

Really Wrecked SAC newsletter

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Hah! You weren't expecting this, were you? No, you bloody weren't. Well, don't get used to it, I haven't turned over a new leaf or anything, I just thought you could probably do with being slagged off in print sooner rather than later. It won't happen again this year, don't worry.

I've got some stuff to tell you about, the dinner, a couple of trips, that kind of thing, so read on to find out what you missed out on, or were present at and want an unbiased and accurate account of things to remind you of what happened and make you smile (or curse) all over again.

I'd also just like to remind you that if you haven't told us when you want to go fishing this year, it's too late. You've almost literally *missed the boat*. And yet it isn't really, as you can always get yourself added to the list of reserves for any trip. As our reserves actually get to go at least half the time, you've got a pretty good chance of getting on a trip. So don't give up, put yourself down. Or let me put you down, you useless tosser. Yes, that really is the standard of "humour" you've got to look forward to in what follows. Perhaps I've spent too much time with Adam over the years.

Annual dinner 2014

Amusingly the 2014 annual dinner took place in 2015. The hilarious fact that each year's dinner takes place the following year causes Adam and I no end of joy as we look at all the documents called, for example, "Winners and nominations 2014" and discard them as last year's. This happens every year. We should learn, but we don't. Not ever. Of course, we could rename the dinner so that it has the same name as the year it currently sits in, so this year's dinner would have been *The Really Wrecked Annual Dinner 2015*. This would make things very simple, apart from the fact that there would then be a disconnect in my files, with the "Awards and Nominations 2014" document forever missing, leaving me to think that we'd lost one set of winners. This may not seem important to you, but every year at this time it causes me as much grief as my tax return.

Anyway, the dinner itself passed off without a hitch or any major alarms. Beef was notable by his absence, so the evening was shorter by half an hour due to the lack of the mumbling and

groaning that passes for his speech, but was poorer for its absence, which speaks volumes for the quality of the rest of the entertainment. We had three new members giving the dinner the benefit of the doubt and coming along to see what all the fuss was about. I doubt they'll be making that mistake again. We had Adrian Collier and his wife Hazel, David Simpson and his wife Susan, and Andy Barker, who didn't bring a WAG, hoping, I think, to pick up someone likely from Lewes. Another lesson learned there.

The food was pretty tasty. I particularly liked my goats cheese and beetroot and tapenade and-other-yummy-stuff-like-that starter, but it was all good, and well worth the price of admission on its own. Then of course, there's the entertainment.

I noted this year a conflicting desire among certain club members to get me to claim that I was Club President, and then, having got me to agree to this, to mock me and suggest that I was a nobody, a nothing, a disorganiser, a maker of chaos. That may all be true, of course, but I am going to take this opportunity, when you can't all answer back, to stake my claim and tell you all that I *am* all that, Club President, General Secretary of the Party, Your Beloved Leader, and to be known from now on as Kim Jong Ben. I was going to make that Kim Fal Down, but then I realised I could do a sentence like this one, and so get both versions of the "joke" in.

Anyway, Your President and his Secret Vice (that's Adam's official position) have for a long time been considering whether we don't need a committee to rubber stamp all the many important decisions we make on your behalf. In addition to their vital role in legitimising the various awful things we do in your name, a committee might be useful in a number of other ways, such as thinking about other possible ports to fish from, whether we care that the club will die when we do, and therefore whether we want a few younger members to join and outfish us, and also possibly even helping with the disorganisation that Adam and I currently bravely shoulder alone.

Trouble is, I have no idea how to go about co-opting people for this transparent bit of window-dressing. I mean, if we ask for volunteers, we'll be swamped, and then we face the unenviable task of having to tell various people that they are surplus to requirements and, frankly, useless.

Alternatively, we could invite people to join, but this means we'll leave people out who wanted to play, offending them deeply. Or we could create a load of notional positions, such as "Treasurer", "Bookings secretary", "Social Secretary" (the last one basically means procurer of drugs and women for Adam and me) etc. and invite people to apply. Any roles with more than one applicant could be decided by a ballot of the people. But that smacks unhealthily of democracy, and we haven't spent years lovingly cultivating this little dictatorship, just to hand it over to so-called progressive forces at the first opportunity. So you can see my problem. I don't think there's any solution, so we'll probably just carry on as before.

