



**Talking
Carp**
Magazine

Issue 70
December 2021



**SPECIAL EDITION
CARTOON CARPER CHRISTMAS COVER**

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P R E C I S E N U T R I T I O N T E C H N O L O G Y

Hello and welcome.... To issue 70

Well, what a year it has been... many ups and many downs. I can still remember writing last Decembers editorial like it was yesterday... yet here we are.

We have had a fabulous year bringing the magazine to you and we hope to continue doing so next year, and as always it is because of you, the readers, getting involved. We are the magazine written by the reader for the reader, the magazine written by the angler, for the angler. No bias and no snobbery here!! Everyone is welcome. 2021 saw many new writers come through and join the likes of Cundiff, Turnbull, Grant, Murray and so many more. Will you be next? Do you dream of writing your own articles but don't know where to start? Give us a shout... we got you!

Email us and we will walk you through it.

Also keep those catch reports rolling in!! And remember... there's always a chance you could make front cover! How cool would that be?

That's me for this year, and I would like to take this opportunity wish our writers, advertisers, contributors and readers here at Talking Carp a big heartfelt thank you for 2021 and look forward to a wonderful 2022.

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year everybody
The magazine written for the angler, by the angler.
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Team Talking Carp

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Cover shot - Joe Turnbull by Cartoon Carper - Full story from Cartton Carper next month

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PHOTOGRAPHY BASICS THEN
AND NOW PART 2

BY JOE TURNBULL

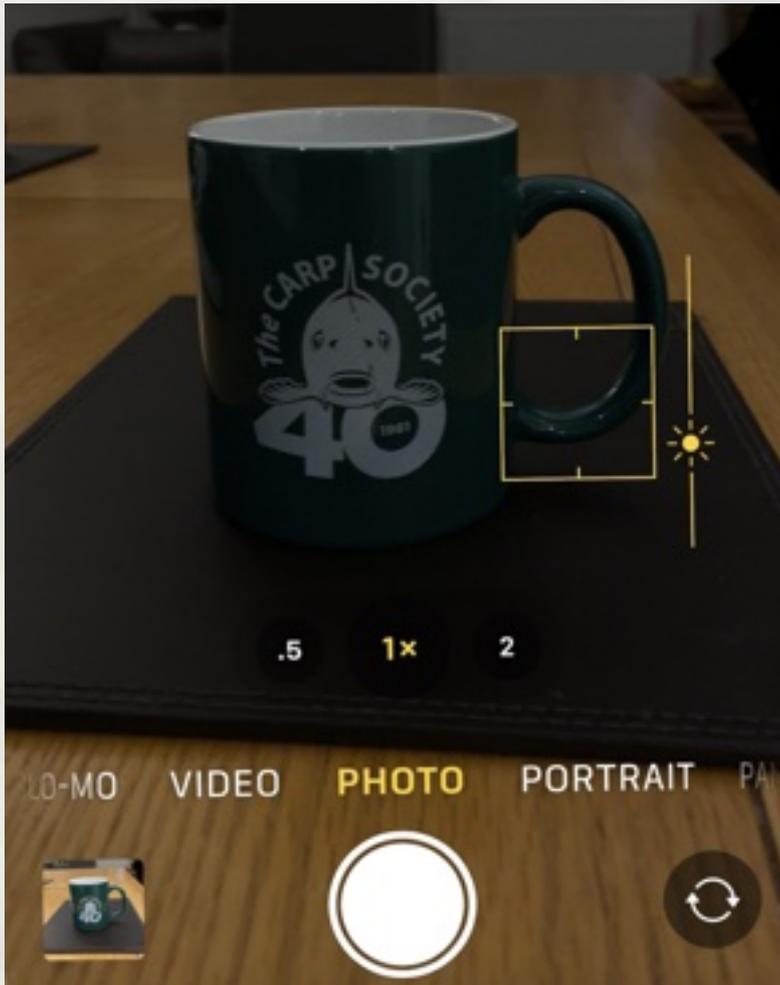
The Mobile Phone

Following on from last month's look at how we've progressed with cameras and photography I thought I'd continue this month with a look at mobile phones. We've come a long way with them and hopefully I'll be able to give you some tips on how to get the best from them. Obviously, there are a few popular mobile models that have great cameras, and I haven't used them all, but Apple iPhone appears to be popular so if you have one of those you may be in luck. The majority of mobiles are the same in what they do albeit with a few minor changes so I'm sure you'll find the following of some use no matter what device you may have.

Now, personally, I have the latest pro12 and although the pro13 is now out, there isn't much difference between the two other than automatic cinematic focus and a few further zoom functions of each lens.

Zoom In Or Zoom Out?

I don't think I need to explain what a zoom feature is but just in case you're wondering what that is, you can basically zoom in on a subject without having to move your camera nearer the subject. The only problem with taking a photo by using the zoom function with these types of cameras is that the further you zoom in on a subject, the more it tends to blur the finished photo. The reason for this is that these cameras have a digital zoom and not a zoom like you would usually have on a standard DSLR (Digital single lens reflex) camera. So, if you're going to zoom in on a subject, just remember that the photo will generally always lose quality especially if you're taking a photo of something at distance. Close up shots of something like a packet of hooks or hook baits is fine but trying to zoom in on something like a bird sitting on a branch will usually look blurred, unless you can get closer of course. The bottom line with getting a nice sharp close up shot is that you need to be as close as you can to the particular subject.



In this photo you can clearly see the mat is wonky but the horizontal line is straight.

