

With changing weather patterns curtailing winter river fishing...

# Do fish still need close season?

**WITH** sewage-coloured rivers again topping their banks and more wet stuff falling, it looks like yet another weekend's running water sport down the tubes.

But Elinor opens Saturday – quickly followed by most other local trout waters... so 'spring' must be on its way with some better sport all round?

Yet on rivers the legal close season begins in just 28 days time – and after what must have been one of the worst ever recorded winters for angling access to river fishing: we get BANNED from wetting a line for three solid months.

I used to defend the break to the hilt...but with changing weather patterns and cultures, do river fish REALLY need a close season anymore?

They've already had pretty much six months rest from most anglers' attentions; it doesn't leave wildlife undisturbed because anyone can (and many do) let their dogs crash through the reeds all year; and if 'resting' fish stressed post-spawning is an issue, keepnets could be banned for 90 days and or major spawning areas shut for that period.

Dumping the break would also help the sport and the trade AND keep genuine anglers on the banks to help deter non-law abiding fish thieves.

**What do you think?**

■ **TROUT** water Grafham's boat fleet is to be replaced with new, larger, 16 foot craft like those used on Rutland.



■ **RINGSTEAD** trout fishery, opening March 1, gets another double figure 'stockie', watched by Rosemary Foster (wife of owner Harold) and grandson George

● Steve Ringer swooped on Castle Ashby's Grendon, midweek, to win with 11 carp and five bream for 104-6 with, a long way back, dad Geoff on 35-14. Alan West split them with 66-12.

● 'ASHBY, Sunday matches: Grendon, Pete Lovell 76-1, Gary Millward 65-14, Keith Garrett 60-8; Scotland, Ian Smith 42-2, Roger Clutton 38-12, Roy Woodward 33-14; brickyard, Paul Hardman 24-12, Frank Pizmenti 18-14, John Bagely 12-7.

● **WHITE** Hart Flore, Barby Banks: Mark Tottenham 44-12, Glen Tilson 44-5, Terry Adams 43-8.

● **FLORE & Brockhall**, Barby Marshes: Gareth Abrahams 35lb, Steve Smith 5lb, Rob Rawlins 3rd with something too small to record...

● **BISHOPS** Bowl open: Kevin Green 10-11, Rob Bassett 7-14, Derek Cullett 6-10. Green and Bassett top pair.

● **TOWCESTER** at home to Leighton Buzzard, Tove: LB totalled 15-13 and Tows 7-10. Visitors Ray Cook and Ian Banks 9-14 and 3-11. Tows' Darren Panel 6-2.

● **CASTLE**, Canons: Geoff Lewis 6-6, Fred Prior 5-3, Jeff Rice 4-10.

● **COUNTY** vets, midweek, Canons: Jeff Rice 11-12, Bob Spencer 6-8, John Lewis 4-12.

● **NENE**, Yardley cut: Andy Law 1-12, Brian Beard 1-1-8, Chris Howard 1-1.

● **OLNEY**, Ouse: Graeme Prince 0-4-8 (13 bleak), Dave Partridge 0-2, Paul Caton 0-0-4...

● **TROUT OPENINGS:** Saturday, Elinor; March 1;

Ravensthorpe and Ringstead; March 8, Pitsford; March 15, Grafham; March 29, Rutland.

● **FIXTURES:** Sunday, Olney river open, 01234 240061; March 29 (Good Friday) 'Bucko' open, Wold Farm, Poddington, 01327 351780 ■

Matches, catches, even rough patches? If there's a tale to tell call Trevor Johnson on 01908 270000 (office) or 07801 183381 or [angling@intermediauk.com](mailto:angling@intermediauk.com) (click link to email)