

Teifi Boating Club
Annual Fishing Competition Report
2021



Cory Westermarck with an early Bass

Following the disruption of 2020, it was with some relief that the Power Section members were able to get out on the water from March. With a full season in front of us, people were keen to make up for the fishing time lost last season and the catch reports soon began to appear on the Power Section Facebook page.

It was encouraging to see a few new faces submit their pictures and hopefully the 'usual suspects' will be given a good run for their money in the coming season.

We saw a couple of new species entered into the 'Most Species' category which is always a popular challenge. The fact that we are seeing a diversity of species demonstrates that members are trying different approaches when targeting the many species of fish available to us.

The 'Shark & Tope' trophy was claimed this year with a fish caught towards the end of the season. In recent years, we have seen quite a few Tope landed and I'm sure it won't be too long before we are awarding the trophy for the capture of a shark.

It was satisfying to see a good number of Bass reported throughout the year and a decent fish took the award for the biggest.

The 'Heaviest Fish' award went unclaimed again this year, mainly because people forget to weigh their fish or think it's too small to be worth submitting. Last season was the first time we amended the rule to the largest specimen. This was an effort to try and make the competition as accessible for as many members as possible. Simply put, the award was to be decided on the weight percentage of the Welsh boat angling record. As an example, a Bull Huss which went into double figures would not necessarily beat a decent Gurnard of a pound or two. This system does not disadvantage those who do not like to push out into Cardigan Bay after the larger fish, with plenty of interesting targets within half a mile or so of the shore.

Once again we managed to get the Mackerel competition done. It's the only fishing event that takes place on a specific date so the weather is

always a factor. This is one of the most popular competitions at the club and always good for encouraging novices and youngsters to pick up a rod and have a bash.

As always at this time of year, I like to emphasise that TBC is a boating club and not a fishing club. There are those like myself who are serious competitive anglers all year round and others who just like to drop a line over the side and catch a few Mackerel during the holidays. (Which I also enjoy!) The most important aspect of these competitions is that they are designed to encourage people to try something different and get involved. It is up to the more knowledgeable of us to pass on advice regarding techniques and tackle that will hopefully bring more members into angling as a means of providing an extra dimension to their boating experience which will hopefully lead to new names on the trophies.

Recently, we have been making use of social media to publish details of our trips and while I know Facebook is not everybody's cup of tea, it has become a bit of a necessary evil when it comes to organising and collating reports. To those who may not know, the Power Section have their own group page, '**TBC Power Section**' so try and get on board as the contributions are interesting and informative. From my point of view, it makes life easy to keep records of what has been caught and the photos are always good to see.

Following the Mackerel Competition this year we were able to squeeze in a hastily arranged presentation of the 2019 trophies. Our usual presentation BBQ in the Spring of 2020 had fallen by the wayside due to Covid restrictions and the situation was still uncertain enough to prevent an event this Spring. Hopefully, we will once again be in a position to hold a presentation with a BBQ during the coming spring and the trophies for 2020 & 2021 can eventually be awarded.