Lighting

On the iPhone and on most phones such as the Samsung Galaxy you can adjust the light that's coming into the lens. On the iPhone there are two live lighting settings that you can use and I'm pretty sure that you can do the same with the Samsung. The first setting is literally on the camera picture screen itself and to adjust this whilst taking a photo you simply touch the part of the screen that looks bright, and the auto adjust should rectify it. There is also a manual setting that you can adjust by touching the line next to the small

yellow box. This can be slid either down for darker or up for brighter it's that simple. However, the latest setting that can be adjusted for light compensation is the exposure button. If you press the small triangle at the top of the picture screen it will expose a small drop-down menu that displays a few options. Now look to right of photo ratio size numbered button and you'll see a round symbol with a plus and a minus in it. This is the new exposure button but do not mistake it for simply adding or taking away light. Although it does do that in a roundabout way, it actually adjusts the picture for the correct colour and light balance so that what you're taking a picture of looks exactly like what you see with your eyes. The correct lighting on a photo can really make a picture look a million dollars so think about that the next time you take a photo of anything. One other really neat addition to the latest phones is that of the long exposure



Look at this photo. The end of the table is the horizontal and everything including the mat is perfectly straight.

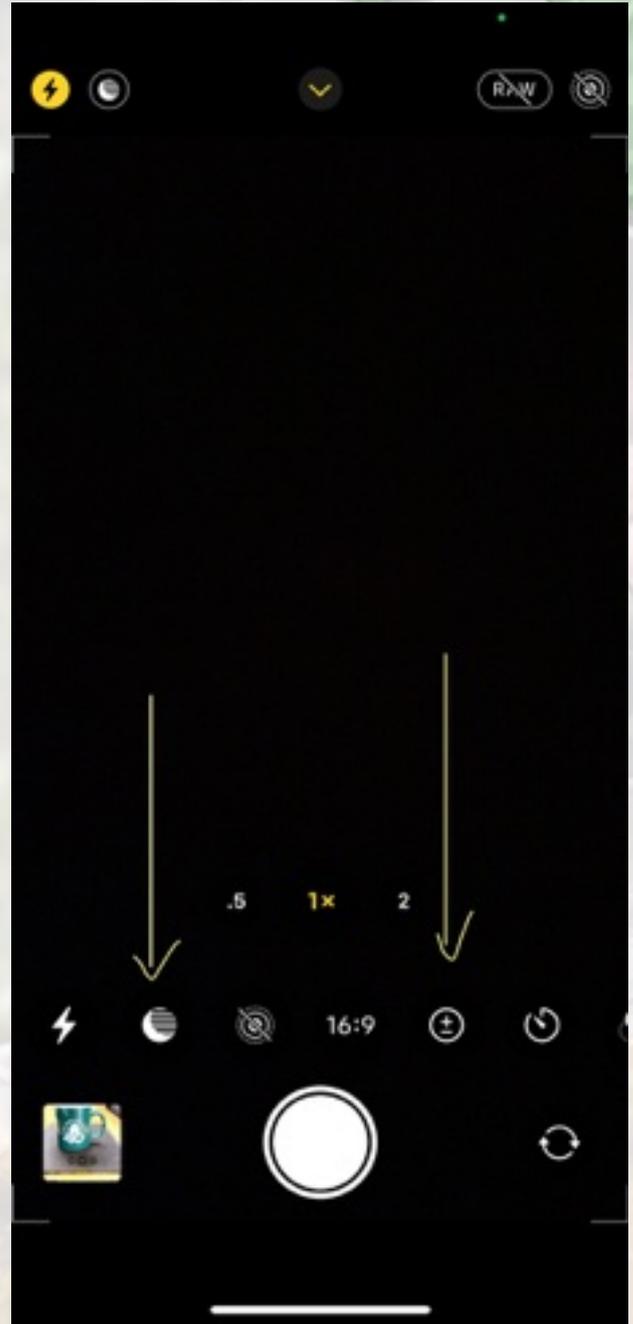
settings. This setting now enables the user to take much better photos in dim or low light situations. Once again you will never beat the more expensive DSLR or non-mirrored digital cameras but used correctly and it can give your more expensive cameras a good run for their money. This setting is next to the flash setting and can be set to auto or manual but when taking a photo on this setting you need to hold the camera dead still or you'll get a very blurry picture. If you have a tripod they work perfectly and if you don't you must get one. We'll look at those further on as they are an integral and seriously important thing to have. They are also fairly cheap and once you have one, you'll never look back.

Framing And The Horizon

This is another subject that will make an enormous difference when looking for the perfect photo. Getting your subject in frame is especially important and even more important is getting the horizon correct. An example of getting it wrong that I see on a daily basis on social media is one where the angler will take a photo of his lovely rod set up with the lake in the background only for the lake water to look like it's on a hill or slope. It's easy to get that wrong because your eye is so focused on getting the rods looking nice, that you forget to look beyond them. Once you train your eye to not only look at the subject, you're taking the picture of, your photo's will look much better all round. Getting the horizon



Once you press the low light setting you can adjust it for a night shot.



The arrow on the left is the low light setting and the one on the right is the exposure adjustment. Both are very important and give great effects.

correct is fairly simple and you can pick that out by looking at any horizontal line in the distance. There will always be a horizontal line in every single scene, you just have to look for it, but it is there. It could be the sleeper that's in the front of the swim or the furthest part of the lake but picking one out will give you a base for your photo to sit on. Once

you have a good horizontal line to work with you can then go ahead and square up your photo. The same principle works whether you're using a mobile phone or latest DSLR camera. In fact, on most mobiles there is usually a setting that you can enable which then places a lined grid on the screen so that all you need to do is find a horizontal line and match the lines up.

