

# You get what you pay for

Impressed by the society's own 'designer label' clothing, BASS catch recorder Geoff Gonella looks at other ways members can benefit from their £20 annual subs



There's no substitute for learning on the beach...and suitable clothing helps too!



BASS man...the caped crusader!

I'm a big fan of the new range of BASS clothing. There have been a few branded items before, but this time there is a wide range of colours and the option of embroidered extras. It started off as an idea from a committee member who developed it and showed the prototypes at a BASS Fish-in. These were tried on and talked about by about 30 anglers present. Another member then developed the concept further in conjunction with a clothing firm, and now it's a reality. The whole process was talked about on the Society's forum from beginning to end, with suggestions and encouragement along the way. It is nice to see an ideas culture developing naturally, with volunteers driving things to a conclusion and 'transparency' along the way. Long may it continue.

This got me thinking, in a wider context, about what BASS has to offer in terms of bass fishing information compared with the same in general angling forums. After all, everything about bass fishing can be learnt from public forums, can't it? Well...no. Fair enough, there are a few sites with lots of good guidance in forum talk and linked articles. But is it enough? Take for example the practical side of watercraft and the 'art' of plugging, surface popping and fly-fishing for bass. There is no substitute for being shown these techniques, or watching at close range someone who performs them well. I learnt surface popping from a BASS member back in 2000, and no way could I have learnt it properly from forums. Reading forum talk and guidelines can take you so far, but when it comes to learning

you can't beat watching another angler (and ideally being shown the skills) out in the elements, in 3D, warts and all. The same goes for watercraft - there is some really good guidance on holding areas in one forum, and in a recently published sea angling book, but there is no substitute for learning from one who knows, in real time, and outdoors - even more so when you are on your own in unfamiliar territory, where it can help to rely on what you've read plus what you've learnt in practice from other anglers. Being a BASS member for about 12 years has enabled me to fish with some really good bass anglers, on trips at home and abroad, whether at organised 'fish-ins' or out with individuals. Every time I've found it rewarding in terms of friendship and exchange of ideas - very important when you fish out of

your comfort zone, which I do a lot of the time. Summing up, I think the trick is to use a few public forums that have friendly chat and advice on bass fishing, and, of course, use Sea Angler magazine, but in addition, be a member of BASS and get the member benefits such as the quarterly magazine, members' forum and the chance to attend fish-ins. Free information from public forums is all very well, but you do get what you pay for in life - just £20 for annual BASS membership, and paying for the services of a bass guide/tutor, can help you become a more 'rounded' bass angler. Talking of paying, I think I'll get a few items of BASS clothing. Polos and hoodies. Good quality stuff by the look of it. Check it out on: <http://ukbass.com/2012/02/14/bass-clothing/> Or you can email [nickrobson3679@gmail.com](mailto:nickrobson3679@gmail.com)