



**SHARK ANGLING CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 AT 7pm  
At Looe Social Club and Via Zoom**

Present: - Bob Woodman - Chairman, C Kelly - Secretary, P Davis, K Tapper, A McKay, S Thomas

Via Zoom: P Martin, D Stone, S Ward

Apologies: M Collings

**Minutes of Last Meeting –**

**18<sup>th</sup> October 2021** - Proposed as an accurate record by Pete Davis, seconded by Paul Martin

**Matters Arising**

1. Festival Review

- I. Balloons – The secretary stated that D Stone had requested further discussion regarding the use of balloons  
*'It is preferable not to use balloons for floats as they mimic jelly fish and are eaten by other marine species. We encourage the use of biodegradable balloons.'*  
A further discussion took place regarding the use of balloons. It was agreed that the wording as above would remain and a total ban would not be implemented.
- II. Iris Memorial Trophy – date clarification. Mr Stone clarified that the trophy could be claimed for a fish caught between 22<sup>nd</sup> July and 8<sup>th</sup> October in that season only. This meant that allocation of that trophy would have to be specified as open until midnight on 8<sup>th</sup> October on the new claim form.
- III. Claim Form Review – the new claim form, specifying that all claims (except the Iris Memorial – which is as above) must be reported to the secretary by midnight on 30<sup>th</sup> September each year for consideration, was approved by the Committee. The secretary stated that new forms were now available on the website which could be completed online, without the need for printing and posting to the club. Along with an online membership form.

**Trophy Claims**

S Jones – B M & R Line Record. It was concluded that the footage was insufficient to award a line class record but that a Certificate of Achievement would be issued.

**Lucky Run Club**

- The Winner of the November draw was Terry Field winning £80.00

**New Business**

- The secretary read the following Email from Keith Armishaw;  
**I don't know if the Committee are aware of that porbeagle and skate are likely to be added to the endangered species list at the end of Jan unless urgent action is taken so please could you put forward the following letter to the committee for their consideration**

**To SACGB**

**I understand that porbeagle and common and blue skate are likely to be added to the endangered species list at the end of Jan and we may be banned from fishing for them. As a keen angler I think not only would this be tragic for anglers but also for the fish species. How else are we going to be able to monitor stocks.**



**This follows some pictures that I have seen on Facebook showing how fish are handled appallingly and hear of anglers going after the heaviest fish so fish for pregnant females so have to take most of the blame, but there must be something we can do to find a way forward where we can fish, the shark trust feel they are doing their job and we can do professional research on the species to protect them in their nurseries.**

**I think the Chart model for tuna (having seen it catching my first) where we can gather data for the ongoing protection of the species and ensure the fish are handled sympathetically would be a sensible way forward and compromise.**

**As aa aside, I also participated in the skate tagging programme at Crinnan in Scotland about 7 or 8 years ago. Following up afterwards I was told that it showed Crinnan contained the big females in a nursery and the smaller males moved up and down the coast. At the time the body doing the research was trying to get the area designated as a reserve to protect them including from scallopers which cause devastation to the species. I didn't follow up from that point so am unsure what happened.**

**I hope this shows my concern for the species and for angling, but I do also see it as the thin end of the wedge for sportfishing in the UK. I also hear anecdotal evidence that porbeagle numbers are rising too, but don't think that this is the driving force behind the issue.**

**I think it is essential that the SACGB write to the Angling Trust without delay as a member and ask for their urgent help to address the issue**

**Kindest regards**

**Keith Armishaw**

The following email from Murray Collings was also read:

**Prior to leaving I had phone conversations with both Sam Narbett and Dan Hawkins regarding the proposed porbeagle ban. We felt this was going to be the start of the main attack on shark fishing in general. Firstly the porbeagle stock and next the blues. I also had a good talk with Simon Ward discussing this issue. I feel we need to really get together and collectively deal with this matter. We have the data set regarding the most accurate set of figures for shark captures going.**

The following letter had already been prepared by the Committee, for publication on the website and to be sent to the Angling Trust;

**The Shark Angling Club of Great Britain (SACGB) wish to register their concern regarding the potential inclusion of the Porbeagle in schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside ACT (WCA). We feel that the inclusion of the Porbeagle on a list which contains species such as the Burbot (which is considered extinct in UK watercourses), is an overreaction, which does not reflect the current state of the stock for the species and maybe used to promote a ban on the recreational catch and release Porbeagle fishery in the UK.**

**The SACGB are totally committed to shark conservation and have been active in promoting good handling practices and conservation of shark species.**

**Over the past years the SACGB have been working closely with scientists, many whom were totally unaware of the populations and geographical extent of shark species in UK waters.**

**Many have come to realise the only way to study these creatures is to go aboard a sharking boat, rather than rely on data from an unmotivated commercial fleet who provide only dead sharks.**

**The SACGB has an unparalleled database of shark captures dating back to the 1950s with an effort component, thus is in a unique position monitor for the numbers and locations of the shark captures throughout UK waters in near real-time.**

**As indicated by the recent paper submitted to ICCAT from SACGB and many other shark skippers' data, there has been an increase of Porbeagle numbers and of geographical spread since the zero Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for commercial targeting in 2010.. The data shows increases in both recruitment of year 0 fish and of sub-adult and adult fish in UK waters, with fish returning to areas that they have been absent from since the 1970s.**



**Of particular concern is the affect of any ban on the north coast of Devon and Cornwall recreational fishery for the Porbeagle .**

**The charter boats that work this coast are well aware of the importance of this area and how the welfare of the shark are paramount both the recovery of stocks and to their livelyhoods and as such have committed to stringent handline guidelines that they have developed. No sharks are boarded, the use of circle hooks are mandatory to reduce gut hooking and fight times are reduced by the use of suitable tackle.**

**Recent data from Exeter University and the Sulikowski Shark and Fish Conservation Lab in the USA indicated excellent outcomes for recreationally captured Porbeagle and the time series data from this area suggests that populations are increasing.**

**The impact of the inclusion of the Porbeagle in schedule 5 of the WCA may not provide any additional protection for the fish and threatens the ability of scientists and angler to cooperate to provide data on a species that ICCAT acknowledge are hugely understudied. In addition recent experience of banning of large pelagic fish in the UK have proved unsuccessful and have in fact led to the inexperienced angler targeting fish rather than use experienced skippers with a proven track record of high welfare standards, who can no longer operate.**

**The SACGB will continue their commitment to shark conservation and acknowledge that any potential recovery in Porbeagle stocks is tentative, due to the long generation times and low fecundity of the species. However, we consider the inclusion of the Porbeagle in schedule 5 of the WCA to be an overreaction and detrimental to both the scientific understanding and recovery of this iconic apex predator.**

**Yours sincerely,  
Bob Woodman  
Chairman SACGB**

Simon Thomas will be attending a meeting with the Angling Trust on SACGB's behalf and reporting back to the Committee with any updates.

### **Any Other Business**

1. Paul Martin – stated that he was not busy at the moment and could make up some traces to be given to the skippers in the Festival next year and would submit prices. The Committee agreed to pay for three dozen traces. Paul to submit photos via the Whatsapp group.
2. Simon Ward – stated that he was meeting with his local fishing club and asked if he could raise the Porbeagle matter with them. The Committee agreed.
3. Pete Davis – stated that when Exeter University had been on board with him, in October, they had tagged three fish with three satellite tags and all three had now come off and the results had been received, although this information could not be published at the moment.

There were no further matters to discuss.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

**Date of Next Meeting** – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022 at 7pm Lower Bar, Social Club, West Looe and via Zoom.