

DA Fishing Column

3rd January 2007

Over the Christmas break I spent some time up at Talbingo and by the number of boats I saw churning about, the fish must have been cowering with fear. The warm weather and light winds made perfect conditions for water skiing and the highland lakes were brimming with V8 power.

Despite the busy conditions, I spoke to a few fishermen on Talbingo Dam and they all managed to get a trout or two. Some of the fish were good size and were taken on a mixture of flatline and downrigger trolling. The people that found a quiet bay seemed to fare better than those who fished closer to the wall/spillway area.

As anyone who knows me will attest, I am a big fan of catching natives (cod, golden perch) on lures and spend much of my spare time harassing the green fish that hide amongst the snags and clay ledges of the Murrumbidgee. In the past few years I have noticed things that can salvage a slow day and turn it around in your favour.

When bites are hard to come by make sure that your lure does not have any weed on it. There is plenty of weed/slime in the river at present and the slightest bit on your lure will stop fish from attacking. Also make sure that your hooks are super sharp. If you only get one or two bites for the session, you want them to stick.

If things are really slow, I will always tie on one of my battered old lures, which is normally a 90mm AC Invader or medium Hammerhead in my favourite colour (I would tell what colours but I can't give away all my secrets!) and fish locations that consistently produce fish. By keeping with a system that works at least you have optimised one part of your fishing technique and hopefully with patience, eventually a fish will strike.

I believe that if I use lures that haven't proven themselves (to me at least), that confidence reduces and you spend more time changing lures than actually fishing. You don't catch fish with your line out of the water.

The river continues to be the standout fishing location with bardi-grubs and cheese producing plenty of small to just-legal cod, whilst the odd big cod, such as the metre plus 19kg monster landed (and released) by one of Anthony Curtis (maker of AC Lures) crew in the river last week make the long hours of lure fishing worthwhile. This fish ate a 90mm Invader and apparently took some landing on light spinning tackle.