



JULY 2019 NEWSLETTER

The Shark Angling Club of Great Britain

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2020 Shark Festival

8th, 9th & 10th July 2020 – draw takes place on the evening of 7th July 2020 at Looe Social Club

2020 AGM

Thursday 9th July 2020 – Looe Social Club

2019 Annual Dinner and Trophy Presentation

Saturday 26th October 2019 – Portbyhan Hotel

CHAIRPERSONS WELCOME

Welcome to our second newsletter of the year. As the weather improves and the memories of one of the wettest winters have all but faded away our focus now turns to sharking and the level of activity is ramping up quickly.

This year's festival was a great success with more anglers taking part than in previous years. It was good to see many old faces and several new faces. Details of the festival are recorded later in this newsletter. Many members have already signed up for next year so do not leave it too long to add your name to the list.

Tight Lines

Bob Woodman

Chairperson SACGB

Annual Subscriptions

With over 95% of our members having paid their subscriptions this year, the first thing we need to say is a big..... **Thank You.**

Chasing subscriptions takes up a considerable amount of administration time so we greatly appreciate you helping us by paying your subscriptions on time.

For those of you that have yet to pay, your membership subscriptions were due on 1st January, so they are now overdue. The cost for 2019 is £20.00

You will retain the membership number which you received last year throughout your membership with the club.

To renew your subs online, visit the shop on our website at www.sharkanglingclubofgreatbritain.org.uk or if you wish to pay by bank transfer, you can do so using the account details below.

Lloyds Bank

Acc Name: Shark Angling Club of Great Britain

Sort Code: 30-95-08

Account Number: 00692083

Please remember to enter your FULL name as a reference, so that we can correctly identify and allocate your payment.

Thank you.

Lucky Run Club

The SACGB are proud to announce our Lucky Run Club – a great way for you to support us whilst having a bit of a flutter! Here's how it works...

You complete and sign the attached membership form and Standing Order mandate for £10 a month (or £120 annually).

This buys you one membership number (which we will allocate), which enters you into the monthly draw. All participants must be over 16.

The draw will take place on the last Monday of each month, at the Monthly Committee Meeting.

If you win, payment will be made directly into your bank account and your name published in the newsletter, on Facebook and the S.A.C.G.B website.

The prize money will be 50% of the membership fee taken that month. The remaining 50% goes to the club to help fund essential tagging equipment, resources and opportunities for members.

PLEASE NOTE: The first draw, to take place on 26th August, 2019, will be for the last remaining 'Leaping Mako Tapestry'.

Any queries, please contact Claire Kelly (Secretary) on 07572 976680 or email sacgb1953@gmail.com

JOIN OUR LUCKY RUN CLUB TODAY AND YOU COULD BE OUR NEXT WINNER!

2019 Shark Festival

The 2019 SACGB Annual Shark Festival started officially at 8pm on Tuesday the 2nd July.



Richard Day – Festival Winner 2019



- Runner up, Danny O'Malley



- Third Place, Dave Gorring



- receiving the Jolly Sailor Trophy for the most points from the landlord & landlady of the Jolly Sailor – Gary James



- Most Sharks, Carl Wane and Gary James



– skipper with the most sharks, Chris Gill - Obsession



– skipper with the largest shark, Dan Margetts - Sowenna

We would like to thank Mustad, Rokmax, Fishing Mayhem, Ammo Baits, Jack Bray & Son, Portbyhan Hotel, Sea Angler Magazine, Cornish Orchards, St Austell Brewery, The Albion Inn, Looe Social Club, Nippers Crab Fish, Quayfresh, Catch Looe, Pengelly's, The Angling Club and Paul Martin for their generosity and continued support for our Festival. We raised over £600 in the raffle!





The evening proved to be a great success with most promising to make the pilgrimage again and meet up at the 2020 event.

The 2019 SACGB Festival, the largest and longest running Shark Angling Competition in the UK and possibly well beyond our shores has concluded for this year and the most important statistic of all is that 83 sharks were caught and released, and swam away strongly.

2019 Annual Dinner & Trophy Evening

The ticket price for the Annual Dinner & Trophy Presentation, held at the Portbyhan Hotel in Looe on the 26th October will be confirmed as soon as possible.



This event is open to all, members, associate members and guest whether they be anglers or not. We are taking bookings now and already have a good number so don't leave it too late to book your place at the event as it will be filled on a first come first served basis.

Contact the secretary to reserve your place. Full payment is required no later than the 27th September 2019

2020 SHARK FESTIVAL

The dates have been set for the 2020 Shark Festival, 8th, 9th & 10th of July with the draw evening taking place on the 7th July.

This year's Festival had 53 competitors which was the largest ever. This number of competitors meant we needed to use additional boats from outside of Looe. As you are all aware, getting a place with a good sharking skipper is becoming increasingly difficult, and the club face the same challenge when booking boats for the festival.

The Committee are currently looking at costings to ensure you get the best price for next year's festival.

