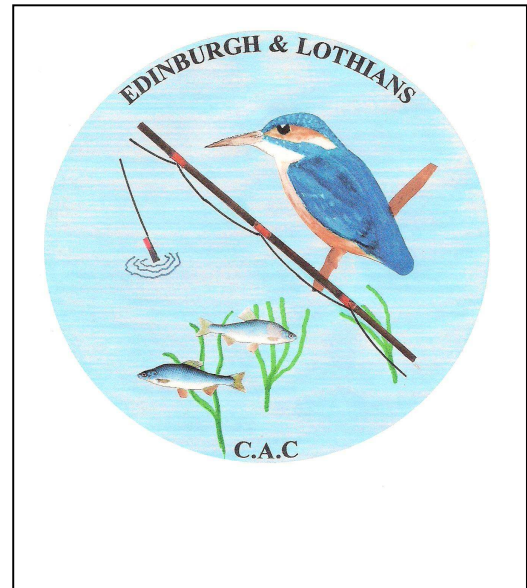


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**Wandering Thoughts**

**B**efore I write anything else I must apologise to all members for not producing a newsletter last month. This month is different. Being the December issue it is the Christmas newsletter. Have you thought about your present(s)? More importantly have you discussed with your wife/partner just what you would like? I can only hope that your wishes are fulfilled.

Winter has arrived with a vengeance. Orchil has had some snow but we have to remember that it is further north and higher than most of us.

Winter fishing means two things to me – Grayling and bread punch. Geoff will possibly get some information on the grayling for any who would like it. Kinkel Bridge is a great place to go. Bread punch, that is up to you.

I will end by wishing you all

**A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS  
NEW YEAR.**

## **Comments**

**A**s I indicated at the AGM I will not be attending any more winter league matches, age and infirmity have finally caught up!

Foul language appears to be on the increase again as I noticed at the last match, Winter League 1, it is really quite unnecessary especially when there are young people and females amongst us. I know that many of the young and the females can use as much if not more foul language than us mere men but at least we could try to be Gentlemen.

Meetings, or should I say, what meetings? Because of the poor attendance no meetings have been held recently. This could be an ongoing trend or just a recent aberration. I suggested in one of the newsletters that we should stop having meetings and instead the committee should meet once a month. Even this isn't happening! All decisions seem to fall on one member of the committee. Do you really think that this is fair, because I don't, especially as some members complain about the choice of venue and other decisions which are made in your name.

Perhaps next year will see a change in attitudes.

I think that I have nagged you enough and will end at this point. Have a good festive season.

*Tight Lines*

**Phil Maude**

## Bread Punch

Winter is here, the cold and frost have arrived and most waters are now gin clear. This is the time to get out your bread punches and your bags of Tesco's white plastic bread, medium slice of course.

Seriously when waters are clear punch is a supreme bait. It has two factors which make it a very good bait. First is cost and second is that bread can and will be taken by all species, except pike.

Tackle is simple, punch is best fished with a pole or whip. A waggler can be used but the bread has to be very fresh. A set of punches or a couple of multi punches will obviously be needed.

How to do it? Let me try to explain.

Take a slice of the bread and remove the crust. Lightly steam the slice and then roll it out until it is about 1/8<sup>th</sup> of an inch thick. This is your hook bait.

Take a few more slices of the bread, remove the crusts and put through a liquidiser. I am sure that the kitchen god will allow the use of this vital tool if you are only making bread crumbs. Why remove the crusts? If the crusts stay on the bread they will only liquidise down into quite large pieces. Because fish do not feed well in winter these pieces will quickly feed them off and the days sport will be over.

Cut the compressed slice into four pieces and pack into bags placed in a bait box. If the bread dries out in the wind or sun it is useless as bait and only of use for feeding the ducks.

The liquidised bread should be placed, again in a plastic bag to retain both its dampness and freshness.

Once at the water set up your tackle in the usual way but try to have the bait at dead depth or slightly of the bottom. Choose the size of punch that you think will be attractive to the fish and on a hard surface punch a hole in one of your quarter slices of bread. The size of the punch is I am afraid trial and error, if one doesn't work try a different size.

Look at the side of your punch and you will see a narrow slot cut vertically. Place the point of your hook in the slot push through the bread and the hook is baited.

Squeeze some liquidised crumb together until you have a piece about the size of a walnut. This can be thrown or cupped in around the float.

An important point to remember is that the liquidised bread floats for a minute or so before it drops down through the water. In a wind put the bread in the water so that it will sink around the hook bait.

Bites are fast and very positive. The hook size used depends on the size of the punch but a good average would be a 20.

I have used punch at Magiscroft with good results from the smaller silver fish although on a session at Deans I was lucky enough to connect with a common of just over 10lb. The moral being, “think about your line strength but fish as fine as possible”.

Because punch “flutters” as it sinks through the water it should be fished on a hook length of no less than 14 inches with no weight on the hook length. Float shotting should be “shirt button” style.

Fish often take the bait before the float has settled so watch carefully, if the float doesn't settle then one of three things has happened. You are hard on the bottom, a shot has fallen off or you are into a fish, strike with a gentle upward move of the rod or pole tip. If there isn't a fish check the tackle and bait and get it back into the water.

Other than liquidised bread it is also possible to buy “punch crumb” which is just a very fine white bread crumb. I suppose it could be possible to buy white crumb and liquidise again or put it through a coffee grinder but it is just as cheap to buy the real thing. Punch crumb needs to be lightly misted so that it holds together but will instantly break up when it hits the water. It forms a cloud of particles around the hook bait.

Punch need not be a winter only method. It works well all the year round but most anglers are so preoccupied with paste, pellet, maggot and choppie that they are reluctant to give it a try. They could be missing out!