Pete Dutfield

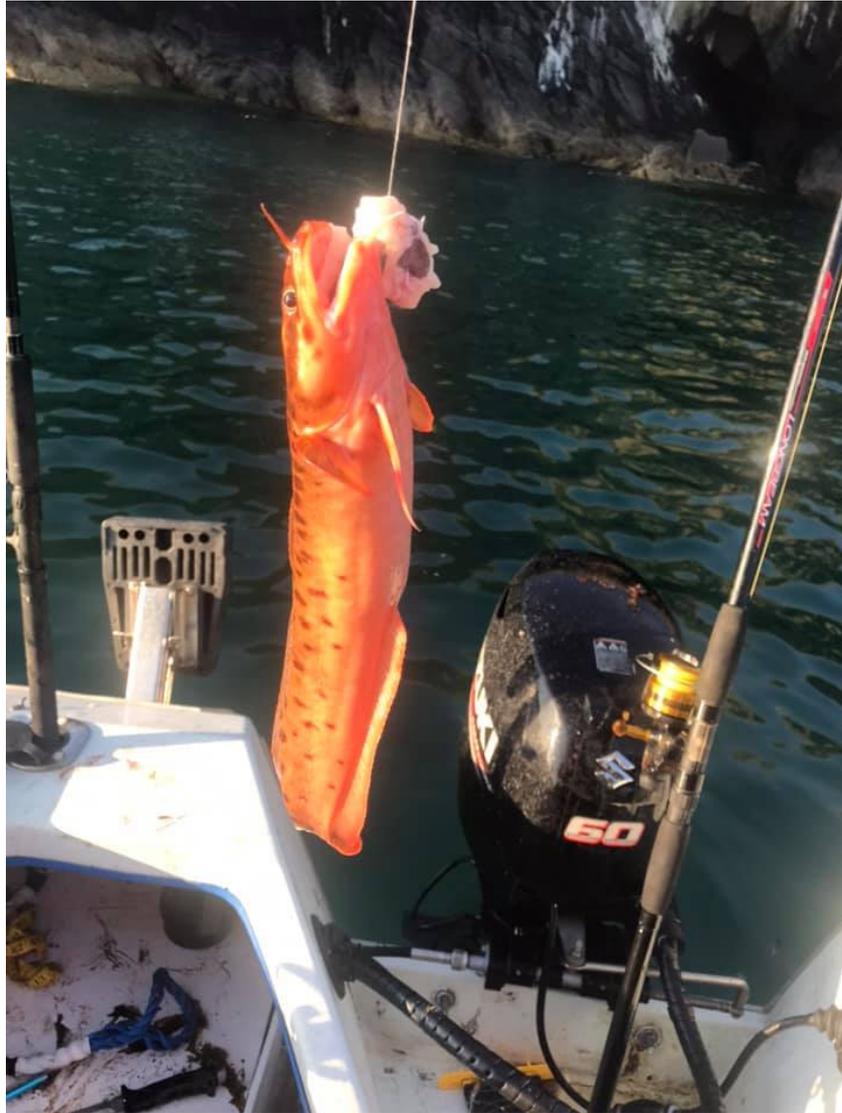
Most Species Competition

Always popular, the quest for the most species caught in a season encourages anglers to vary their methods and locations in order to target a greater variety of fish. The early reports included no great surprises with Pollack, Whiting and the odd Dogfish soon featuring in the catches.

There were some good Bass fishing reports from Neil and Cory Westermarck and I was able to start chipping away at the Wrasse and other bits and pieces lurking around the Island.

At the beginning of August Derek Collins ventured out for a night fishing session which produced two species not recorded in recent years. Derek fished the rough ground inshore and landed three Conger Eels as well as a nice Three Bearded Rockling. Unfortunately, the largest fish of the night, a big Conger, was lost at the side of the boat so no doubt it remains lurking in the rocks around the island. This is a good example of how varying conditions can produce different results over the same ground.

The club species count since I started organising the competitions a few years ago has now reached 28.



A Three Bearded Rockling caught by Derek Collins

Ultimately, Derek's regular trips paid off this year and Team Collins managed a decent species count over the season. Derek led the way with an impressive eleven species which included three new species for the fish encountered from TBC in recent years. The Three Bearded Rockling, Conger Eel and a Long Spined Sea Scorpion. Derek also managed to land Dogfish, Red Gurnard, Grey Gurnard, Poor Cod, Pouting, Mackerel, Herring and Pollack.