To secure your space in the 2020 Festival you have two options:

1. Pay £100 deposit with the balance before the 28th February 2020
2. Pay a £75 deposit before 31st August followed by an amount (to be confirmed) each month starting in September and ending in February

The Booking form is available on the website. You can also pay your deposit at the SACGB shop on the website

The Festival format will be the same as this year with the calculated estimated weight using the formula (girth * girth * length nose to fork of tail taken along lateral line)/800.

First prize: the angler with the largest shark (calculated estimated weight)

Second prize: the angler with the second largest shark (calculated estimated weight)

Third prize: the angler with the third largest shark (calculated estimated weight)

Most sharks: the angler who catches the most sharks over the 3 days

Most estimated weight: the angler with the most cumulative calculated estimated weight over the three days

Optional daily pool: The angler who catches the largest shark (in calculated estimated weight) each day, and who has contributed to the pool, will take the money

Skipper of the boat with the largest shark (calculated estimated weight)

Skipper of the boat catching the most sharks over the 3 days

Last year we had some anglers attempting to book late which we were unable to accommodate so please book early to avoid disappointment. At time of writing we already have 37 confirmed places

CLOTHING & MERCHANDISE

Don't forget you can order your T Shirts, Hoodies and Sweatshirts from the website.

We have managed to maintain the clothing pricing this year with Hoodies at £25 plus postage, Sweatshirts at £20 plus postage, Polo Shirts at £15 plus postage, T Shirts at £10 plus postage and Baseball caps at £10 plus postage.

We also have Burgees available at a price of £25.00 + Postage and Blue Pennants at 17.50 plus postage. Postage in the UK is normally £3.50.

Stocks of the large type 120" measuring tape, are available at £21 plus postage. Each year we are unable to process a good number of claims as the measuring tape used is difficult and, in some cases, impossible to read.



The large type on these tapes increases the clarity of video and photographic measurement evidence and they have already been used to good effect by many of our members. They are a very worthwhile addition to your tackle box. These and other goods can be ordered online at;

www.sharkanglingclubofgreatbritain.org.uk.

AGM 2019

This year's AGM was very well supported with 19 members attending. As usual it was held in the evening of the middle day of the Festival. The meeting commenced with the Chairperson's report, presented by the current chairperson, Bob Woodman.

Chairpersons Report

'On a sad note I have to report on the passing of Mel Casson. Mel was a long-time member of the club and a committee member. Our thoughts are with Hilary.'

The Chairman then led a minute of silence for Mel.

'Last season's total catch and release was slightly less than the previous year, 1887 in 2017 and 1857 last year. Whilst the total was less the number of qualifying sharks was increased to 120. The number of porbeagle sharks also showed an increase to 29. We now have 271 members this figure includes 20 life members and the level of activity on Facebook

and website has increased significantly. Most of you will know of the recent adverse publicity regarding the catching of porbeagle sharks and the subsequent involvement of the Shark Trust. This could in the future lead to restrictions on what we do. In order for our club to be properly represented we have joined the Angling Trust. In the future I think that we should be more proactive in our approach to our sport, an example would be releasing some sharks at the side of the boat and being careful what pictures are posted on Facebook and our website. If sharks were boarded, they should be tagged, and the clubs best practise should be followed. Financially the club is healthy and the level of engagement across the sharking community continues to increase with more and more people getting involved. I would like to thank the committee for all the work they have done over the last year. Special thanks must go to our new secretary Claire Kelly and to Alex McKay for producing the programme for this year's festival.'

Bob Woodman – Chairperson SACGB

Minutes

The 2019 minutes were proposed by C Jenkins and seconded by Murray Collings

Matters Arising – Rule Book

There were none.

Accounts

The secretary advised that an accountant had only just been secured and the process of handing over the accounts was still in progress. The accounts would be presented as soon as possible.

Propositions

Proposition 1 Carl Aldridge – Proposed Steve Dawe, seconded John Lock

It is proposed that there is no complete 'Release at side of boat' policy.

The boating of sharks to be at the discretion of the Angler/Skipper. E.g.: 400lb pregnant Porbeagles are best boat side release.

Blue sharks and smaller sharks of other species boated measurements/photography for club information/conservation and trophy claims.

Postal/E Vote was 8 For and 0 Against. A discussion took place during which an amendment was made. The amended proposition, as follows '***It is proposed that there is no complete 'Release at side of boat' policy. The boating of sharks to be at the discretion of the Skipper. E.g. 400lb pregnant Porbeagles are best boat side release***' was voted for. The majority of the members voted 'For'. The amended proposition to be sent out to all postal/e-voters and reported back to the next Monthly Committee Meeting.

Proposition 2 - Steve Dawe – Proposed Carl Aldridge, seconded Daniel Hawkins

It is proposed: to consider including the lesser UK Shark species into their records and Trophies. Eg: Tope, Spurdog and Smooth Hound.

This could create a year-round shark club and attract shore anglers to the SACGB.

Club qualification would need considering, but Mr Dawe would guarantee a trophy for the three species, if accepted.

