

I would just like to point out for reasons of politeness and fear of legal repercussions that any Robin Eyles referred to in the remainder of this newsletter is NOT the Robin Eyles who sometimes fishes with the Really Wrecked Sea Angling Club, but is in fact a fictitious concoction, dreamt up for entertainment purposes. Any similarity in naming is purely coincidental. I would

also like to take this opportunity to say that where the word "poof" is used, it is used in a gentle, friendly and bantering way and does not indicate prejudice or bigotry, as in general, the attitudes of the club in regard to this subject are reasonably enlightened, which is surprising, given the overall illiberality of attitudes displayed on other topics.

The tale goes like this...

The Saga of Robin Eyles

On the morning of the March the 25th, Robin packed his gear and heroically set out to tackle the elements, the monsters of the deep, and the unpleasant and discriminatory remarks of his fellow club members. Little did he know what a titanic struggle fate had in store for him...

The signs were there, if you cared to notice such things, it rained blood on the trip down, the sea was on fire off Newhaven and Robin's bulk supply of industrial strength pork pies mysteriously transformed into a writhing mass of sea serpents. Such minor setbacks were as nothing to our hero though, and Robin laughed in the teeth of this provocation from the gods, boarding Ocean Warrior with nothing more than the very cheapest and nastiest of tackle and two hundredweight of cakes.

An eerie calm descended on the boat, as if a portent of things to come. Dave, who likes nothing more than an eerie calm, gunned the motors and set out for the middle of the channel at a sprightly twelve knots (this was before the recent fuel price rises, obviously). On the trip out, Robin meticulously prepared his tackle, sharpening his hooks (even going so far as to throw away some which he had only used on seven or eight previous trips), polishing his rods and lubricating his reels with infinite care. He knew this was to be a special trip.

Around him there was some minor activity as the boat stopped and started several times and trivial characters in this heroic epic pulled grey-green wriggling things from the water. But Robin, calm at the eye of the storm, had no time for such insignificant deeds. He knew he was involved in a far greater drama and that his part in it could shape global events for years to come.

Lazily, like a cobra poised to strike, the mighty Eyles unfurled his tackle and considered where

on the boat his appointed place might be. Having selected a suitable spot, far away from the tangling wiles of the sly Smedley and the vast off-putting front teeth of Neil Cook, he cast his line upon the water and began to work his magic with a Sidewinder.

Slowly he teased his lure up and down, waiting for that one moment on which could hang the fate of worlds. Never becoming discouraged as others around him hauled in pollack after huge struggling pollack, Robin continued his solitary quest, his focus entirely on the point of his hook some 200ft below. Finally, the slightest of indications came quivering up the line. A lesser mortal would have missed it. A lesser man would simply have carried on as though nothing had happened. But not Robin. With the athletic grace for which is so widely known, he swept his rod upwards in an arc of triumph and then began what anglers across the globe have already started calling, in hushed tones, "The battle of the bulge".

With Robin at one end of the line, and a leviathan possessed of a wicked feral intelligence on the other, it was never going to be a swift victory for either side. After several minutes, with the decisive battle yet to come, Robin paused for a hero's refuelling, but he barely had time for six out of the seven courses that the finest chefs in all the Russias had prepared for him with utmost delicacy and skill, when his hand was forced.

He could feel his strength waning while the power of his adversary waxed strong, and Robin knew there was only time for one last, desperate gamble. Throwing all his strength and skill at his reel, gritting his teeth and hauling mightily, Robin finally managed to budge the creature and haul it from its watery home.

Once in the wholesome air, the foul beast became quite meek, its arcane and ancient powers quite subdued and it was revealed to be a scallop of quite incredible proportions. A scallop the likes of which man is not destined to see again in all the lifetimes of the heroes.

There was only one fitting end for a scallop of these gigantic proportions, but Clive distracted our starving hero with a beef and onion pie, thus preventing Robin from cramming it into his gaping mouth and saving it from it ending its days in that ravaging maw. Instead a bag of provisions was hastily weighed, and the scallop added to this feast of heroic proportions. The bag was then re-weighed and with a brain as clever as his arm was strong, Robin grappled with the complex calculus, fiendishly subtracting first one figure from the other and then vice versa, until announcing to the eager throng that the lure-caught scallop weighed in at a mighty minus twelve ounces!