So, what are we looking for in a finished photo, well we want sharpness of the main subject, correct lighting and correct horizons. A nicely framed photo with your subject in the centre is what we're looking for when we're talking about fish captures. Next month we'll look at self takes, framing a fish correctly and making sure you're holding it right. Until then keep at it and have a great Christmas!

JT



Here's a nicely framed and perfectly lit photo... notice how my fingers are out of the way of the fish.

Talking Point



*with Julian Cundiff
and Brian Dixon*

TALKING POINT...

LOOKING BACK AT 2021

with Julian Cundiff

So here we are... wrapping up 2021 and who better than to chat with than our good friend Mr Julian Cundiff.

Well, here we are Jules, the end of 2021 looms closely and we have a brand new year to look forward to. So, this month we will start by looking back at the year.

T.C. It was an uncertain start to the year but we hung in there, and we all finally got our angling heads on. Common sense seemed to prevail and we got back into the swing of things...so how has your angling year gone Jules?

J.C Well here we are again and thank goodness we are. Sadly, it has been a year when we have lost people to the dreaded C word and other illnesses so I'm just happy to be here typing this albeit seeing off the remnants of my once a year cold my friend. To be honest the weather has been that **** this week that missing a week kind of wasn't that bad. Fishing wise it's been enjoyable and looking at my diaries I've fished thirteen waters and had just over three hundred carp so I'm fine with that in purely statistical terms. What I have enjoyed is consistency and although I've had a few blanks I've only had one seven day period without a carp.....and that has been this week.... due to illness. I had seven last Monday as I started to feel crap and my next trip was a week on Tuesday so not bad. Nothing earth shattering but a blooming good year when I think about it.

T.C They do say you can't teach an old dogs new tricks but we know that's not true don't we.... Every day can be a school day. So, do tell... have you picked up any new tips or tricks that have helped you bank a bonus fish?

J.C To be honest being in the game so long there is very little ' new ' that comes along but two things I've picked up on and disciplined myself to do have helped. Firstly hookbaits.. Normally the year follows a pattern with my hookbaits. Yellow Pineapple pop ups mid-winter, then Condensed Milk in White moving on to the same in Pink as they wise up. As we get into summer the match the hatch pop ups over lots of Scopex Squid and once those clear spots start appearing the good old Cultured Hookbaits on the hard spots. This year I've been less willing to put up with quieter spells and have been ringing the changes more often swapping colours and flavours quickly. I was catching well on match the hatch in the spring and fishing bright ones over feed in the summer which is unusual. Secondly I've been using less rods than usual and working a spot or maybe two better.

Most of the time I've fished two rods rather than three and I've honestly fished just one rod as many times as I've fished three. Less noise, quicker to get set up and more focused I guess? I've never felt compromised for sure.

T.C Looking forward to it appears the shows are back on for now, and



First blood with the new Nash Smock

the tackle companies will have all their goodies on display. We know you've already had a look at the new Nash stuff... is there plenty coming for us to spend our pennies on?

J.C Yes, the new gear from most major brands is starting to hit the shops now but I'm sure that most of you will be aware that a good percentage is made abroad, imported in and therein is the issue. Container costs have risen tenfold, there are less ships out there, less people to crew them and the red tape is horrendous. For that reason, supply of new items will continue to be an issue. Nash wise I'm loving my new R4 buzzers with the drop back tone, dual lights and sensitivity extras making my fishing much better on the indication side of things. The new soft fleece lined Smock and joggers are so warm and I'm only wearing a base layer under the Smock because it's so warm. The kneeling pads on the joggers come in very handy too at this time of year. So those are what yours truly is putting to the test

but I can tell you there is an awesome Nashbait particle range coming soon, a new Bushwhacker and so much more.



Alan and me will see you on the shop days

T.C So what are your plans for carp fishing next year? Will you simply keep on doing what you're doing or do you have plans for a special trip here and there?

J.C. What the pandemic has taught me is not to plan too far ahead so my plans are pretty similar



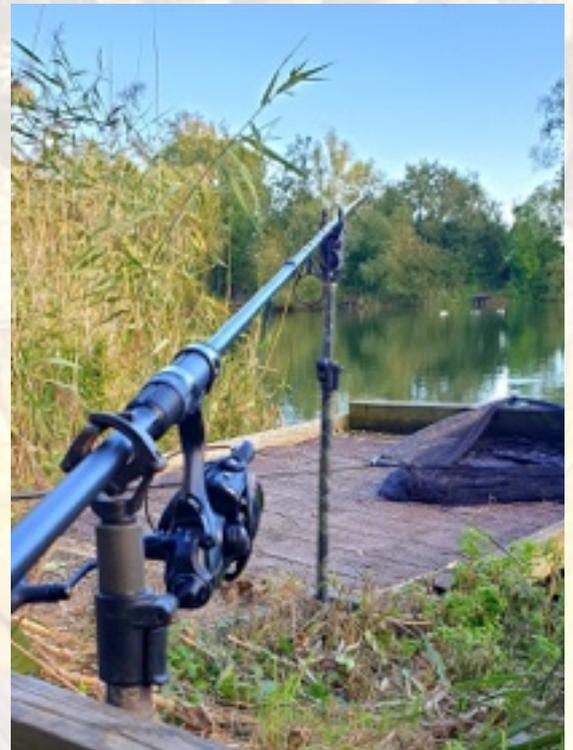
with one new syndicate place finally achieved. I'm going to up my game on the place I call ' Jurassic Park ' as my tactics have been producing too many of the bodyguards and not enough of the A Team. If it snows I'm hoping to catch a few more and that's about it. You make plans then life gets in the way.