Anyway, where was I? Oh yes, back at the dinner... So, food eaten, people eventually stopped milling about and going off to the loo or for a fag or whatever, and were confined to the dining room for long enough for Adam and I to start doling out the shiny things. Did you know that we have 28 cups and trophies? Twenty eight! And that's not counting the specimen medals. For fuck's sake! And every one has to be assigned to some unworthy recipient, collected from last year's unworthy etc. delivered for engraving, engraved, collected from engraving, polished, reassembled and then dished out again. Not only is this time-consuming and pointless, but it's actually quite hard. I mean I'm generally acknowledged to be one of the funniest men ever to have lived, but even I struggle to make every single second of the seven hour presentation ritual utterly hilarious and absorbing. Of course, I'm not suggesting we cull any of the trophies, such as the ever-popular *Clive Hodges Award For The Best Slightly Discoloured Fish Caught On A Tuesday, On Line Purchased During The Last Millennium By A Club Member Fishing To The Left Of Someone Who Has A Name Starting With A Vowel On Bait Slightly Past Its Best With A Blunt Hook Which Has Previously Been Used For An Entire Trip Without Troubling The Scorers*. No, God forbid we did that; these are hallowed prizes and TRADITIONAL, and these TRADITIONS must be respected, even if it ruins everyone's life. All I am suggesting is that ENOUGH IS ENOUGH and we don't add any more. Please. No more.

Right, um, yes, so yes, I was very funny indeed for a very sustained period, handing out our baubles and gewgaws. Building on the success of last year's multimedia extravaganza, we not only had a rotating slideshow of images from the glorious history of the club, featuring old members such as Karen and Alain, plus a separate slideshow to accompany our awards, so we could see a possibly relevant image to accompany each award, we also had a specially recorded video from the man himself, Beef, in

which he made various not-so-veiled threats to come back from Australia in the course of the year to fish with us. Luckily, he's so confused about the change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar that he's actually planning to come on the trip planned for the 34th of Mungomas, which I've assured him will be a cracker.

Anyway, it was so lovely to hear his dulcet tones coming out of the chocolate fountain that we were using as a loudspeaker at the dinner, that Steve was moved to call his dear friend on his mobile. Steve! Called Australia! On his mobile! Hahahahahahaha! Steve saw the funny side once the phone had been passed around the room, out into the bar, along the High Street and so all round Lewes. He did eventually get it back and is currently selling his home to pay the bill.

That was it really. I hope everyone else had more fun than me. You were at least polite enough to pretend you did, so that's nice. Then it was just Adam and me in front of *Dickie Carr's Groundbait Guide* at 4am. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Monday the 9th of February

This was our first pollack trip of the year. Dave was raring to go and we just about managed to scrape together a crew. Obviously it was a bit difficult to get a full crew together once word got out that I wasn't to be there, dishing out my own inimitable mix of life-affirming chat and morale-raising tips and hints, but we did eventually get there, partly because of the welcome return of our Battle-hardened members Marvin and his sidekick Rob (they're from Battle, so you see what I did there?). Or is Marvin actually Rob's sidekick? It's hard to tell with those two. Whichever way round it is, we're glad they're turned their backs on bluefin tuna and other undesirables and have returned to pouting, whiting and dogfish. That we had a full complement of anglers was also thanks in part to Adrian persuading Martin, a friend of his who had never fished with us, to waste an entire day getting cold with a bunch of people you'd normally cross the road/town/country/continent/galaxy to avoid.

Luckily for Martin, this gang of undesirables did not include the otherwise ever-present Brooksie, which cried off at the 11th hour pleading a work commitment in Birmingham, which just goes to show how far some people will go to avoid spending the day with Adam. Fortunately, Brooksie is a Muslim, so he was able to enter and leave the no-go zone that is Britain's second city. Or is that second worst city? If some of you are wondering about my sudden crazy decent into simplistic ethnic stereotyping and/or desire to provoke a fatwa, just Google "Fox News Birmingham no go zone for non-Muslims" to see

the brilliant piece of well-informed analysis to which I am referring, or, if you can't be bothered, just go here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zF7nbEvvY>. In any case, Brooksie is not a Muslim. They wouldn't have him, nor would any self-respecting religion. In fact, even the Quakers were moved to agree, on meeting our Phil, that murder wasn't **always** wrong. Of course we missed the big lunk, not least because in his absence we have no way of knowing which celebrities and/or fisherman and/or anyone else has died recently.

