

Look what I got as a birthday treat!



HIS previous biggest catch had weighed in at a modest 15lb.

But teenage angler Toby Hardwick beat his record nine times over when he reeled in this monster catfish.

The 18-year-old was staggered when he hooked the 139lb specimen on a fishing holiday to celebrate his birthday.

It was part of a remarkable haul of fish that Toby and his father Alan, pictured above with the giant catfish, caught on their trip to the River Ebro in Northern

Spain. Mr Hardwick, of Solisgan Wood, Tomatin, Inverness-shire, said: 'It was just a wee present to mark Toby's 18th birthday.'

'Previously, his best fish was a 15lb pike he caught at Loch Duntelchaig, but this was something else.'

'We had just got two rods set up when, after ten minutes, the first rod went and he caught the biggest fish of the week which weighed 139lb. Toby was almost taken off his feet with the shock. We just

could not believe the size of it. We were stunned.'

Toby, who works at a fishing tackle shop in Inverness, was delighted with his birthday trip.

He said: 'It was brilliant. I want to go back out there with my mates. It was just superb.'

'When I hooked the fish it was a shock. It almost pulled me off my feet. It was

fantastic fishing. It was a wonderful birthday present from my dad.'

The catfish gets its name from its long barbels, which look like whiskers. It can be found in various habitats, ranging from stagnant water to fast mountain streams.

The catfish's mouth is lined with hundreds of razor-sharp teeth, used to 'rasp' prey - such as fish, frogs, water birds and small mammals.