Postal/E Vote was 5 For and 3 Against. The majority of the members assembled voted 'Against' - Proposition was not carried

President

The committee recommended that Ian King be re-elected as the President of the SACGB. The members present voted unanimously for Ian and he was duly elected President.

AOB

Committee Elections

There were 4 vacancies and 3 full member nominees.

Each nominee had to submit a personal statement which was emailed to the members. This enabled members to assess each nominee's skills, experience and their views on the direction of the club.

The members placed their votes by Post/E-Vote and in person at the AGM. The members listed below will now join Bob Woodman, Kevin Tapper, Dave Stone and Alex McKay as committee members for the SACGB;

Murray Collings

Pete Davis

Simon Ward

At the post AGM Committee meeting it was decided that a decision regarding co-opting members to the committee would be discussed at the next committee meeting. The Committee is quorate with four members, so it can operate with fewer than the maximum 9 committee members allowed.

Bob Woodman was proposed as Chairperson by Murray Collings and seconded by Kevin Tapper. The committee voted unanimously for Bob.

Murray Collings was proposed as Vice Chairperson by Pete Davis and seconded by Dave Stone. The committee voted unanimously for Murray

I am sure you will join me in welcoming our President, Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and the new committee members. ***Congratulations to all***

Regarding the Hardy's Rod and Fortuna Reel. And Sharks. By Ken Horsfield

I acquired the rod from a fisherman on East Looe when he was clearing out his store.

It was in a very poor state but after many many hours of work I restored it to something like its original condition. I have checked back and I think this was in 1991.

I have used it as a display item since that time.

The Reel I purchased via Ebay about the same time, it too was a bit neglected but allot of elbow grease and it was quite presentable.

When I decided to fish the 2019 festival I thought "why not give the old gear one last outing". However the drag on the reel did not work right. After allot of research, and trial and error, I discovered that the drag had been reassembled in the wrong order - once I had that figured out I was away.

The rod is a Hardy's (The No5 Saltwater. Test Curve 35lb. Palakona).

I discovered that the rod had a serial number E95432 this corresponds with rods made by Hardy's in 1954. The reel is not so clear cut, it has the initial AHW for Arthur Wall who made nearly all of the Fortuna reels, he retired in 1939. It also has the number 3 stamped on the frame, spool and handle with no other identifying marks. However on the star drag it has stamped "Patent applied for" from what I can discover Hardy's patented the Andeas drag system in 1923, meaning this reel pre-dates 1923. It also has the handle, drag capstan and reel seat in Monel metal and not brass, I believe that only a very few were made to this spec.

I have contacted Hardy's who said they were unable to assist with anything further,

I loaded the reel with a backing of 80lb mono with about 200 yds of Dacron type line which I think was about 80lb B.S.



One the second day of the festival I took this tackle out on Top Cat. After a couple of hours I was surprised, but pleased, to hear the Fortuna make a long purring growl as a shark ran off with my bait.

After a fight of about 10 mins I had the fish at the side of the boat, Andre (the skipper) wired it up to the door in the side of the boat but, as he lifted the fish in, the barbless circle hook I was using pulled free and the shark slid back through the door and was away. I have caught many Sharks as you are no doubt aware and I would agree with Andre who estimated it at 60 to 65 LB. The pictures of me wearing a hat and a fish in the water relate to this shark.

On the Friday I was drawn on Typhoon I decided to give it another try.



After sitting in the sun all day we had a small shark about 35lb come in close to the boat, one of the other guys hooked it but after a couple of minutes it pulled the hook. Ten minutes before lines in at the end of the day the Fortuna again made a purring growl and after a couple of seconds a full on run developed and I tightened the drag and hung on for dear life. I now know why people sat in a chair when using this type of gear, all the fight is through the reel as the rod has no give at all but I did get a slight bend in it as the shark went deep on one run. After a few minutes and allot of huffing and puffing from me "this may be evident on a couple of the photo's" we had the shark at the boat side Phil (the skipper) tailed the shark by hand and brought it on board,

The barbless circle hook was easily removed.



It was measured as 68" long with a girth of 27" about 64lb I'm told. It was then tagged - I'm showing the tag with my right hand - photographed and released having been out of the water no more than 3 mins .

By Ken Horsfield

Shark Smell – Blog by Simon Thomas

A whisper in the crowd. How sharks find their food Part one: Smell and taste- By Dr Simon Thomas.

The sun is still low in the sky, but still has enough power to warm the back of your neck. The breeze scuffs the surface of the water, but the white horses are still asleep and the boat just dips gently, touching the chum bags onto the water before snatching them away with a satisfying slop as the next swell fights back against the fibreglass hull. The wind and tide gently spar with each other, just allowing the lines to the four floats to tighten, as they stagger towards the horizon, next to the oily calm water which roughly signifies the direction of the chum trail. As the bags release clouds of bran and minced fish with each wave along with oily

globules which scurry towards the surface before bursting into a molecule thick layer, you catch a glimpse of something, which glints and flickers across the slick, just in the corner of your eye. Is it? Yes..... Wait a minute, no it's a garfish, those acrobatic miniature warriors which annoying swim only partially visible, where the particles from the chum bags fade from view?