The sea was flat, and the wind light, with a chill in the air, as you might expect in early February. Dave headed 25 miles or so offshore and then let Ocean Warrior and its contents loose over various wrecks to see what we could prise from the inky depths. Dave had worked his cabin boy, Steve, to death with his relentless demands for tea, so our very own Adrian stepped nobly into the breach as tea boy and made a very serviceable couple of brews for everyone.

Sadly, this wasn't one of those berserk pollacking days, but, to be fair to everyone involved (not something I can usually be bothered with), it was early in the year, and the fish that were there were pretty big. When I say "pretty big" I mean that of the 14 fish caught, four were doubles, topped by a magnificent new record of 19lb 6oz to the fish-catching machine that is Steve Newham. That's a proper pollack, that is. Our other fish-catching machine, Clive Hodges, was feeling in a generous mood all day and decided not to trouble the scorers with any fish of his own, despite trying every colour of lure known to man. It doesn't happen very often to Clive, so we have to take advantage when it does by generously gloating at every possible opportunity.



Getting a bit sick of pics of Steve now.

Andy Barker, also present, showed that his performance on the Weymouth summer trip was

no fluke as he yet again managed to achieve the near-impossible double feat of both omitting a ring while threading line up his rod, and simultaneously wrapping the line around the rod blank in the process. This takes real skill and shows a dedication to winning trophies that goes above and beyond the call of idiocy.

Monday the 9th of March

By early March, the pollack are on the wrecks in good number numbers, and even better, Brooksie was unable to make the trip again, not because he had been detained in the Caliphate of Birmingham but because this time he was in the process of becoming a cyborg, with his increasingly wrecked knee due to be replaced with a bionic version which will, sadly, make him more nimble and able to come on fishing trips again. Even betterer than that, I was down to be fishing! There was joy unbounded on the streets of Newhaven at the news, and it was gratifying to see huge numbers of people signing up for the trip, once Adam had increased the financial incentives to five figures.

On this trip Dave had replaced Steve with a new model, called Jas (pronounced Jace, as in Jason, I think) who brewed up twice, netted all our fish and didn't manage to smack Adam on the head with the net, not even once! He needs some proper training.

The day wasn't bad, a window in the weather allowed us to fish, but there was a little southerly swell which made the journey out a little damp and interesting, and kept us rocking and rolling all day. About ten minutes out of port, Dave had the good fortune to run over a free-floating bit of net, which wrapped itself around a prop, and for a while had us contemplating the prospect of one of the shortest fishing trips in our illustrious history of abortive expeditions. However, a bit of back and forth with the props chopped up the offending nylon and left us free to continue on our merry way.

About an hour later, Dave surprised us all by slowing the motor and asking us to start fishing. "But Dave, we're only about 12 miles off! There won't be any fish here." We were right, there were no fish, but it was worth having a look just in case we could have had less steaming and more fishing time. Next time, there will be fish.

An hour later we were over the first proper offshore wreck and dropping our lures into the depths with anticipation. Most people started with rhubarb and custard Sidewinders after their success on the previous trip, though a couple of absolute idiots (Kim and Colin) started with blue ones. It's interesting, but when I were a lad, you were a fool if you didn't start with either a black or a red lure, or perhaps, best of all, a black-bodied

lure with a red tail, unless you wanted cod, in which case orange was the colour. These days you can't buy a black lure for love nor money, and as for orange, or Afterburners? You're having a laugh, aren't you? One of these days I'm going to dig out all my old lures and show these modern fish a thing or two old school style.

Anyway, new lures and old, yellow, red and blue alike were all equally ineffective on the first drift. And the second. But then, guess what? On the third drift, nothing happened. Then, on the fourth, nothing happened, but a little faster as the tide had picked up. Of course, "nothing" is an oversimplification. Clive changed lures twice per drift in an unsuccessful attempt to overcome his blanking hoodoo, I snagged the wreck and lost my R & C Sidewinder, Scoop demonstrated how to catch 12 winks between drifts, thus retaining enough energy to fish like a man possessed for at least the first 45 minutes of the day, and Colin and son, Luke, passed their rod back and forth like they didn't really hate each other. Really, Luke, you're fooling no-one, we know you're not an idiot, and no-one with any sense can stand your dad, so there's absolutely no need to keep up the façade when you're out with us.

