

## From the Fisher's Mouth

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7<sup>th</sup> December 2009

Fishing is a game of luck. We think we understand how such instinctive creatures think and act under differing circumstances, but we are effectively using educated guesswork to try and fool one. Luck plays a part in getting a fish to bite and at times when your luck is strong, you will catch fish almost at will when those around you are struggling to get a bite.

What we can do to improve our chances is to optimise the presentation of our lure or bait to the fish in a manner they find attractive. Whether they choose to bite it is entirely up to the fish. With our native fish spending most of their lives living within a metre of



a snag or other structure, it makes sense to present your lure or bait within that metre so that a cod or golden waiting in ambush has little distance to swim to eat your offering.

A prime example of where lure presentation paid off was on the afternoon of the last full moon, where I was fishing Blowering Dam with Riverina Sportfishing's own Dave & Mitch Carter. Whilst casting small bibless minnows for golden perch, Dave's luck was shining landing a procession of golden perch, whilst Mitch and I were fishless.

Dave's lure landed beside a big rock, and was promptly eaten by a fish. The fish briefly snagged the line, before it moved slowly away, oblivious to the fact that it was hooked. With plenty of weight on the rod, it was clearly a big fish, but we didn't expect the gargantuan cod that eyeballed us on the surface some ten metres from the boat.

On the light line we were using, the chances of landing this fish were slim, but we positioned the boat to bring the fish away from the rocks and snags along the shore and into the depths of Blowering Dam. Seven times the fish was adjacent to the boat and each time managed to dive back to the bottom over ten metres below. After an hour or so, the fish tired a little and we led it to the net. At 149cm and an estimated 50kg+, it took all three of us to lift it into the boat for the photos.

Cod of this size generally eat large food items and could easily swallow a 2-3kg fish, a turtle, a duck or anything smaller than its bucket sized mouth. The fact that it ate a tiny 60mm lure is testament that big fish don't always wait for a substantial meal to swim by. One analogy is that elephants also eat peanuts.

Blowering is producing good numbers of fish over a metre in length, with most of these cod coming at night. Burrinjuck also has plenty of big fish with Al Anderson getting 80cm and 100cm cod last weekend. As with any fishing, they won't always bite, but with patience, persistence and a hint of luck, you can land the fish of a lifetime.

Dave is a skilled angler and guide, but even so he was fortunate to hook his big fish, even luckier to land it on the tackle being used, and it will be waiting patiently under that same rock for the next lucky angler.

Jamin Forbes