As time passes the gulls grow bored, and cease chattering and yammering over morsels of food, and just the odd intellectually challenged Fulmar attempts to peck through the painted surface of one of the floats, attempting with annoying determination, to derive nourishment from some supposed treat hidden within. As the half cold beverage in your hand, which maybe tea, coffee or a combination of the two, is nearly gone, you see something by the furthest float, just a shape, hidden by the water and the ripple. Then just as you think you are imagining it, you all see the shark, as she turns and swirls at the furthest float, flicks it with her tail and then disappears. The gulls know where she is though, and they scatter two by two until only the dumbest Fulmar is left and even this bird seems slightly perturbed by the unseen shark, and paddles furiously away from the nearby predator. Then, if you happen to be looking, one of the floats gently submerges and simultaneously a rod bends slightly in agreement as the shark considers the suitability of its dinner. Then the ratchets of one of the reels click twice, pauses and then screams in disapproval as the shark, panicked by the opposition of its prey, flicks its tail and heads off towards the sanctuary of the deep.

We all know those feelings of slowly diminishing expectation, shock, excitement and then elation that is a huge part of the whole experience of shark fishing. But how, given the vastness of the sea and the patchy distributions of our prey, did that shark manage to find that one solitary mackerel with your hook in it? The answer, of course is a pretty impressive array of sensory detectors, some familiar

to us, and some not so, that millions of years of evolution has provided them with.

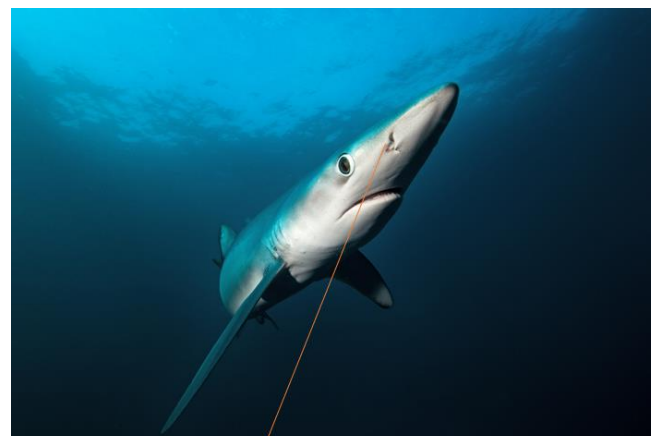
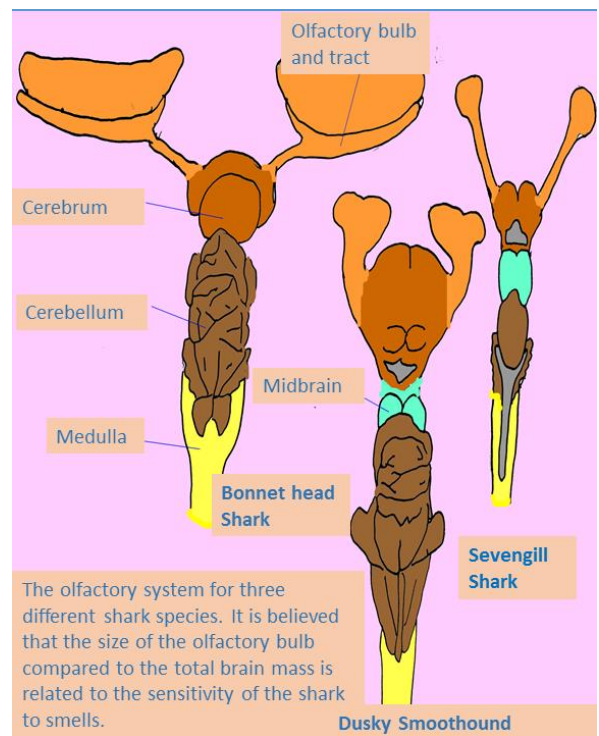
Let us start with the sense that is probably best known in sharks and for which there is both extensive fact and myth written about. That is, of course, their sense of smell and taste. The two are lumped together, as in water, the two are almost the same.

First some of the claims about the shark's ability to smell food.

- **Isolated cells from some Skate species respond to the amino acid (the building blocks of proteins) lysine dissolved in water at a concentration of 0.00000000001 grams per litre.** That is the equivalent of detecting a liquidised sprat dissolved in Loch Ness!
- **The Scalloped hammerhead shark can detect the amino acids alanine and cysteine at concentrations of approximately 10 parts per billion and 0.1 parts per million respectively.** That is roughly between 1/10 of a cup down to ten drops diluted in an average swimming pool.
- **The Lemon Shark can detect tuna oil diluted at one part per 25 million.** However, oil has a low solubility in water.
- **The Great White Shark has the largest olfactory organ in relation to brain size of all the sharks and rays.** They can detect one drop of blood dissolved in a hundred litres of water and can detect blood from a distance of up to three miles.
- **The olfactory organs of the Blue and Porbeagle Sharks are about a quarter of the size of that of the Great White relative to brain size.** Although this

implies that these sharks have a less sensitive sense of smell than the Great White, it is still very well developed in these species.