I'm in there somewhere. Love the shows but not this winter

T.C Is there anything you would like to see in the carp fishing world in 2022? Any changes you would enforce if it was possible? I know there are a couple we would like to see....

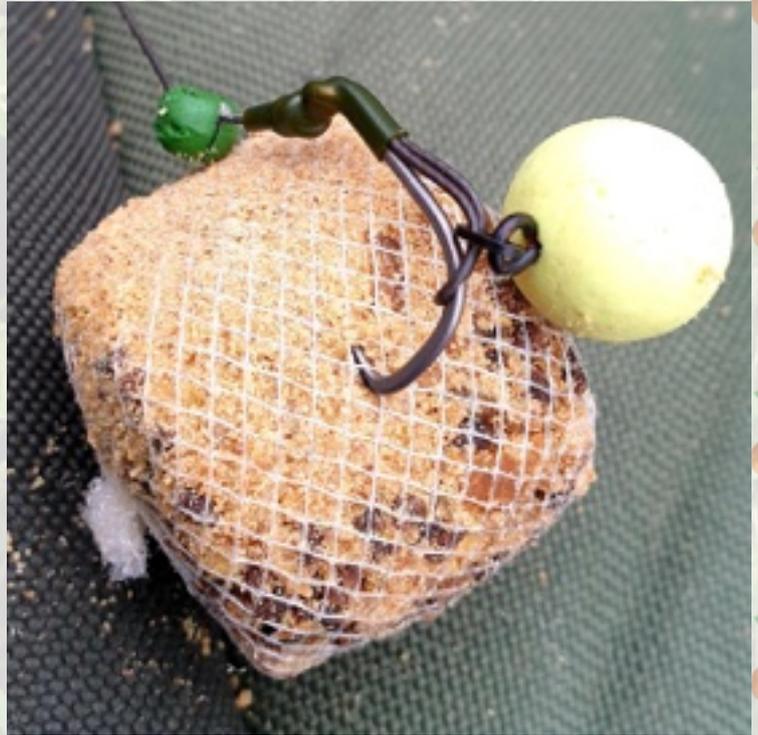
Mandatory fish care products with every angler. We have seen people with thousands of pounds worth of fishing paraphernalia and no carp care liquid.... Simply cannot figure that out.

J.C. Fishing is such a wide church that I'm not one for mandates as I probably have not walked in the steps of those people. I guess if I could say or do one thing I'd say to fishery owners stop complaining about litter droppers, bad fish care, being off the rods, being knobs etc and ****g do something about it. When I ran Three Lakes if you broke



One rod was often enough

rules you got banned and I made sure the syndicate knew who and why. That soon sorted it. Peter Broxup taught me that when I gusted at Savay. He made the rules, he enforced them, and his word was final. Anglers are replaceable, old carp are not. Nowadays I see lots of posts by fisheries on gates being left open, litter dropped, rules broken and tut tut. Like that works.... duh....grew some **** and **** them off. Don't let a minority **** it for the majority of us or is a few bits of ticket money really that important?



Varying my colours and flavours helped

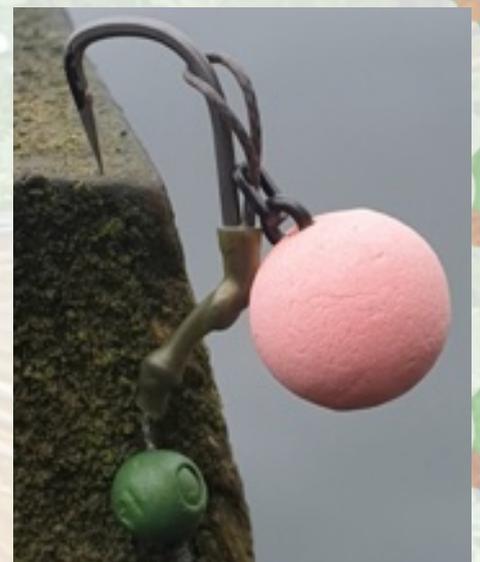
T.C. What about Santa's list? Did you make the nice list this year? What fishing related items are you hoping Santa may deliver to you on



Sharpened hooks catch more thanks Rig It Tackle



Loving my new R4 buzzers



That's a bite

Christmas morning?? We all have those wish lists don't we!

J.C. Not fishing tackle I can assure you mate. The new KISS Destroyer 45th Anniversary Box Set, John Hopkins of MotoGP fame book, a house move.....nothing major...

T.C Just a quick one for this issue, and time to wrap up for 2021, I know all our readers will join me in wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year. We look forward to chatting again in the next issue as we roll into 2022.

So to finish off in true Jules style, can you give our readers one bit of advice that we could take on our next sessions with us.

J.C. Thanks Brian....one bit of advice ? I think not to be sloppy and as I say at my shows it's either right or it's shite. You don't catch any less carp by doing things right and you will catch a lot less by doing



It was a bite !!

it sloppily. Accurate casting and baiting up. Being quiet. Getting there first and leaving last. Getting your hooks pin sharp (thanks Lisa and Rig It Tackle) and so on. Not doing things as well as you can WHEN ITS IN YOUR

HANDS to do so is poor angling people and will cost you carp.

T.C Thank you once again, and we will catch up soon. All the very best for 2022. Brian and the team.

