



Martin Beer joined the party taking this fine pollack on a blue Eddystone

### Can you handle a crash dive?

Switching to a blue lure was the work of a moment. I threw the lure uptide and swung the sinker up and out to give the Eddystone and sinker maximum separation before it plunged 40 fathoms into the inky black depths.

Reeling the little Penn 310 quite fast in the slack tide gave the eel just that little extra zip and fish-attracting noise in the water.

Tap-tap..keep reeling Symons..tap-tap, the pollack were not giving themselves up today. Then the weight came on... keep reeling.

Yee-ha, the 12lb-class rod zapped over and the clutch began to sing its urgent song... this was good, this is where reliable tackle from the lure right through the rod, reel and line will work for you.

After that tackle-crunching first dive, the pollack came fairly easily to mid-water where the brightening light gave the fish its second wind, and I felt an uneasy momentary sensation of slack line.

Lift, lift, lift the rod high, reel like a lunatic. I've played these games before. The fish had swum up the line and was turning to dive against the slack line.

The shovel-size tail and muscular body of these jumbo pollack can cause some serious upsets when anglers try to heave and haul these fish on tackle that is not up to the job.

If they are allowed to build some speed to bang against the slack, they will pop quite heavy-breaking-strain lines, especially if any of the knots are suspect.

There was the weight again, a steady pump and reel. Lloyd was at my side, a dip of the net and the fish was inboard. A glistening, scale-perfect pollack - the new blue Eddystone eel had worked its magic for me!

### Zap the crap... go with the Prosi!

Lloyd Saunders got fed up with anglers complaining to him that they could not buy a decent light-tackle rod. So in typical fashion he did something about it. He got Conoflex to make him some custom rod blanks to his own specification and South West Tackle Developments to build the Pro range of 'Saltwind' rods.

Available as 6, 12 or 20lb-class they are a range of rods especially suited to fishing the Skerries plaice, the Lannacombe bass, fishing Eddystone eels over a deepwater wreck, or handling applications where a rod is needed to get the best from light-line situations.

Reels for pollacking have changed over the last decade. Once it was impossible to sell a boat reel with a level-wind, now in the smaller boat reel sizes, the line spreader is a convenience that few of us would be without.

Two reels favoured by many pollack



## 'Previously many anglers made their own eels and the shapes, proportions and plastics used were guarded like the Crown Jewels'

pros are the Penn 310, if you like a star-drag, and Shimano's Charter Special for those who prefer a lever-drag. Both are ideally suited for the use of superbraid line or monofilament.

End tackle is simple. An 8in or 10in boom is needed to give the leader some separation from the mainline as it plunges to depths often in excess of 200ft. The boom is used to prevent the leader from tangling back around the mainline as the rig is lowered.

This can still happen if you let the reel run at full pelt, but an educated thumb on the spool will retard the speed of the drop, just enough to allow the leader with the Eddystone eel trailing on the end to stream downtime, away from the mainline.

Fine wire Knotless booms are favoured by some because of their skeletal profile, and the fact that people like me can make a leader up and clip it on to the mainline via a Crosslok swivel that is permanently attached to the mainline. Other pollackers prefer to use lightweight plastic tube booms to make a running boom that slides onto the mainline.

### Long or short leaders?

Logically, a short leader should work fine on a big tide and on a neap, where there is minimal movement from the tide. A long leader should present the eel to greater advantage.

Problem is, on a neap tide, if you use a long leader, you have to let the rig down very slowly to avoid tangling. In recent years I have fished a leader no longer than 10ft long on spring tides and neaps over the wrecks and still caught fish.

In shallower water, and over reefs, the longer leaders will come into their own. But for wreck fishing I don't think it makes much difference.

Make the leader up from seven to eight feet of 15lb/20lb mono to a swivel, then a couple of feet of 25 to 30lb line to the Eddystone eel.

The reason for this two-foot rubbing length is that although pollack and bass do not have sharp fangs, they do have some highly abrasive 'rubbing strips' along the front of their jaws which make short work of light-breaking-strain line.

### Expansion of Eddystone Eels

The original Eddystone eels have remained unaltered since Dave Beer first made them commercially in the early 1970s. Since then the list of specimen and record fish caught on

them would fill this magazine.

Highlights are a record coalfish apiece for Lloyd Saunders and his father, pollack and bass records, giant cod and ling, and the largest bass ever caught in France. Overseas catches include a huge 62lb striped bass taken from the shore on a black Eddystone at Martha's Vineyard in the USA.

The evolution of these eels goes back many years before Dave Beer began to make the classic Eddystone Eel. Previously many anglers made their own eels and the shapes, proportions and plastics were guarded like the Crown Jewels.

Believe me when I say that in those halcyon days of the Mark 5 and Mark 12 Decca sets, 'industrial espionage' was rampant and good catching lures changed hands in the pubs and clubs for real money.

Knowing Dave Beer, as I do, it was without doubt the intrigue and the 'clink of coin' which resulted in the manufacture of the now famous Eddystone Eel. I thought it was the best then, and over the years have seen nothing to change my mind. I believe it is still the best no-nonsense plastic sandeel available today.

This year will see the range of colours expanded to make available some of the killer colours used by some enterprising commercial bass trollers who colour their own lures for shallow water use, as well as some new deep spectrum colours for deep water use... try the new blue!

Word on the street is that Dave is working on some other 'very interesting' new products which promise some serious catching and fun fishing. You have been warned! ■



Above: Bright, lifelike and deadly, that's Eddystone artificial eels. Note the new blue lures

Even ling are attracted to Eddystones!