- **Some sharks also use their sense of smell to detect mates.** It is believed that male sharks can detect the pheromones produced by the females, a very useful ability in vast oceanic environments.
- **Sharks also have taste receptors in their mouths.** Although generally not as sensitive as smell, taste is used to decide whether to accept or reject potential food items.
- **Some sharks can smell in stereo.** Both the Bonnethead and Hammerhead sharks have been shown to locate the origin of an odour by sensing differences in concentrations between each of the nares (nostrils).
- **Both the Great White and the Oceanic Whitetip sharks poke their noses above the sea surface to smell.** It is believed that this is to detect prey, such as a whale carcass or a seal colony, from greater distances.
- **There is no evidence that pelagic sharks are attracted by rotting flesh.** In fact, the breakdown products or dead fish and mammals, such as the fantastically named cadaverine and putrescine, have been shown to deter sharks from feeding. The exceptions might be the deep-water sharks, such as the Sixgill Shark, which are known to eat whale fall as a major part of their diet.



The nares (nostril) of a Blue Shark. The shark channels or sucks water through the nares into the nasal sacs. The flaps on the nares control water movement over olfactory organs. The organ itself consists of many parallel plates (Lamellae) which are studded with smell receptors. This arrangement allows the maximum number of smell receptors in the smallest space.

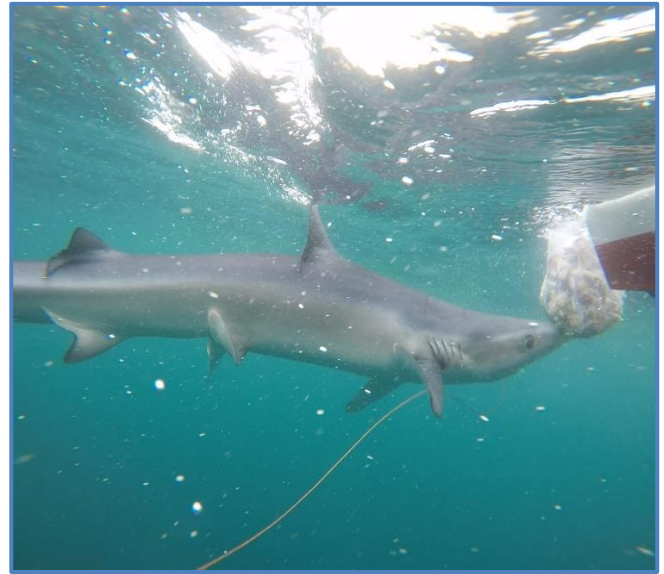
The ability to determine the truth is problematic in the many sharks that can't be successfully kept in captivity and many of the examples above are unrealistic tests using one substance. The background concentrations of amino acids that sharks detect in the ocean is approximately one in a billion, so for a shark to detect prey, the dissolved levels of these substances would have to be higher than this. More realistic tests indicated that the Clearnose Skate, the Yellow Stingray, the Atlantic Stingray, the Lemon Shark and the Bonnethead Shark, could differentiate various amino acids at

concentrations of around one parts per million. In the wild, the environment around the shark is a variable and complex mixture of smells, some attractive, many not. Our highly migratory species, such as the Blue Sharks, will travel across desert-like areas of open ocean where little apart from the smallest plankton thrive, to get to the rich productive zones on the continental shelf or upwellings where food and smells abound. So, in the real world, how does a shark detect the whisper in the crowd? How do they differentiate the odour from potential prey from the background odour of the ocean?

In humans. Smell and taste are very different, our noses detect mainly volatile (easy to evaporate) substances, whilst our taste buds detect dissolved substances. In the ocean sharks both taste and smell dissolved chemicals. Sharks possess a pair of nostrils, termed nares, as they play no part in breathing, which are divided into water inlets and outlet. Water enters through the inlet and passes over a series of parallel plates, known as lamellae and then exits through the outlet. These plates are studded with receptor cells to which scent molecules bind and then send a signal to the brain. Consider the receptor cells are a lock, and the scent molecule the key, both the number of keys in the locks and how well the keys fit the lock determine the strength of the signal sent to the brain. Each shark species has a variety of different receptor cells designed to detect the various smells of their prey. For example, the biggest shark found in UK waters, the plankton-eating Basking Shark, preferentially detects a substance, dimethyl sulphide, which is released when the zooplankton (tiny herbivores) devour phytoplankton (tiny plant-like organisms)

Whilst active pelagic sharks, such as the Blue Shark, Great White or even the Basking Shark, rely heavily on scent to detect prey, and have a large area of the brain devoted to detecting odours. Bottom dwelling ambush hunters, such as the Angel Shark, rely much less on smell and more of their other senses, have a

correspondingly smaller percentage of their brain devoted to the sense of smell.