J.C. And Happy Christmas and New Year to all my friends on here. Check out my social media links as you can always contact me on those and on some tackle shop days I'm doing in winter '21 and spring '22 with Alan Blair countrywide. I'm not doing the big shows Essex Carp Show, NAS or the Big One for the obvious reasons (to me). I'm a people person and hundreds and hundreds of close indoor contacts with people who've had similar amounts of contacts for my health is crazy. Sorry mate I'm standing away from you doing that selfie etc is rude to them so please forgive my absence from the winter show season that I've been doing almost thirty five years now. Please go and enjoy it safely.

Jules

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Sadly we lost some lovely people in 2021



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Life is a Minestrone...

by Andy Murray

Hi all, the title may seem a bit strange to some, but no doubt the older folk amongst you reading this will remember the song from 10cc, if memory is correct, it was released in 1975, oh my word, I was 18 then! So, what has the title to do with fishing? Well, like most of my ramblings we will get there eventually. I haven't contributed on here regularly for a few months, due to a number of issues, hopefully normal service will be resumed going forward, as I clear my life a bit.

By the time you are reading this Christmas will be upon us, and what a different one to last year heh? A little bit more optimism and hope that things are coming back to normal, though it is a different type of normal than most will have pictured. As I just typed that line, the announcement came on the TV from Boris about new measures coming in due to the new strain of Covid-19! So, I guess we will have to wait and see... The last two years have been a real test for most folks, including myself and my family, but we press on, building for the future. After a few set-backs Sal has had the all-clear from the cancer that was diagnosed at Christmas 2019. Getting over the treatment from Cancer can take years and we are seeing this first hand. So, maybe we can start to plan and look forward to things again. There is no doubt this and other things have impacted on my own fishing, well it's bound to, isn't it?

So, back to the title, Minestrone soup is a centuries old dish that is basically a bit of everything that can be used, that's how my fishing year seems to have been this year, a bit here and a bit there, just chuck it in, sometimes making do just to get out on the bank, chopping and changing tackle to use and test. All of this has affected my catches at times. I never seemed to really settle into one pattern of fishing, when I did drop on fish then all was



ok, but there were a number of times when I didn't drop on them and seemed powerless to do much about it. There is no doubt, the lack of regular bank time didn't help, as well as competing for bank space on busy day ticket waters. In the first part of the year, I spent too much time at meetings and filming etc. Doing stuff for others, which to be honest now, I wished I hadn't, I sacrificed my own quality fishing time and that's something I can't get back. My work with Wolf has come to an end and

I don't intend to make any similar mistakes next year. Not that I regret getting involved, life is a journey and trying new things is part of that. It didn't work out, so time to move on. On some of the Self-help Seminars I run, one of the phrases I frequently impress upon attendees is 'If you are doing something that doesn't serve you or your family directly, or a cause you are involved, you should ask yourself why I am doing this?' If you can't answer that, then walk away, it's not a criticism of anyone, it's just how things worked out. I wasn't seeing or achieving what I expected from the effort I put in and I have a busy life, only so much can be fit in, maybe the time just wasn't right.

The second half of the summer and into Autumn, we had family

illness's, a number of family gatherings, some Birthdays and two weddings, which meant weekends away and also me not wanting to travel far from home for too long. For me family always takes priority and always will, but again it ate into my fishing time. As I'm writing this its late November and the weather has taken a dip for the worse, I'm about to switch to my winter water, which will be fishing days only, already work and weather has lost me a couple of sessions. As I said at the start of this piece, a lot of stuff has interfered with my fishing, I am hoping its temporary, and things will go a bit better in the future. But and this is a big but, time alone is not the issue. It may appear to some that those who fish a lot more catch a lot more, that doesn't necessarily follow though. One still has to apply oneself just as much, if not more, as we are not just fishing against the carp but other anglers

as well, which has certainly been the case this year with more anglers on the bank again.

It's usually this time of year when I take a look at the years fishing and look at lessons learned, which is what I am doing now, and will do so for the next few weeks in the run up to Christmas and then in the New year work on plans for the coming year. This helps me start the new season with some fresh ideas and plans. The other thing I need to work on for a



few months, as you can see by the posing picture, is to lose a bit of weight, certainly I need lose a stone or so and work at getting some fitness back, the next 2-3 months are ideal times for this, rather than wait until just after Christmas and gasp one morning when I step on the scales! It's easier to be energetic when fishing if you are fit and strong. Given my age its harder to get that fitness back, the longer it's left. Some of my fishing borders on extreme and there have been times when I haven't gone into a swim because of the sheer amount of effort it would take. So a couple of cycling sessions a week and a couple of gym sessions, and a little less falling down water!

There have been clearly times on the big pit when I wasn't getting

it right, it's certainly not an easy water but I felt at times I should have caught more than I did. Over the last few trips out I have been making some changes to my tackle and my set-ups, it seems to have made some impact and has certainly given me a few thoughts as to things I haven't been getting right. In the new year I'm going to cover bait, tackle and tactics in more depth as it warrants more space than this piece. One thing I have experienced



this year has been that I seem to have dropped more carp than usual, looking back, over the year I have dropped about five carp, now that may not sound that much, but on a difficult water that's an average season compared against what could have been a great season. Being honest with myself, a small part of the cause of this has to be laziness on my part, such as not checking line enough, not retying leader knots, not changing rigs regular enough. As I said, it isn't just about time, it's about effort as well. If you want to catch on a regular basis, then you have to apply yourself a bit more, there are times this year when I haven't done that and caught less. Maybe I'm just being a bit hard on myself, but nothing wrong with a bit of self-criticism. To be honest, I had a couple of trips in September, when our France trip was cancelled, I caught on both trips, when I was the only angler in a line of anglers getting a bite at all, so maybe I'm not far off...just a little bit more practice and effort is needed. There are some things I did that really worked, such as using PVA bags more and fine tuning the set-ups for this, but even then, there were times when I wasn't getting the best out of this. So, in the New Year I'm going to go into a lot of these things in more detail.