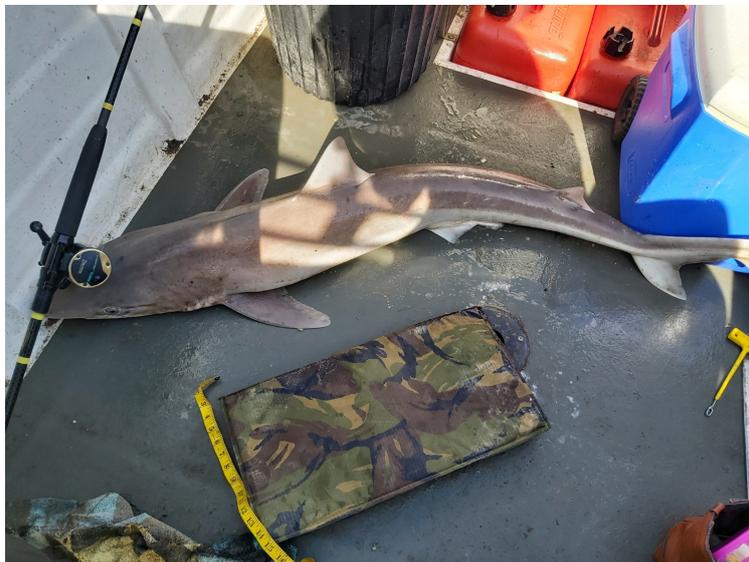
Species Trophy Winner **Derek Collins**



Shark & Tope Competition

We always hope to see a few Tope reported but it took until September for a claim to be submitted. I managed to pick up a 29lb fish which was a good size for a male that time of year. With the larger fish generally showing around May and June, we would hope that a better fish would take the honours. I know that a few Tope were caught in the bay earlier in the year but there were no details recorded for competition entry.

Tope fishing at the club has developed over the last few years and it is unusual to not see a few entries by the middle of summer. A few of us have the tackle to try for sharks and I'm sure we will see a shark take the trophy within a few years. Derek Collins reported a 6ft Thresher Shark jumping out of the water just off Cardigan Island this summer so they are out there.



29lb Tope caught by Pete Dutfield



Shark & Tope Trophy winner Pete Dutfield



Heaviest Bass Competition

A fairly recent introduction, the Bass trophy is awarded for the largest Bass caught during the season.

A few years ago we had to deal with legislation being introduced to protect Bass stocks and we had to be seen to be complying with any restrictions. It was decided to record the fish by measurement rather than weight. This is a quicker and easier method of recording the fish size that allows fish to be returned quickly to the water after capture. The regulations are fairly fluid and are updated reasonably often. This year an angler was allowed to keep two fish so long as they were in size (42cm limit). Everything else had to go back. Undersize Bass are accepted in this category but they must be returned after a quick photograph and measure.

Neil and Cory Westermark found some decent fish early on and it was Neil who held the first place for the 'heaviest' Bass when the competition closed. A very nice fish of 57cm took the award.



Bass Trophy winner Neil Westermark



Mackerel competition (*Report copied from my post on Facebook following the competition.*)

Our second attempt at running the Mackerel Competition was successful, as clear skies and light winds greeted those who took to the sea with their rods and reels.

Some 11 crews departed the club in search of the heaviest mackerel, the capture of which would see their name engraved on the coveted 'Mackerel Competition' shield.

First boat back at the club was 'Wyesmove' skippered by Dave Hall. Dave presented a decent fish that tipped the scale at 266 grams, setting the benchmark for the day. Not far behind was Derek Collins. A previous winner of the event, Derek was keen to put in his challenge. Having earlier been distracted by a leaping Thresher Shark, (look it up if you don't know what they are) the Jamerio crew still managed to find a dozen or so mackerel to bring ashore. The best of these fish weighed 314 grams, pushing the bar ever higher as boats started to queue at the base of the slip. One of the first up the slip was Nick Hopkins, another previous winner but a smile and a 'thumbs down' from Nick as he pulled his boat into the yard past the weigh in point told me that his challenge for the trophy had been put back another year.

Next to the scale was Nigel Griffiths who presented a sizable fish that went to 383 grams, a potential winner, surely?

Nick Smith also managed to put 'Emmfyn' over the fish and ended the day with around twenty mackerel. Unfortunately, none of them were of a size to beat Nigel's effort, the best going to 322 grams.

The traditional bank holiday slip carnage was thinning out and Jason Crudge was able to recover 'C-Bass' to the yard before bringing a sizable mackerel to be weighed. It was going to be close! That is probably an understatement. Jason's fish weighed in at 384 grams. 1 whole gram heavier than the previous best! For those wondering how I weigh the fish to be confident of a result, I always carry a cloth and every fish is wiped

down before being placed on the scale several times in different positions. I will take the heaviest weight recorded a number of times as the weight recorded for entry.

On a day that promised more than it delivered, five crews were able to bring fish to the scales out of at least eleven boats that fished. That's a pretty good show considering that this was our second attempt at holding the competition.

Congratulations go to Jason Crudge whose name will be immortalised forever on the Mackerel Shield.



Mackerel Trophy winner Jason Crudge



There was no claim for the Heaviest Fish award this year. I will publish the competition rules and details of fishing activities for 2022 in the new year.