A Blue Shark uses its array of senses to find both the bait and the chum bag. The angler eventually realises that the shark has taken the bait and acts accordingly!

So how far can a shark detect the chum slick from? Given a decent bit of tide and wind to separate the boat from the slick, it is likely that the slick will carry a few miles and the scent will be detectable to a shark for several hundred metres either side of the trail. Some of the best days sharking I have seen have been in wind against tide situations. The boat doesn't actually travel that far, but the slick covers a big geographical area and doesn't just slowly diffuse from the same body of water, as is the case on calm days. The effectiveness of the chum trail

If you watch a shark coming into the slick, you will often notice how they swim in a wide S shaped manner, and this is believed to be the natural way a shark navigates the trail to the source of the odour. This is likely aided by the stereo nature of the olfactory system, but also the shark can use its other senses to locate tidal flow and therefore the source of the smell. On a very calm day when the slick is dispersed in a wide circle around the boat, you will often see sharks circling the boat at a

distance. It is almost as if the concentrated odour confuses the fish, and they are unable to pinpoint the source.

Finally taste, the sense that finally determines whether a bait is accepted or rejected. Although the shark's sense of taste isn't as developed as the smell, it is still effective enough to detect a tasty morsel from a half decayed one, or a balloon. Southern sea otters are often found dead, with bite marks from Great White Sharks apparent, but the otters have never been found in the stomachs of these fish. Unfortunately, the otter smell and look enough like a baby seal, for the shark to have a taste, but is unpalatable and is thus rejected. The consequences for the otter are pretty dire though! The taste receptors work in the same way as the smell receptors, but are located on the lining of the mouth and throat. These "taste buds" have been shown to be more sensitive to fats than the smell receptors, as fats have low solubility in water, and are best detected by physical contact with the food item. This is certainly something worth considering with your chum mix, as adding oil may make a very nice calm patch on the surface, but probably has limited effect in the water column, unless you use some sort of emulsifying agent, although undoubtedly sharks can taste these fats in the small pieces of chum that flutter about in the trail.

In summary, the shark sense of smell is extremely sensitive, but not quite as keen as some of the myths would have you believe as the background chorus of smells already in the ocean would drown out those emanating from potential food at levels between the equivalent of one drop to one cup in a swimming pool. Different species can preferentially detect various amino acids at low concentrations and can home in on a scent trail from several hundred metres away. Taste buds of sharks are more sensitive to fats rather than amino acids and determine whether a fish accepts or rejects food items. But sharks have other senses apart from smell. They also detect sounds, vibrations, light and even electricity to enable

them to feed, navigate and detect mates effectively.

Just a final thought, both squid and pelagic fish, the main prey items of the Blue Shark, contain high concentrations of the amino acids' aspartic acid, glutamic acid, serine, lysine and of course various oils. It would logically follow that the smell and taste receptors of these sharks would be sensitive to these chemicals. Maybe could learn a few tricks from the freshwater anglers regarding baits and chum?

Simon Thomas

Honorary Biologist and Committee Member

The First Mako – by Ian Harbage

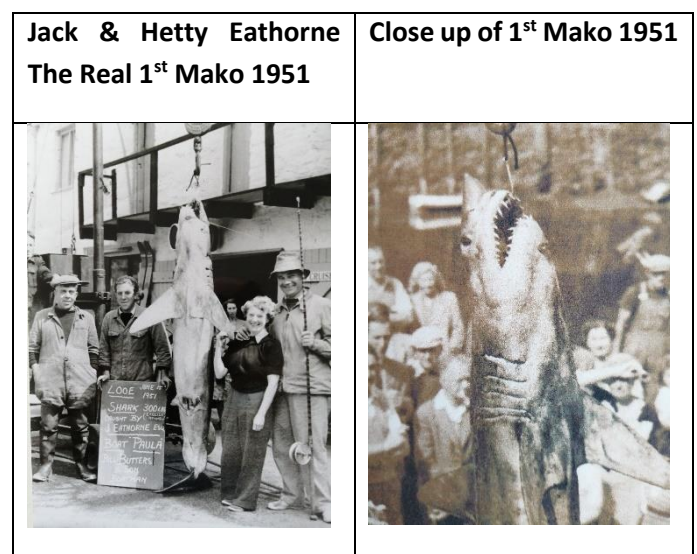
One of the questions that always arises when discussing British Mako captures is how many Mako's could have been misidentified as Porbeagle's, before Hetty Eathorne's 352 pounder confirmed they visited our shores.. This shark caught on the 25th August 1955 on her own boat the "LITTLE ONE", skippered by father and son Bill and Jack Butters, was at first entered for a new world record Porgie. The teeth samples requested by the IGFA to verify the claim came back as belonging to a shortfin Mako and the rest is as they say, angling history. Most of us are familiar with these facts and the excitement it generated amongst the sharking community. As anglers now had a chance to test themselves against the world's most elite fighting shark.

Prior to this capture Cornish boats had occasionally encountered large mysterious jumping fish that could strip all the line off the best reels in the blink of an eye, and would leave the latest state of the art steel cored split cane rods with a permanent bend. What kind of fish were they? How was it possible for a fish to out run the pursuer's boat?