Just lately I have switched to using another bait from the DT Baits stable, there are so many to choose from I was spoilt for choice, even when I first went to the factory, I was like a kid in a sweet shop. I wanted something that had a bit more initial pull, I had caught well on the N-Blend, but I felt it was maybe a bit subtle for how I was fishing. So, I have switched to the Pukka Fish with Peach and Sour Cream, I think this will be my bait for the next year now, I have been impressed with the results from the off, after catching on it straight away. It is part of thinking things through and being honest with what is working and what is not working. All baits are not suitable to all waters, but one must give

it enough time to get to the right conclusion. The other thing I deviated from was changing my baiting approach I had planned for the year, why I have no idea. I had a clear plan of how I was going to fish right back in April. Yet by half-way through the year, I was messing around with all sorts. Later into the season talking to another angler, he was having great results doing what I had planned to do all year, what a plonker I am!

So, yesterday was my first winter day trip to the Tarn, the forecast was -3 at night and 0 degrees in the day, after the storms we had this weekend, I call that winter fishing. I spent some time in the garage the day before mixing up some boilie crumb and additives to let them soak overnight. The lake has been fishing well, and I had some info and a couple of tips, which I need after last winter's fishing on there. What happened when I got there? It was frozen solid! It was a long trudge home to unpack. There is always next time I guess.

Wishing you all
and your families
a great Christmas
and a happy,
healthy and
prosperous New
Year

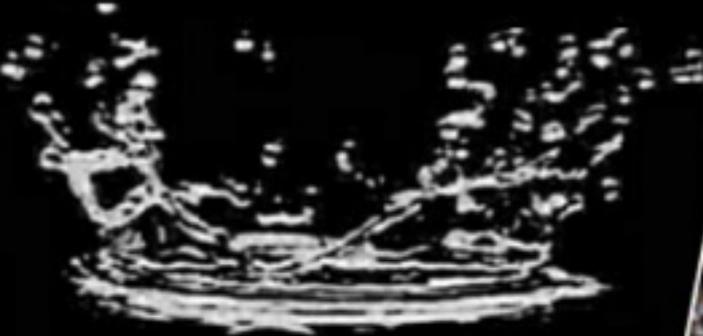
Catch you next
time.

Regards

Andy



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IN THE MARGIN
PARTICLES



All for a good cause....

Lucy's Bowl by Scott Geezer Grant



lucysbowl

Est 2011

Following my successful session over the Dell, I was off to Cornwall for 2 weeks, with the Mrs and my dog. It had been planned for a while with my dive club BSAC. After successfully passing all my exams/ Lectures for Sports Diver I would be taking my final step to get my qualification. Needless to say, it was a cracking holiday with plenty of diving, and halfway through my final week a dive was planned with the Dive Officer. I led the dive and what a great dive it was, a wreckage at just over 20 metres. The dive went really well and the icing on the cake was getting the hand shake from my D/O to say I had passed. Finally, the hard work has paid off and with this qualification I can dive down to 35 metres. Diving is another passion of mine and when diving a lake, I fish it makes it even more special. Once back from holiday it was back to work, and my next fishing session wouldn't be until late August.

In 2019 I was asked by Mark Twin if I minded being put up for auction, this would be for 48 hrs with me accommodating the winning bidder on Bayeswater Syndicate with all proceeds going to Lucy's Bowl. I remember saying to Mark you'll be lucky if anyone bids let alone anyone actually bidding their hard-earned cash. Well as luck would have it the winning bid was £450, which I was totally blown away with. This was great for the charity and



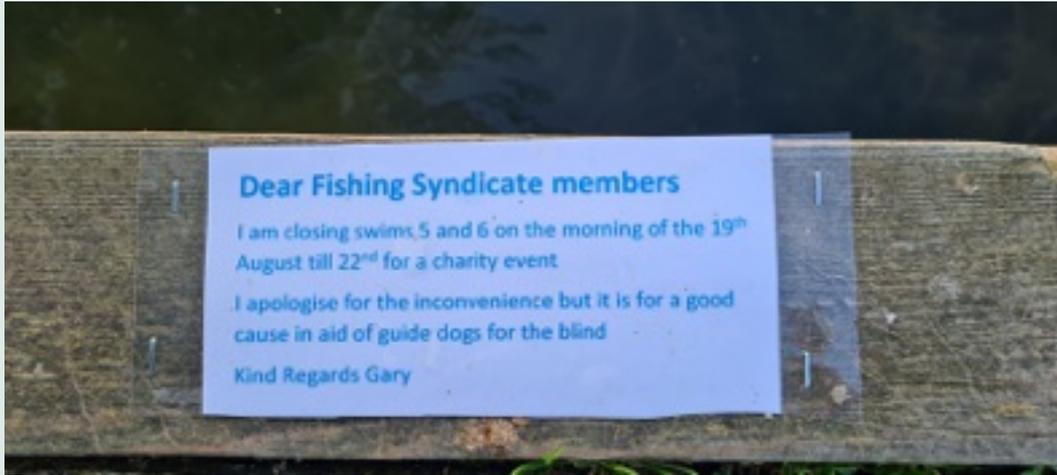
now all I had to do was plan the session. I contacted Chris the winning bidder and the session was temporarily planned for the August of the same year. But nearer the time Chris contacted me to say his wife has just had a baby and he didn't want to be away for 48 hrs. I totally understood and told him I would plan the session for August 2020, this would give him plenty of time and I can then get the days booked off of work. Well, we all know what happened come the end of March the Covid

