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# OBAN AND LORN ANGLING CLUB

**Charity No.**

**SCO47428**

Dear Member

Some good and bad news this time. Nothing earth-shattering but I thought that it was time to share the latest happenings, including some catch reports. We had a lot of rain at the beginning of May but this has lessened of late and we are at last getting some warmer weather; I hope to receive some news of even more fish being caught soon.

Loch Nell

Further to my mention of Loch Nell in Newsletter Number 5, I

have been discussing access to the boat on Loch Nell with the estate manager. He is prepared to allow us to access the boat by car, but has asked for certain conditions to be satisfied for the Club members to do this. These are not unreasonable, given the problems that the inhabitants of Torinturk have had with theft and trespass in the past and also an incident with a vehicle being driven by a then-member of the Club. Suffice to say that we are very much in the "Last Chance Saloon" here and any transgression will see the Club lose the privilege of driving to the boat. The main conditions are:

- 1) We have to give three days' notice, including its registration and the date of the visit, for any car going down the road to the boat.
- 2) We have to present the 2021 Membership Card to anyone who asks for it.
- 3) We have to show the "OLAC Member 2021" sticker in the car windscreen.
- 4) We have to drive with extreme care and at low speed - 5mph.
- 5) We have to take one car only.
- 6) We have to park by the boat, off the track.
- 7) We have to use the boat only - no bank fishing.

Please contact Allan to book the boat well in advance of your wishing to use it and follow the above restrictions. Loch Nell is one of the two lochs we have that contain sea trout and salmon (Loch Seil being the other, but salmon in Seil would be very unusual). I think that the conditions applied are worth following in order to have access to the loch.

Allan has kindly contributed to this newsletter on the subject of boat bookings in general. Here is his report:

### **Boat Bookings - by Allan Coutts, Boat Booking Recorder**

**The new boat booking system set up this year by Geoff Blunsum is working well with members enjoying the ability to check boat availability online and I would like to thank all members who have used the form. There have been about 50 bookings made so far this year with Loch Avich and Loch Seil proving very popular. Sometimes the best plans are made on the spur of the moment and a few members have managed to book boats 'on the day', I am happy to take these bookings but bear in mind that there is a risk that I may not receive the email until later as I don't always get a mobile signal so it's always best to plan ahead if possible. Phone calls or texts from members**

regarding bookings are also welcome either on the previously advertised number or to my direct number, see below.

Thanks also to those members who took the time to submit catch returns or report back after their days fishing on the condition of boats, locks, oars etc. Catch returns are important as we have a duty to supply numbers of fish caught to our landlords and these reports also assist the committee in deciding whether it's worth renewing the lease for a particular loch.

The boat availability calendar and booking form is available on the club website <http://www.obanandlorn-anglingclub.co.uk/boat-booking>

**Tight Lines!**

**Allan Coutts, Boat Bookings.**

**Tel: [07802917882](tel:07802917882).**

Dubh Loch Mor/Sandpit Gate

We have had problems with locks at the Sandpit Gate, giving access to Dubh Loch Mor, Barcaldine. First a member reported that the code did not work, even though others had

successfully opened it before. On inspection the lock appeared to have been battered about and the code I had set was indeed not opening it. I had to use bolt cutters to remove it and replaced it with another combination lock.

Last week, a member reported that the lock and chain were not in place. I went up and found that the forestry lock had been taken off the chain and locked around the gate latch. This did nothing to secure the gate - it opens as normal because the latch still operates.



The chain and our combination lock have disappeared.

I went up to Dhub Loch Mor to see that all was well up there and found nothing amiss. On my way back to the Sandpit Gate I used yet another of our spare locks to secure the second gate which has a chain and forest lock on it, leaving the Sandpit Gate unlocked. The code for access is the same as before.



The inner gate beyond the Sandpit Gate - the only option now that the Sandpit Gate chain has been removed.

For now, we shall notify F&LS of the problems, which appear to be caused by someone with a Forestry Key, and see if we can resolve this. I suspect that someone with a key does not like OLAC putting a combination lock on the gate. Quite what

their objection is remains unclear as they have a key that will give them access. It will not be economic for us to put new locks on the Sandpit Gate at the rate of one a month. Their retail price is £50. I picked up a couple of spares on Ebay for £25 each but even at that price we cannot continue to see them damaged or stolen to this extent.

## Loch Nant

The work party I announced for May 9th in the last newsletter was a success, in that we had enough people to turn and drag the Nant boat to the water and launch it. Then we went to the inlet by the tower and used the boat, motored around by Bruce, to lay a mooring block. We secured a running mooring to this and secured the shore end to a chain embedded in a gabion we filled with rock. All quite straightforward, except that I forgot that I had put the running mooring together in two parts and forgot the loop of chain for the shore end to take the padlock. We left the mooring secured with rope and I went back the next day with the chain and finished it off. I left the boat floating serenely in about four feet of water beside its buoy.

I was therefore saddened to receive this photo ten days later:



The loch level is down by about eight feet and the boat inaccessible on a sea of mud.

