

Flood, sweat and tears



Anglers can expect great catches like this 15kg cod all through the year while casting spinnerbaits in impoundments in the late afternoon or twilight periods.



The authors' premium selection for the warmer weather: Wilson 100mm Slick Backs for trolling the impoundments for cod; and Bassman Codman Spinnerbaits for casting the rivers and impoundments for cod. These colours are Priscilla Pink and Jungle Juice which the authors designed for Northern NSW cod waters and can be ordered through your local Bassman dealer.

FIRST, we would like to offer our most sincere sympathy and support to all victims affected by the catastrophic flooding that Queensland has experienced over the past month.

Numerous lives and homes have been lost and we can only wish a brighter future to all who have been affected by such a disaster.

We've moved into the new year and the Murray cod season is flying past at a rate of knots.

Coming off the back of one of the wettest years in decades, there is plenty of water still about and with a positive approach to the weather when the rivers and dams return to their norm, we can only look forward to a magnificent fish-filled 2011.

Fishing activity reports from anglers across our North West Region have mentioned up and down experiences throughout many fishing circles.

To some there is still too much unsettled fresh water, to others fishing the flowing waters is proving to be rewarding.

On a recent outing to Split Rock Dam at Manilla, the Murray cod action was slow.

There have been reports of a couple of small cod being boated but the majority of anglers took to the water trolling smaller lures and reaped the benefits, with several bagging nice golden perch despite water levels still rising and discolouring the water.

Reports from Split Rock early in the season revealed at least two nice cod up to and over the magical metre mark captured by trolling lures and casting spinnerbaits.

Further downstream, the Lake Keepit area including the Namoi River catchment, has once again copped intermittent rainfall that has stirred the dam up, resulting in a slow bite pattern for all species.

A family fishing competition held at Lake Keepit over the weekend of January 8-9 saw 183 entrants take part but unfortunately many anglers were left empty-handed with only 60 fish boated.

Out of the four cod landed, the biggest pushed the brag mat to 102cm and was taken trolling around the quarry near the boat ramp.

The other cod were caught trolling as well.

Around 40 golden perch were landed with some nice fish up to 3kg taken trolling and jigging lipless crankbaits on the edge of the dirty water, but the



Northern NSW Freshwater

by THE WELLS BROTHERS



majority was caught using live bait.

At Glenbawn Dam in the Hunter Valley, the bass have been turning the heat on with some brilliant catches being witnessed.

It has provided us with a nice getaway from the flooded rivers and dams that our area has been constantly dealing with.

We have taken some good bass while casting spinnerbaits, soft plastics and lipless crankbaits, targeting both grassy points and heavily timbered bays.

The majority of our success has been around the middle of the day.

Hot weather fishing

Anglers targeting our waterways through the extreme heat over the summer or early autumn period should take into account the severe stress caused to large fish when pulled to the warmer surface temperatures and if taken out of the water, the hot atmospheric temperatures.

If your sounder is reading a surface temperature around 28-30C you can only bet the air temperature will be a good 5-10C warmer and if the fish are in a comfort level in the water of around 20C, you can only imagine what the fish's health will be like after a long battle and half a dozen photos out of the water.

Anglers should be aware of the amount of time that has elapsed between the moment the fish is lifted out of the water to when it's released.

Any longer than three minutes without the support of water and the fish's chance of a successful, healthy release is drastically reduced.

Warm water trolling

Trolling for large species like the mighty Murray cod has become somewhat of a prerequisite for many anglers over the last decade in our local impoundments.

Trolling can be seen as an easy, relaxed, less technical approach as opposed to other hands-on strategies.

Summertime can bring many tribulations to anglers who chance their hand during the warmer months.

Species such as Murray cod will tend to shut down during the peak summer months and while this doesn't rule out targeting these green fish, it means taking a different approach.

Big deep diving lures

that will get you down around 20-30ft are the safest bet.

Many anglers will target deeper waters but only to troll lures that can only achieve depths of around 15ft which defeats the purpose of deepwater trolling.

Now that both Keepit and Split Rock dams boast some quality water levels, these trolling guidelines can easily be met.

Early morning trolling

can be very prosperous in the shallows as well as late afternoon, but when the sun is high in our southern sky, charging the depths is the way to go.

New BCF Tamworth

Just in time for the new year, Tamworth's brand spanking Boating-Camping-Fishing store is steaming ahead.

Manager Laura, and Jim and all the staff have been in overdrive mode ensuring anglers, boaters and all great outdoors enthusiasts are well prepared.

The store is equipped with a plethora of gear options for tackling our

North West natives.

Rods, reels, lures, line, tents, boat gear and pretty much everything you will need to head away for that much needed weekend fishing getaway is available!

BCF Tamworth is located just off Goonoo Goonoo Rd in the Longyard Homemakers Centre.

For any further information and updates, we can be contacted via our website at www.wellsbros.net



This awesome bag of Glenbawn bass was taken on Bassman TW Spinnerbaits and soft plastics on a recent trip. Glenbawn has been a welcome retreat from the flooded waterways.



The author and Mick Walker recently enjoyed a great afternoon of solid Chaffey gold, landing some great yellowbelly.



A 47cm Chaffey yella taken trolling the notorious Wilson Slick Back lure.