The earliest account I can find of a Mako hook up took place in the summer of 1948 off Looe on a flat calm summer's day. The angler involved was one of the founder members of our club Mr F. Lyde. Caunter (no relation to our brigadier Caunter). Mr Caunter saw the fin of a very large shark gliding through the water, so baited up quickly and drifted down on him. The huge mouth swallowed the offering in one gulp and the predator began to swim off leisurely. Mr Caunter struck as hard as he could but before he could brace himself the great fish showed its annoyance by making seven consecutive leaps to a height of fifteen feet! The angler was completely unprepared for such a response and couldn't believe what he had hooked in to. He was a very experienced shark angler, and had accounted for hundreds of sharks during his time, but he was totally in awe of this shark's acrobatics, speed, power and size. This really was big game fishing the likes of which anglers would normally travel thousands of miles to encounter, and here it was happening off Cornwall! He manfully kept contact with the shark, for all he was worth, until it leapt again after a 300yd line stripping run. At the height of this giant leap his trace parted - A sad end. Later Mr Caunter described the whole experience as the "greatest angling thrill of his life." I think it's fair to say that this mighty 500 pounder was a Mako. After the capture of Mrs Eathorne's fish confirmed their presence, few would argue this fact. As Mako's have cruised the English channel for centuries there are bound to be lots of other times when Cornish shark anglers crossed paths with these mighty fish without knowing what they had encountered.

So now we move on to the first British rod and line Mako capture. The earliest I can trace took place on June 15th 1951 off Looe. It was caught on the famous Looe boat the "PAULA", skippered again by Bill and Jack Butters. Now time for a little known surprising fact - it was actually caught by Hetty Eathorne's Husband Jack Eathorne! That really is some coincidence! Jack and Hetty were at the forefront of the sharking scene, and were regulars to Looe to fish on the "PAULA", or on their own boat

the "LITTLE ONE". Jack Eathorne's Mako was a female fish. This makes it an even rarer catch because 95% of British Mako's are male, so it was a real case of ladies first. True to type this shark was a leaper and tested the angler, boatmen and tackle to the maximum. Eventually the angler won the battle and returned for the weighing in ceremony on the quay at Looe. Jack Bray and F Clarke confirmed the weight as 300lbs. No one could identify its species so it was just recorded as a new English record weight for a shark. The Photos and leaping ability are true evidence that this was the first rod caught Mako (Unless an earlier picture turns up one day).



Bill and Jack Butters and the "PAULA" were to figure prominently in the history of Mako captures, and they were at it again on the 8th of July 1954 with the capture of a 230 pounder. This shark was wrongly identified as being a Porbeagle and won the Sammy Porbeagle Trophy for the season for its captor Mr Miles, a SACGB member. As Mako's were seen as sharks that only existed in foreign waters, again, its leaping ability didn't arise suspicion to its true identity. So here we have two examples, one of mistaken identification, and one of no identification, from the early days of our club. I'm sure that in time there could be one or two more pictures found that will add to the misidentification story.

So there it is, the evidence shows it was Jack Eathorne who caught the first Mako, and Mr Miles

had the second. But Hetty Eathorne will always be remembered for catching the first identified Mako in our history and opening the door for us anglers to dream of one day catching the ultimate game shark. Thanks for the dreams Hetty.

Hetty's 352lb Mako – 1st to be identified in British Waters



By Ian Harbage

LIGHTNING DOES STRIKE TWICE! – by Ian Harbage

It has taken years to gather evidence for the list of British Mako captures. My present list has 74 authenticated fish on it. This has involved Lots of searching through SACGB archives and talking to anglers and skippers to verify captures. Without a doubt there are still more genuine captures I am yet to find. I would put the figure at probably 100 plus. There are bound to be some small to medium sized sharks that were caught with less publicity, or from ports that didn't always archive captures. So let's assume that we are dealing with about 100 rod caught UK Mako's.

For years hundreds of anglers a day have been sharking off our shores during the summer months in hope that one day a Mako will take their bait. I've never met a

shark angler that wouldn't give his or her last quid, (or certain parts of their anatomy), to catch a British Mako and join the list of anglers who have achieved the ultimate. So can you imagine how fortunate you would have to be to not only catch one, but two! Surprisingly two anglers have done just that and recorded two Mako!

The first angler to achieve this feat was Mr A.M Simpson, and yes you've guessed it they were both caught on the "PAULA" out from Looe with bill and Jack Butters at the helm. Mr Simpson's first was caught on July 4th 1956 and weighed in at 335.5lbs. He had to wait two years for his next one 1958 (poor him) and this was a 324 pounder. The odds on one angler catching two must be massive, but beat the odds he did and the very experienced SACGB member must have had major bragging rights in the pub later.