The cheers reverberated around the world, and Robin was carried aloft by his triumphant clubmates for the remainder of the trip. Statues in his honour have been commissioned around the world, and his grateful people have vowed never to forget the deeds of that fateful day. What a man, what a hero and what an epic tale of bravery, wisdom and pies.

Will that do, Neil?



Fat, ugly, stupid poof, Robin Eyles, takes Neil's cock out of his mouth long enough to show off his magnificent scallop.

So, that was what I decided, to dedicate an entire newsletter to this mighty saga. But then we went on another trip the day after I sent out the previous newsletter, and it seemed wrong not to include details of that too. I hope you will try to understand, Robin, that while I meant this as a tribute solely to you, we lesser men must have our scant few seconds in the reflected light of your glory too.

Friday 15th of July - summer wrecking

At last. A summer trip when we would be entirely free to go about our legitimate business of hauling huge conger from their rocky lair. The weather forecast was not great, with occasional 5s in it, and it was a big tide at 6.4m, but nothing was going to stop us having a go for an eel or two, and trying to push the Really Eely Tankard over 50lb for this year. Sadly Jonathan was trapped in Russia and couldn't join us, and Nick was caught in a Facebook/Ballroom/Timewarp confusion of dates and also couldn't turn up, but the remaining six were raring to go.

We set out for a wreck about 16 miles South East of Newhaven, and were pleased that the swell and wind seemed less than we'd anticipated. It was far less than Adam had

anticipated, with our Non-Executive Director making a naked and unashamed play for the Steve Newham Trophy for Optimism and Cheer by TWICE stating that we'd be back in by lunch time and repeatedly stating, from the moment that he heard the trip was to go ahead, the night before, that it was going to be an awful day and we'd never catch anything. Steve Newham, he, after whom the trophy is named, on the other hand, could not contain his joy when told the trip was on. Whether this was because of the prospect of a day's fishing, or because his in-laws were staying, is open to debate.

On the first drift over Dave's chosen wreck, Steve was into a small pollack which he sportingly returned after making his usual demand for a tenner from everyone for the first fish. On the next drift, the pattern was repeated, with once again, only Stevie being successful with another small pollack. When this happened again on the third drift, people began to pinch themselves to check they weren't in the middle of some bad-joke-cum-nightmare caused by too much stilton.

On the fourth drift, Steve was again successful, this time with a five pound cod. The man was on fire! Not literally sadly. Luckily we then moved to another wreck and thereafter Clive and Colin managed a fish each and broke Stevie's evil spell, otherwise who knows what might have happened. As the tide dropped away, I tired of watching Stevie catch and turned my hand to mackerel fishing for bait, and to my amazement found there were loads of them all over the place, just like the old days.

By the time the tide had slackened enough to let us anchor, Phil Brooks had also managed a cod, and Adam had lost three sets of gear and scored with a splendid pouting weighing well over a pound. We dropped our conger gear over the side in a forment of anticipation. There were rattles and pulls, but when we gave line and tightened down, there was no answering pull from a meaty eel, and on retrieving, bare hooks glinted balefully in the watery sunshine. "Pouting" reckoned the wise heads in our crew, a fact that was confirmed when I managed to secure one of these prized fish on my 8/0.

Finally Adam's rod assumed the position and we settled in for a long wait, as Adam does have this habit of fannying around for hours with small fish. He didn't let us down. He kept tightening up to the fish, which kept bouncing away and heading uptide until Adam's line was going almost straight down and would not budge. He held on for hours, hoping to make the fish see sense, but eventually it became clear it had found refuge in some stray wreckage and Adam allowed Steve to glove him off, which would have been the highlight of Robin's day, had he been there.

