

DA Fishing Column

18th December 2006

The cod season has been open for a couple of weeks now and the fishing has been mixed with some good fish being caught, but as usual with the warmer weather, a lot of small fish are being captured.

I fished the Edward river at Deniliquin on cod opening weekend and whilst we caught plenty of small fish to keep the children amused, we only caught one cod over 50cm and the usually abundant golden perch were strangely absent. Other groups fishing the same water were also having mixed success with bait fisherman doing quite well on small cod, but the lure anglers were not producing many fish at all.

I arrived back home from Deniliquin on Sunday afternoon and spoke to fisherman that fished the Murrumbidgee locally and they also found small fish on bait and hardly a bite on lures. It seems as though the bigger fish knew to avoid the flurry of activity over the cod opening weekend.

This got me thinking that if the bigger fish hadn't eaten much for a couple of days because of the boats zipping up and down the river, that they may make up for it when things quietened down. Needless to say that the next afternoon after work, Dave Longmore and I were fishing a few of my favourite haunts above Wagga. Things started well with a line-burning bite on the first corner and a 4kg trout cod on the next bend. The fish were very aggressive and between us we had a dozen bites. I also got beaten by a fish that was too strong and made it back to its snag taking one of my lures with him.

I have noticed over the years that the busy weekends, where there is a lot of boat activity and plenty of lines in the water, are unusually quiet. As such, I tend to schedule my hard-core fishing trips away from Easter, Christmas holidays and cod opening weekend.

Fish become lure shy very quickly and it pays to try and fish away from the crowds wherever you can. Often this is unavoidable and when your only option is to fish in high traffic, you need to trigger the cod's other attack mechanism and basically keep annoying the fish until it runs out of patience and bites your lure. Thirty or forty casts at one snag isn't excessive when trying to annoy a fish into biting. Likewise ten passes along a good trolling bank can spark that one fish into making a mistake.

With school holidays upon us, there will be plenty of boats about and hopefully plenty of fish to keep the kids (big and small) amused.

Happy fishing

Jamin Forbes