The next angler to put his name firmly in the history books was Ted Belsten. His first was caught in June 1965 on legendary Mako skipper Robin Vinnicombe's boat "INTER-NOS" out from Falmouth. It weighed 260lbs. His second was also caught from Falmouth with Robin, but from his new boat "HUNTRESS". This was a 410 pounder caught in July 1967, another gap of only two years. Both men said their sharks were magnificent fighters so I can see why they needed this short gap in-between.

By Ian Harbage

WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT! – by Ian Harbage

It's very easy to fall into the trap of only fishing using techniques designed to give you the best chance of attracting a Mako onto your hook. In the golden era for Mako's, the 50s and 60s, several anglers became obsessed with trying to catch one. Using the latest big game fishing tackle and expensive lures, in the vein hope of trying to hook up on the 'Blue Dynamite' they would spend endless days and huge amounts of money trolling all day long.

One of these Mako obsessive anglers was SACGB member Anthony Hill. For weeks on end and for many seasons, he would be seen by the rest of the Looe sharking fleet trolling on the horizon, pulling lures all around the supposed Mako hot spots. This would totally frustrate his chosen skipper who listened in to the other boats bagging up on the blues. Day after day it was the same result, nothing! His fellow anglers would taunt him that they had caught plenty of sharks while he was wasting his time chasing a dream. Eventually he gave in to the constant leg pulling, and with a sinking heart he decided to have a day's rest from the stress of Mako hunting. He booked a day out with sharking legend Bonzo Butters on the "SEA BIRD" drifting for blues. The fishing Gods who dish out all the best fish smiled upon him that day, for he returned to port on the 13th June 1967 with a 296lb Mako! Keep shaking those bags..... Tight lines.



By Ian Harbage

The Longest Held British Record Shark Record

In July of this year the longest standing Women's All Tackle British Record for Blue Shark will have been held for 60 years. It's held by Patsy McKim who caught a 144lb Blue Shark out of Looe in July 1959.

At that time the Shark Angling Club of Great Britain was in its sixth year and, by offering a Big Game fishing opportunity without having to travel abroad, had achieved world wide recognition and become a significant contributor to the Looe, and indeed the Cornish, economy.

Patsy who was 24 at the time, decided to take up the challenge of gaining membership of the SACGB while holidaying with her family in Looe in the summer of 1959. She arranged a number of days sharking but after three days the largest she had caught was one of 60lbs which was underneath the 75lbs qualifying weight required for club membership. Undeterred, on day four she boarded the Blossom, skippered by Jack Symons and headed towards the Eddystone Lighthouse.

A couple of hours into the drift a shark was spotted on the surface as it circled the boat. Minutes later the shark took Patsy's bait and she set the hook. Its reaction was to wrap itself in the trace which led to concern that it may fray the line but Patsy maintained focus and began to play the fish. Twenty minutes later she guided it alongside the boat so the skipper could bring it aboard.



Patsy having a well earned rest

It was 8 foot 3 inches long with a girth of 38 inches and weighed in at 144lbs. Patsy's shark beat the previous Women's All Tackle British Record which was held by another sharking legend, Mrs Hetty Eathorne with a 132.5lbs Blue.

With the help of the SACGB Patsy submitted a World Record claim to the International Game Fishing Association in the USA and on the 30th July 1959 she was awarded the World 80lbs Line Class Record for Blue Shark.



Patsy with her Full Membership SACGB Burgee



Patsys 144lbs Blue Shark

With this being Patsys membership qualifying shark she was only eligible to enter for the R. C. Roberts trophy. This is one of the clubs perpetual trophies and is awarded annually to the angler who qualifies with the best shark. With such a magnificent shark you might expect her to have won the trophy but it wasn't to be. Nigel Sutcliffe, who also qualified in 1959 took the R. C. Roberts trophy that year with a 218lbs Blue Shark.

Although Patsy didn't win any trophies her magnificent Blue enabled skipper Jack Symons to take one of the Boatmans Prizes that year.

Appropriately Patsys achievement was widely reported in the newspapers and she also made it on the BBC as a guest on Blue Peter.

1959 was a special year for the club as in addition to Patsy's British and World Records the British Record for Mako Shark was also beaten with a 372lbs fish and the first ever Thresher Shark caught out of Looe, weighing 268lbs was caught by Brigadier Caunter.

In the same year the clubs Spring Dinner and Dance was held at the Cafe Royal in London and was attended by 200 members and guests. Although conservation is not something often associated with those early years, the clubs 1959 final report notes that 200 sharks were tagged during that season.

Sadly, Patsy passed away in 2015 but with the SACGB no longer awarding British Records, her record will never be beaten and her achievement will forever remain a source of inspiration for all shark anglers.

By John McMaster

Thank you to all of the contributors for the above articles, please keep them coming for future newsletters.

Members Section Password Reminder

The password for the member section of the website is currently **psmith369**

This commemorates Pat Smiths British Record Porbeagle caught aboard Alan Dingles Lady Betty.

SACGB Contact Details

Shark Angling Club of Great Britain
c/o The Harbour Office
Buller Quay
East Looe
PL13 2DR

Email: sacgb1953@gmail.com

Tel: 07572 976680