

LOCH ACHONACHIE ANGLING CLUB

NEWSLETTER 35: JANUARY 2021

Greetings to all members and friends, and despite the continued grim settings of the pandemic may I wish you **all the best for 2021** and many more “Tight Lines” than we had last season. I hope this finds you all safe and well. As we begin to get ready for the season ahead it seems likely many of the restrictions we had to follow in 2020 will apply again in 2021. The first part of club life to fall to the pandemic was of course the main meeting of each year:-

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021 CANCELLED

Club Secretary Okain McLennan is preparing the accounts for us and once scrutinised by the committee we will circulate them by email to all members. **However meantime I have to formally notify you that we will not hold an AGM in 2021 but instead "roll over" the current committee and Office Bearers until February 2022.** Charges and rules will remain unchanged wherever possible and this decision by the committee is in line with the constitution of the club. Happier days are ahead hopefully when more members will be able to participate in the running of the club as well as getting involved in club and inter-club competitions. In the good news zone - during the first travel restriction period of 2020, when we had stopped visitor ticket sales but members were able to fish, we recruited many new local members. Accordingly, membership income stayed strong. Meantime Okain has prepared this interim financial report:-

FINANCIAL REPORT 2020

It has been a tough year for the Club. Like many other angling clubs in Scotland (unlike in England) there has been no financial help available yet from the Scottish Government to compensate for the loss in revenue due to COVID-19. Despite this, during the few months we were able to fish, the Club did well to take in over **£5800** in ticket sales – juts over 50% of normal sales income. Club membership has remained stable and we are grateful to those members who continued to stay with the Club during these difficult times.

In addition, the Club managed to deliver on the pontoon moorings on Loch Meig and pay for all the associated costs. There is still some remedial work to be done to correct and balance out the weight of the bridge section which depresses and tilts the first pontoon, but we aim – lockdown permitting – to correct this before the start of the season. We are very grateful to the **SSE Community Windfarm Fund** for the grant enabling this project and the **Highland Council Leader Fund** grant, with the Club contributing £2000 the balance of the costs, along with many many hours of assistance.

The Club has an outstanding invoice for Fishery Board Rates bill of £2062.50 but when this is paid we will have a balance of £12837 to take forward for this season. This, quite frankly is much better than we could have hoped for given the recent events.



Looking forward to being out here again in 2021



DINGWALL SPORTS & MODEL SHOP

It has been a hard year for club member Andy Downie and wife Debbie having had to close along with “non-essential” businesses for much of 2020 and still closed in 2021. They are still operating and can take orders online and over the phone for posting out to you.

As well as having an excellent range of fishing gear and accessories you’ll get great, friendly service and of course as LAAC members – you’ll enjoy a 10% discount when you shop with them. Please give them your support as they strive to keep a cheery face in difficult times.

www.sportsandmodelshop.co.uk

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Fishing

A wide selection of rods,
reels and accessories.

CATCH RETURNS 2020

Despite all the restrictions that COVID-19 placed on us all this year, when restrictions were eased for a time, a few determined members managed to get out and fish our waters. This undoubtedly stopped a few of us from going totally stir crazy! A total of 24 salmon were caught, 8 kept and 16 returned, with the majority of 15 coming off the River Blackwater- mainly in September. The biggest recorded fish of 8 lbs was caught on the Upper Conon in August and duly returned. Compared to an overall total of 29 salmon caught in 2019, this was a very good result given the shortened season

Trout numbers were equally buoyant with a total of 771 fish caught, 289 kept and 482 returned. Against a total of 943 fish caught in 2019, this was an exceptionally good result and a tribute to our stocking policy ably organised by John Cartlidge. The biggest trout recorded weighed in at 3½ lbs. John has decided to take a break from being our stocking co-ordinator and we thank him for his careful and assiduous work in managing our stocking for many years.

We are grateful to all those members who submitted a return this year and it will be even more important that **all** members do so in 2021. The Scottish Government are demanding ever more details about fish catches from all Clubs and angling bodies. Failure to provide accurate returns can lead to substantial financial penalties for the Club – something we must avoid.



C'MON THE STAGGIES

We often find ourselves fishing in Strathconon with the musical background of stags roaring. This photo was taken by club member Stephen Phillips, who has now moved from London to make his new home in Ross-shire. Welcome Steve!

RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP 2021

We will shortly be sending out you pre-printed membership application form. Please check all the details we hold for you, adjust if necessary, and return as soon as possible. Your permit card should carry the same membership number as you have had for your membership in 2019 and 2020. Okain will be posting the cards out by return to let you get out fishing as soon as possible.

ANGLING SCOTLAND COVID ADVICE FOR ANGLERS

The very detailed advice that Angling Scotland has agreed with Scottish Government is available and updated online at the link below as well as in the email that brings this newsletter to you.