pandemic hit which wiped out the rest of the year, plus after getting pains in my groin and not knowing what they were was worrying, but after collapsing and getting rushed to hospital I was diagnosed with a double hernia right in the ball sack area, the pain let me tell you was off the scale!! Hence the reason that the session didn't go ahead and was planned again for August 2021. Well, I can tell you the session did go ahead and what a session it turned out to be.

I had arranged to meet Chris in the car park on the Thursday morning. I had already spoken to Craig owner of A2 baits and he had kindly donated 5kg of boilies along with

matching pop ups, wafers and glugs all in Creamy Toffee. Chris turned out to be a lovely lad and because he had waited so long, I told him he could fish for 72 hrs rather than the 48 hrs. We walked over to the lake and down to swim 6, I had both swims 5 & 6 roped off and Chris had the choice of which one he wanted to go into. He liked the look of 6 I told him what was out Infront then we walked down to swim 5, as we stood there





using and why.

I opted to put his rods out with my boat as all the rods would be bang on and go out with minimal disturbance.

looking out of the swim just as I was explaining what was out in front a unit of a common breached the water right on top of the plateau. Chris looked straight at me and said "Think I'll go in here if that's okay" "no worries, mate fill your boots this session and it's all about me helping you to bank a fish".

I left Chris to get his gear to the swim and everything set up, whilst I did the same. A couple of hours later I had everything sorted so now the only thing left to do was get Chris rods out on the dance floor. He was as proud as punch when I gave him the bait and thanked Craig personally. Chris went out in the boat life jacket on and scope in hand, but due to the wind he couldn't really keep still long enough to see any clearish areas. I told him the weed is not as bad as it was but it is still pretty weedy out there. I told him what rig I had been

With all his rods fished on top of the low lying weed on the plateau it was time for him to sit down and take everything in whilst I went about getting my rods out.

I fished all my rods on the ledge with sparse amounts of weed, it was successful for me on my previous trip a few weeks back so that was going to be my starting point. Come morning when the fish will hopefully start showing I can adjust my areas if need be. That evening I treated us both to a lovely homemade Chillie washed down with a few ciders. Chris was really enjoying himself which to be



honest was my main priority. It wasn't about my fishing it's about him and hopefully catching one of the elusive carp that reside in here. Anyone will tell you this isn't an easy lake by any means, if you've caught 10 fish a year you've had a very good season that's the reality of this place.

As I had been up at 0500 o'clock every morning for the past week come 22:30 my bed was calling me and I had to get some sleep. I told Chris if he has anything to come and get me straight away. As soon as I laid on the bed my head hit the pillow and the next thing, I remember was my alarm going off at 05:00 o'clock!!

I had forgotten to turn it off but it didn't matter I always like to be up for first light at this time of year, as this is the time fish will give themselves away. The kettle went on and the mist was dancing across the water it looked magical, out the corner of my eye I saw some water displacement, it was definitely a carp and a good one at that, they were here which to be honest made me feel so much better, and confident. I had just finished my coffee when Chris rang me and said "Geeze I've got one" to which

I replied "what you've got a carp, and not a tench" Chris replied "no mate it's a carp a lovely scaley one as well" I was a bit gobsmacked to be honest, I grabbed my carp care and went straight down to his swim. Sure, enough a lovely scaley banger was laying in the net, the smile on his face was priceless, he had achieved what some anglers can only dream of, and I hasten to add after only his first ever night on the lake.

With the sling zeroed and the mat doused with water it was ready for Chris to get his prize. With the fish





was nice to see. Steve is a wealth of knowledge and is willing to share it, he always likes anglers to feel confident and if he can help with that

secured Chris lifted up the scales and a weight of 23lb 8oz was recorded. I was so happy for him and judging by the photos he was ecstatic. I took some cracking shots, the fish was then treated and returned safely. I put Chris rod back out then left him floating on cloud 9 whilst I put the kettle on. Chris cooked a lovely breakfast for us both which went down a treat then a few hours later I took him for a guided tour of the whole lake. Just as we were making our way back to our swims, we bumped into one of the bailiffs and all-round top bloke Steve Bugg, He's currently a little under the weather shall we say but as always, he was in high spirits and had a lot of time for Chris which