Eventually Dave worked out that the reason we weren't catching anything wasn't just that he had a boatload of total buffoons and morons that day. If there were fish on this wreck, they weren't playing ball. So we moved to another wreck about a mile away. Nope. Nothing. Nada. Squat. Zip. Zilch. The next wreck was, according to Dave, quite small. Yes, it was. And the tide was quite quick. Basically the timing of things went like this:

- 1) "Down you go."
- 2) Count to two
- 3) "Right, up you come, then."

So not a lot of fishing took place over this wreck.

Next up Dave decided to take us to a BIG wreck. The tide was still screaming through, but the size of this monster meant that we got at least a minute's fishing per drift. This massive increase in time spent dropping and retrieving expensive bits of rubber had, as you'd expect with us, absolutely no effect. Well, until the tide slackened a little, anyway. When that happened, and we started drifting at a marginally less frantic pace across the wreck, lo and behold! A take. In fact two on the same drift. Robin was first in with a standard six-pound pollack and then Colin, having meanly snatched the rod away from his poor innocent son, bested a mighty two-pounder which, despite being only a baby itself, he killed and kept as a trophy to take home and impress his wife. She must be used to pretending to be impressed by small things. Given Colin's attitude to Luke, I suspect it was probably just the fish's

youthfulness that so enraged him as to turn him into a killer.

The next drift produced more of the same, this time to myself and Kim, and the drift after a couple more, including one, which seemed to be giving Andy Freeman a little more trouble. Of course, it might just have been that Andy was, by now, catnapping while actually fishing. It's hard to tell sometimes. Most of the time, in fact. Either way, when the fish finally emerged from the depths, it was a good one, 16 pounds in fact. What a lovely fish.



Scoop uses the fact that he's caught a lovely 16lb pollack to showcase proudly his particularly cunty South Park style camo hat. And note how cheery Adam looks in the background, too.

The fish weren't exactly evenly spread throughout the boat. Kim was doing okay, Robin was doing okay, Luke had had one, so too had Scoop, but Andy Barker and Adam hadn't troubled the scorers. Actually, I tell a lie, Andy had had a pouting, a splendid 6oz fish, and as has been established in previous newsletters, this type of catch definitely means you haven't blanked. Clive was also among the more ardent conservationists, declining to bother with anything as tawdry as hooking and landing a fish. This continued his excellent form from the trip before, and I must say, this nice humble version of Hodges Junior is a joy to spend time with on the boat.

We (or the actual anglers among the crew anyway) continued to pick up the odd fish or two per drift until Dave decided the tide had slackened enough to make it worthwhile moving back to one of the smaller wrecks; as we'd get enough time over it now to allow us to reach the bottom before winding in again. The pattern was pretty much the same there, with a few fish coming sporadically.

Dave was a bit puzzled about the scratchy nature of the fishing thus far, but did point out that with the force 4-5 wind at 90 degrees to the direction of tide, getting an accurate drift was quite tricky. This got me thinking. Yeah, I know, I shouldn't bother with that, after all, it's not a traditional Really Wrecked activity, but anyway here goes, for what it's worth.

I reckon that most fish expect their food to behave in a certain way, and if it doesn't, they don't recognise it as something to eat. This certainly seems to be true when fly fishing, if your dry fly is skating across the current instead of following it down (yeah, yeah, unless you're fishing a sedge pattern late evening), it doesn't look like all the other food items in the surface film, and the fish (mostly) ignore it.

The same may well be true for pollack and cod on the drift. Look at it from their perspective. They're sitting there, holding station in the tidal flow, probably quite close to the bottom where the flow is slower to reduce the amount of energy they have to use to remain in place. The smaller fish are trying to do the same thing, but every so often they get forced up slightly by a change in the current and further up, there's more flow and they're pushed back a bit in the tide. They may be pushed back into the line of sight of a pollack or cod, in which case, they're history.

Now think about what we're doing. We're drifting over the fishes' heads, with our rubbery fish somewhere close to the bottom, and a fairly big bow of line between us and it. If we didn't retrieve, our lures would just drift back with the tide, with no current to make their magic tails work. They wouldn't look much like actual fish and we'd get fewer takes. But if you retrieve a bit, they're still falling back in the tide, but now they're probably lifting up a bit and moving (relative to the waiting pollack) a bit more slowly than the tide, so, as the tide flows past them, their little tails wiggle back and forth, and they look like a small fish trying to hold station in the tide and failing. Hey presto! Pollack sees it and eats it. This means a pollack following your lure and nipping at it before swallowing it may actually be falling back with the tide in order to keep up with the lure, rather than following the lure up at the lovely 45 degree angle we always imagine. This is probably a hassle for a fish, which may be why they sometimes give up.