<https://www.anglingScotland.org.uk/covid-19-advice-when-we-get-back-to-fishing/>



100 CLUB 2021

John Cartlidge has asked me to let you know he is standing down from running the **100 Club** and I have thanked him for his great work for our club in this respect too. John & Sue have set up the arrangements for 2021 and it will run until August 2021 by which time we will need a new 100 Club organiser. The club has benefited hugely from the work of John, ably assisted by Sue, and I thank them for their commitment.

The 100 Club winners for the last four months of 2020 were as follows:-

September

1st Mr Jim King
2nd Mr Okain MacLennan
3rd Mr Angus Weir

November

1st Mr John Harris
2nd Mr Nick Bryant
3rd Mr Steve Jones.

October

1st Mrs Christine Mackintosh
2nd Mr Henry Cameron
3rd Mr Richard Davis

December

1st Mr Sandy Innes
2nd Mrs S Graham
3rd Mr Alex G Mark

If you've forgotten to **renew your 100 Club entry for 2021** please get in touch immediately for renewal. The first prize each month is £30 with two other prizes of £10 each. Each number costs £12 for the year (£1 per month) with the proceeds supporting the Club's programme of fishing for junior members. We can process your entry by BACs if that suits you.

The 100 Club provides essential funding for the club's activities and is currently dedicated to promoting youth angling opportunities in 2021. It can make a fine birthday or special occasion gift for someone and we can send those out for you too.

EXCHANGE TICKETS 2021

Our normally popular exchange scheme suffered badly from travel restrictions last season but I am currently renewing our arrangements with the participating clubs and we all hope to get the benefit of these opportunities to try out other clubs' waters later in 2021.

ACHIM REISINGER : RIP



Sad news came from Germany this week as club member from Hofheim, Achim Reisinger passes away. Condolences to his wife Renate and family. He has been a member of the club from the 90's, and a very keen angler and photographer. Achim is pictured here with the Sport & Model Shop Trophy for biggest fish in the 2016 Achonachie Members' competition. He first experienced fishing in Ross-shire with the help of Kenny Ross and quickly Achim & Renate became firm friends with Kenny & Jeanette, who have kindly agreed to provide some memories of happy times with him on Loch Garve & Blackwater etc for the next newsletter.

WINTER LEAGUE 2020-21

We badly missed our run of competitions last season as all the clubs abandoned any hope of running inter-club contests during the pandemic restrictions. Safe and sensible approaches were adopted as soon as allowed to let anglers get out and fish but the competitions were clearly a no go area.

I'm still going **Fishing**



However, by carefully following detailed Covid Safe restrictions we managed to start the Winter League early with our first outing as usual at Achagour Fishery in October. There followed three further legs, two at Glen of Rothes and then Lagg Fishery in December, but January's lockdown rules have so far prevented the competition continuing into 2021. At the moment we are hoping to have one final leg, our usual final meet at Lagg, late in March but only if it is safe to do so. It seems certain restrictions will apply for some further time.

Meantime the top five in the league are shown below, lowest points - **highest** position, and as well as leading the pack **Ally Hunter** shares biggest fish currently with **Derek Williamson** (both pictured below). As they say, it's tight at the top.



VENUE	Leg 1 3/10/20 Achagour			Leg 2 24/10/20 Glen of Rothes			Leg 3 14/11/20 Glen of Rothes			Leg 4 5/12/20 Lagg			LEADER COLUMN
	Name	No Fish	Total Wt	Points	No Fish	Total Wt	Points	No Fish	Total Wt	Points	No Fish	Total Wt	Points
Ally Hunter	4	8lb 3	4	3	7lb 1oz	6	4	7lb 6oz	5	3	12lb 6oz	1	16
Okain MacIennan	4	7lb 3	5	3	6lb	9	4	10lb 9oz	1	2	7lb 7oz	2	17
Neal Drummond	4	8lb 8	3	2	3lb 12oz	10	4	8lb 13oz	3	2	6lb 11oz	4	20
Dave Macgregor	4	9lb	2	4	9lb 11oz	1	2	4lb 2oz	10	0		8	21
George Smith	3	6lb 7	6	1	3lb 4oz	11	4	9lb 12oz	2	2	7lb 2oz	3	22

START OF SEASON 2021

We'll be needing some willing hands before the start of the season to get the boats lifted into Achonachie, Meig and Scardroy, so please don't be shy at offering to do a wee bit volunteering for your club. It will make a difference for sure. If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found it useful please let us know and remember **your contributions in stories and photographs are always very welcome.**

Our Club website <https://highlandfishing.net/>, Facebook page and Instagram site are all available to stay up to date with LAAC activities and news. Email me at achonachie.angling@gmail.com

Stephen Dowds
LAAC Chairman
21 January 2021