

JUST ANOTHER FISHERS

By 'WADMEEK'

TAILIE



There is a carp lake where, whenever I had a free weekend, I invariably used to go. I shall never go again. Not that anything frightening happened last time, but I would certainly be frightened if it happened again. I will tell you about it.

I had arrived on the Friday evening in the usual way, dumped my case at the inn, and straightway wended my way with my tackle down to the lake. There was a spot where I had fished before. It was alright except that about 30 yards

to the left there was a small islet where four trees jostled for the scrap of earth, and whenever I hooked a fish it nearly always swung round it and as often as not stayed there. If however I moved quickly enough, I could run along the bank to the right and, with sidestrain, head it off.

Nothing happened all evening until it was just getting dark. Then I had a run. I gathered up my rod and struck hard. The fish sped straight out to the centre of the lake and, true to type, swung round towards the islet. I charged down the bank in the opposite direction and heaved on the rod. It worked. The fish missed the islet and turned in its tracks to run parallel with the bank past me. Gradually I pumped and worried the fish to the bank. It was at that moment that I realised that my landing net was along the bank by my swim. I was about to give verbal vent to my feelings when - "Here you are," sounded at my elbow. I jumped a little. I had heard nobody approach. But it was only Skinner the game-keeper, and he had my landing net in his hand. I took it from him and slipped it under my fish. "Thirteen and a half pounds", I said jubilantly peering at the spring balance. But there was no answer. Skinner had gone just as quietly as he had come. I shrugged my shoulders. "Always was a cheerless old so-and-so," I muttered to myself.

Back at the inn, Tom my host asked "Any sport?" "Yes" I replied proudly, "Had a thirteen and a half pounder. Good job that Skinner came up, though I ...". "Skinner!" "Yes, he gave me the landing net when..." "Skinner's dead - Drowned - Fell into the lake a month ago."