Now as the speed of the tide changes, so the behaviour of fish, big and small, may change. They may not need to hug the bottom so much if the tidal flow is less, the smaller fish may not be swept back as much and the bigger fish might sit higher up to give themselves a wider field of vision. The smaller fish may in fact be able to make some headway against the tide. All of which might mean that in order for your lure to look like

prey, you've got to speed up your retrieve as the tide slackens. But maybe not, maybe the same speed will achieve the right thing. The point is that if you're not catching, I bet the speed of retrieve is going to make more of a difference than changing to another colour lure.

Okay, so now imagine the wind is also pushing the boat sideways across the line of drift. Now your lure is not just falling back in the tide, it's moving across the tide too. This is probably usually okay, after all, little fish are going to swim sideways too from time to time, but if the sideways movement is too much, or the combination of sideways motion, plus the tidal motion, plus your retrieve is too much, your little rubbery thing just might not look like food any more. It might look like something weird, and the big fish may well ignore it. Of course, if there are lots and lots of big fish, and they're madly competing for the food, then they won't have time or space to decide whether stuff looks much like food, they'll snatch at anything going past them before the next fish does, but when there are fewer big fish around, this might make a difference.



Luke managed to prise the rod from his dad's vice-like grip long enough to land this nice 9lb pollack.

Of course, you have no control over how fast the tide is flowing, or how strong the wind is, but you do have control over how fast you retrieve, how heavy your lead is, and how big your lure is. All of these things will have some affect on how your rubbery thing moves downtide and how natural it looks. If you're not catching, try a slower, or a faster retrieve, put on a heavier lead and do the same thing, try a smaller lure a smaller lead and a slower retrieve, and just cos it works at one point in the tide doesn't mean it will work in ten minutes, or on the next wreck. And that may be why the fish taken by a crew aren't always evenly spread around the boat. We all have different

reels, are probably using different leads, with different diameter line and different speeds of retrieve. I reckon those things are much more important than the colour of your rubber fish.

Anyway, that's my theory. Sorry to get all serious on you there. But don't worry, Adam is still a cunt and everyone still hates Robin, who incidentally has lost lots of weight, but while he's undoubtedly healthier and will therefore live longer, sadly, there's still just as much to hate.

And talking of Adam, his day was going from good to excellent in short order. On the large wreck, he'd hooked the bottom once and had to retackle, but on the new smaller wreck, he really came into his own. First of all he hooked something very large and unyielding. It kept taking line and Adam, being absolutely **desperate** for a fish, refused to acknowledge that it might not be the totally mahoosive twenty he craves (as we all do), rather than the wreck, which the rest of us could totally see it actually was. There's no talking to him when he gets like that. Eventually Dave had to make him see sense and to glove him off. Everyone likes being gloved off by Dave.

This incident, amusing in itself, was merely the prelude to a sustained period of snagging and tackle loss the like of which we haven't seen since the last time I was down in Weymouth drifting all day for plaice over the mussel beds. And Adam does suffering like no other, except perhaps me. With each lost lure/rig his spirits sunk further and deeper towards the wreck. What made it even more special was the fact that it really was only Adam who was losing all his tackle. The gods had singled him out for punishment, and quite right too, we all know he deserves it.

Now I know what you're thinking, I always exaggerate for so-called comic effect ('so-called' because of the lack of actual comedy) in these things, and Adam was in reality probably only having a little bit of bother. Let me assure you that this is not the case here. No, there is no exaggeration, this tragedy was Oedipal in scope and intensity. In fact, having killed his dad, shagged his mum and brought plague and destruction upon Thebes, causing his mum/wife to kill herself, Oedipus, just before he blinded himself in despair, was noticeably cheerier than Adam at this stage of the day.

Kind words availed not, and all we could do was watch and pray to the capricious god of fishing to end Adam's, and indeed all our, suffering. Meanwhile the anglers among us (Kim, Robin and I) were still catching the odd fish, in amongst all this misery, or perhaps helping to cause it by our selfish (and successful) actions. Luckily Clive and Andy B weren't making things worse by heaping ignominy on Adam's broad

shoulders and catching anything, so it wasn't **quite** as bad as it might have been.