At least the boat missed the block as it settled. Rory was out there the next day and had to settle for Loch an Leoid instead of fishing Loch Nant. He sent a couple of photos showing that the Loch an Leoid boat was down to the gunwales before he bailed it, so the Nant basin has had a fair bit of rain. The problem with a hydro loch is that rain means money and then the water is drained away. A word of warning here - do NOT try to traverse the muddy shores of Loch Nant if you go up. There are good fish to be had there but you should

recognised the danger presented by soft mud and stay clear. There are lots of rocky areas that can be fished safely, so choose your spots carefully and if in doubt, stay out!

### Membership and finances

On a more positive note, Iain Moody has now recorded over 70 subscribing members so far. This is very good news and will maintain our finances in good order. We look to be covering our costs this year, even though we have taken on Dubh Loch Mor as an additional lease. We have to make some repairs to the boats and hut, so this will entail some further expenditure but overall our funds are sufficient to secure the Club's activities for the future.

### Boats

Despite my best efforts to find the time, I have not made much progress with boat repairs this month. I did purchase some pourable foam from our Glasgow supplier Allscot and this was kindly brought up to Oban by Bruce Smith. This material has allowed me to make a start on the buoyancy for the Loch Dhu Mhor, Kilmelford boat, which has been in the hut for longer than I would have wished. I was distracted by the boat "Anna" on Loch Avich which needed a new aft thwart - it broke while in use. After recovering it the thwart proved to be completely rotten; Allan kindly made up and

fitted a replacement. We used polystyrene for the buoyancy but if the pourable foam proves to be more water resistant and durable we shall change to that material in due course.

Other than that I have not had time to get out to the Sior Loch boat and work on its keel band, nor have I progressed with the boat for Dubh Loch Mor, Barcaldine. The latter I have moved with some difficulty to the compound beside the Club Hut. It needs new bottom boards and a patch of fibreglass to be usable but to be safe will also need buoyancy fitting under the thwarts. I have high hopes for the pourable foam in 25L plastic plant troughs as buoyancy - they are cheap and a perfect size but I can only spare limited time for boat repairs just now.

#### And Now for Something Completely Different

I was contacted by a company who are filming a channel 5 programme soon. They are looking for local "colour" in the form of filmable fishermen. If you have a hankering for fame and glory on the small screen, this could be your opportunity. Or perhaps not. Either way, I agreed to include their flyer in a newsletter so here it is:

# **FISHING**

## **COAST TO COAST**

An exciting brand new TV Series is being made for Channel 5 to be filmed this Spring/Summer!

As an Island Nation, our love for the sea is written in our DNA and our well known and loved presenter will explore the rich landscapes and fish for majestic marine life.

We're looking for local people who can help bring alive your fishing heritage and meet the next generation of fishermen and women. We want to get hands on in your fishing community!

**DO YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING STORY?**

**DO YOU KNOW A FANTASTIC LOCAL CHARACTER?**

**IS THERE AN EXCITING PROJECT YOU'RE INVOLVED WITH?**

**OR MAYBE FISH FOR SOMETHING UNUSUAL?!**

If so, please do get in touch by emailing [Coast@firecrackerfilms.com](mailto:Coast@firecrackerfilms.com) - we are casting now and reely want to hear from you!



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## Survey MPAs

On a similar but more serious note, I was also contacted by Claudia Watson, a research student. This young lady would like to interview anglers who fish in the Marine Protected Areas off Oban and Loch Sunart. Now this is not a close match to Oban and Lorn Angling Club, but because there is some sea-angling activity among our members I agreed to

include her flyer with this newsletter. There are few if any sea-angling clubs in Argyll so if we can help, I think we should. The flyer outlining the project is the .docx file attached.

### Catch Reports

And finally some fish have been caught! Allan had a good day on Avich and reported a catch of eight fish in four hours from the boat. Here is a picture of three of his fish:



These are typical of the fish you will find in Avich but there are bigger ones. You may remember the picture I put in a newsletter a year or so ago of a four pounder. They rise freely and as you can see from the photograph are typical Argyll loch fish with shades of gold and tan to match the peaty water.

Iain proved that even at the level we see now, Loch Nant can

provide quality fish, landing one just shy of 1lb from the bank. That is the largest fish I have heard of so far this year. Not bad for a wild trout.

Douglas Bayford and his partner fished Loch Seil and Loch Oude, having some success on Seil but less action on Oude.

Charlie Limond and Peter MacKay had a very productive session on the Sior Lochs with Charlie taking 29 fish to Peter's 7. Peter claims that this was because he took his salmon line, reel and flies instead of his trout tackle, borrowing flies and a cast from Charlie and making do with the rest. I suppose this is plausible...

I hope that the warm weather brings the fish up and that more members get out and find some fish. The hawthorn is now fully out and that usually means more surface activity on the lochs. I always look at the "candle" flowers on the horse chestnut by the Club Hut and when they are out it is well time to go fishing. They are in full bloom now.

Good luck and stay safe.

Kind regards

Jonathan Anglesea  
President

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