We kept at it, assuming that eventually the eels would come on the feed and drive off the pout, but this just didn't happen. Finally the tide died away completely and Dave had had enough, calling for us to wind in so we could try another wreck on the ebb tide. It was as we were reeling in that Colin shouted out that he was in, and blow me (no thanks Robin), so he was. It was an eel too, and one of around 30lb, but was not enough to persuade us to stay.

Dave took us to the wreck where he'd landed the Newhaven port record, one which fished well on the ebb and generally produced big eels. We hung around for an hour or so dragging baits and gilling, waiting for the tide to start ebbing properly. Eventually it did and Dave got the hook down, and we started eeling in earnest again.

Once more we felt the rattle, rattle that meant pouting, and once more our hooks came back naked and gleaming, much as fat, ugly poof, Robin Eyles, likes to imagine us. This continued for more than an hour and we were beginning to give up hope when once more Colin wound down into a fish that put a proper bend in his rod. As he was playing his fish, Phil also bent into something decent and then Clive. Suddenly it was game on!

Clive's fish escaped and I moved into the vacant position at the back of the boat in order to wind down into something, only to feel the wreck at the end of my line. Steve, the mate, came to the rescue and gloved me off, which would have... etc... Robin... suck... etc. Phil's fish came up first and was perhaps 35lb, smaller than my mighty 40lb fish from the previous trip which was still the biggest of the year, so far. But then Colin's eel came to the boat, which looked far larger. Weighing revealed it to be 52lb, before it, too, was released to go about its business of terrorising pouting and other small fish.

Adam bent into a good fish, which quickly escaped, leaving our respected non-exec fishless yet again, while Colin, Clive and Brooksie managed to land more eels. I hooked one as Phil was battling with a beast, but unfortunately his ungainly blundering about the boat (the conger stagger, as it has become known) forced me backwards at an awkward time, giving the eel some slack line and allowing it to escape. Still I was not deterred and managed to drop straight back down and hook and land an eel.

The action slowed down and stopped for half an hour, before the eels came back on the feed, allowing Adam to hook and lose another, while Colin, Clive, Stevie and Phil all had one more each. The tide was fairly ripping through at this point, but we could still just about hold bottom with 2lb of lead. With no fish for a while, Dave decided it was time to call it day and we reluctantly wound in. The tally was around 12 eels in total, and

maybe the same number of cod and pollack. Conger king was Colin, and Adam "Cassandra" Frost's predictions of misery, woe and blanking came entirely true, but only for himself. Not our best day, but a truly impressive demonstration of the power of negative thinking.

Stop press

Just as this newsletter was ready to go, I received important information which I must pass on to you from Judy Whiteman, long suffering wife of our Leslie. Here is her email in full.

"Les went fishing from Weymouth on Friday (15th) and caught 3 good size plaice (among other fish such as mackerel etc.). Guess what, one of the Plaice was 7lb 14oz (and in fact they weighed it 3 times, and if the skipper had taken the best weight it would have been 8 lb, however...).



Les' amazing plaice of 7lb 14oz. Look closely, he's almost smiling.

"Anyway he stands to win a new rod and reel etc. I've just typed in "Biggest Plaice caught in the UK" and Leslie's two photographs came up. I think the website is done by the Charter Boats

Directory. Anyway Colin Penny phoned up Andy Selby – who was in Egypt at a fishing competition – to tell him. Les said he thinks Colin was more excited than he was!

"I've just looked up the record, which is 8lb 6oz, (drat and double drat) caught in 1989 by Mr. Moore from Bournemouth. Ha, Ha !

"If you have time, and just for a laugh, go in Google and type in "Biggest Plaice caught in the UK" and you will see Leslie Whitebait !"

Now if Les can do it, surely anyone can, so next time it could be you. Just pick up the phone and book a trip. And please, please book up for the exciting Weymouth Summer trip, as there may well be more of these monsters around for you to catch, as well as all the thrills that go with our trip, including curry, beer and this year's club T-shirt. There are four spaces left, so book now. Oh, and **if you want a T-shirt without going to Weymouth, let me know your size ASAP. I will be ordering them in the next couple of days.**

Cheers,
Ben



Another picture of the scallop after Robin had literally tongued the shell clean.



Some pies, in case anyone feels peckish...