It was noticeable at this stage of the day that after an hour or so when the fish had come at a rate of one or two per drift, things had tailed off again until we were taking maybe one fish every five or six drifts. This reinforced my mad theories about bait presentation, because it was as though, for one period of the day, the tidal strength and the wind speed and direction combined to present our lures slightly more effectively than at other times, leading to an increased catch rate. We also had a lot of follows and nibbles over the wrecks, showing the fish were there, just not taking with enormous gusto, but instead had time to inspect and test the bait.

Anyway, I'm getting sidetracked again by fishing thoughts, so back to the day itself and, more importantly, the misery and abuse. Finally... finally... Adam hooked something that bounced about a bit more than a wreck. The boat, no, the world, held its breath. Would Adam land the fish and save the day from utter desolation and joyless dystopia, or would he lose the fish through a combination of bad luck (1%) and incompetence (99%)? You may think you know how this story ends and yes, they generally do end that way in our club, but this time, for once, the god of fishing smiled down on us all and the fish came all the way to the surface, didn't evade the net, and once there, didn't magically find a previously undetected hole in the net to escape, and once safely on board and unhooked, it wasn't booted out of the port scupper by Clive. In fact the fish, an entirely unremarkable 6lb pollack, made it all the way into the fish box and may by now have made it all the way into a fish pie.

Thank fuck for that. The mood on the boat lifted instantly, as though all eleven people had simultaneously received a diagnosis of "negative". Yes, it was hardly joy unbounded, champagne and cigars all round, but in comparison to the mood five minutes before, it was an e-fuelled 90s rave at 2am, Studio 54 in 1977 and the Halls of Valhalla at feasting time all rolled into one. However, despite the newly optimistic mood, the fishing had more or less tailed off, and we spent the last couple of hours fishing for one or maybe two more fish.

Then it was time for the long steam home. Those of us who had caught anything had fish to fillet or gut, apart from Robin, who is such a lazy cocksucker he can't even be bothered with that, preferring to give his fish to the poor and needy with an airy wave, instead of actually getting his fingers dirty, gutting or filleting his fish. Top rod was Kim, with five fish. In fact it seemed like it might be a day of double celebration for Kim, as not only had he caught well, but he'd also

managed to get through an entire day's fishing, with a bit of a messy swell, remember, without once falling to the deck like the defective Weeble he truly is.

Alas, it was not to be. No sooner had our hero relaxed and started putting his tackle away when... o-o-o-o-o-oh, first one way, and then o-o-o-o-o-oh, another way, he rolled and wobbled and then, like a disaster movie in super slow-mo, his legs went from under him and down he went. But better, much better, than that, his chosen resting place wasn't some empty and unwelcoming stretch of deck. No. It was a section of deck that was occupied by Robin's formerly three-piece Grauvell Anagra gilling rod with attached at-one-time-circular Abu 7000 multiplier, (Robin has a custom Aspreys model, hand-tooled from solid platinum by specially trained magical elves). After Kim had picked himself up and dusted himself down, we noticed that Robin now had a travel rod, in no less than 18 pieces, some very small indeed, and his reel was a much more interesting and unconventional shape. Kim was penitent, Robin was all generosity and love; perhaps something to do with his second-best-on-the-boat performance with four fish, or perhaps just because he is in fact, despite all evidence to the contrary, a decent bloke; refusing all offers from Kim of payment, and saying, in really quite a nice and kind way, that it was a perfect excuse to buy some new tackle.

Be warned Kim, the rest of the club is not so forgiving. I'll mention no names, but I'm sure you realise that if you don't select your future victims with equal care as you did this time, certain club members will be using your misfortune not just to replace their tackle, but to upgrade it at the same time. For myself, I'll just say, keep away from Excalibur, or be prepared to take on a new mortgage.

That was it. A fairly average day, enlivened by one or two extraordinary events, not the least of which was my actually being able to go fishing. The final score was 16 pollack, with two doubles, one rod, one reel and no dignity. Well done one and all, let's see whether we can do any better in April, when the cod might have joined the party.



Robin's new travel rod, with Kim looking suitably apologetic beside him.



A pensive Robin examines his slightly oblate special edition Abu 7000 after Kim had tested its compression resistance.