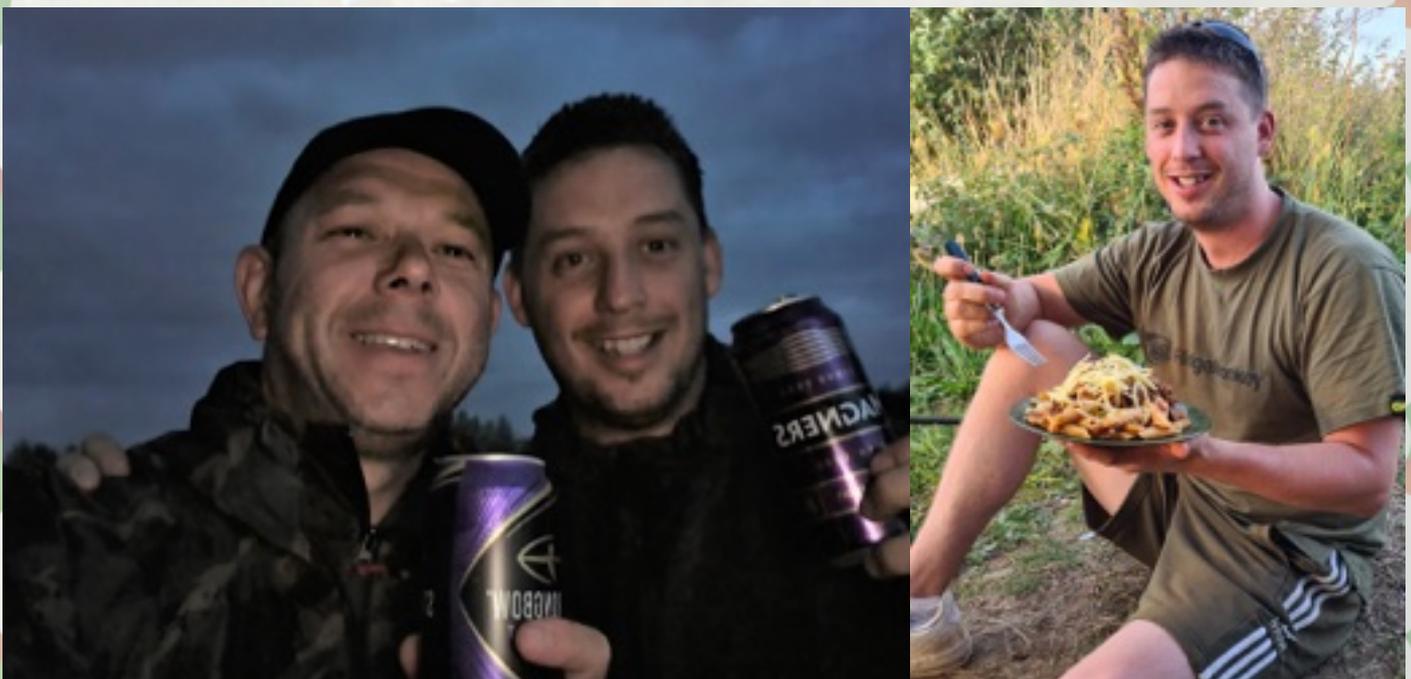
he will do. The amount of PBs that anglers have caught on the day ticket lake is phenomenal and no doubt Steve has helped them along the way.

Steve had a quick cup of tea with us before doing his rounds on the day ticket lake. Me and Chris spent



the rest of the afternoon chatting etc. Chris has got a beautiful family and it was nice to hear him speak so highly of his wife and how much he loves his boy. Evening soon approached and before dinner I redone both mine and Chris rods. On the menu tonight was Cajun chicken another cracking meal courtesy of my Mrs, she really is an exceptional cook. Again, this was washed down with a few ciders. After a great social I retired to bed just after midnight to be honest I could have stayed up all night the cider was flowing and the company was great, but it would have rendered me to sleeping the next day which wouldn't be good. I was woken at just after 03:00 o'clock with 2 bleeps on the left-hand rod, I got out the bivvy and

stood by the rods for the next 10 minutes, but after getting eaten alive by the mozzies and nothing else happening I got back in the bag and managed to get back to sleep. Chris called me moments later and said he had a fish on, I jumped up and started getting dressed, when he called me back to say he had just landed a tench and not to bother. It took me a while to get back to sleep and just after 05:00 o'clock the left-hand rod gave a single bleep again, so I got up put the kettle on, then sat watching the water. At 06:30 I took my boat down to Chris and put his rod back out, I had only just got back to the bivvy when he got a take but lost the fish almost immediately!! With a change of hook link material, a new rig was put on and the rod put back out.



Once back at my swim I stuck the kettle on for another brew and as I sat there the left-hand rod beeped again, a plume of bubbles hit the surface right over my baited area. Then all of a sudden, a unit of a fish crashed out right over the rod, surely it can't be long before the rods away.

Half an hour later the same rod beeped the hanger started to tighten then Ping, the line was out the clip and the rod was in full blown melt down, I was straight on the rod and keep the rod high as not to let the fish weed me up, I kept constant pressure on and managed to turn the fish towards me, after a few nerve-racking moments and just as I slid the net under a lovely dark mirror Chris came walking into my swim. He

said he heard a commotion and thought I was into a fish which I was. The fish turned out to be "Broken Back Lin" and she was in pristine condition on the scales she went 33lb 9oz and to be honest when your catching fish of this stature weight is irrelevant. My old mate Porky who was in swim 9 wound his rods in and came round to do the photos (much appreciated as always mate). With the photos done the fish was treated with the best medication I have ever used Propolis great stuff and every angler should have it in their fish care kit. With the fish safely returned the rod was rebaited and put back out on the spot with a generous amount of bait.

Just before midday Chris caught another tench so there is fish





about in his area just the wrong species. As it was our final night, I was hoping the carp gods would grace Chris net with one of the A Team, that would finish the session off lovely. After a spot of lunch, we both relaxed in our swims watching the water. Late afternoon just as I was about to go and help Chris redo his rods a fish crashed over my left-hand rod, followed by a plume of bubbles, the rod bleeped followed by a one toner which to be honest shit the life out of me, again I was right on the rod, lifting the rod to gain height and hopefully stop the fish from going into any of the weed beds dotted all around us. No such luck the fish went on the rampage and found one of the weed beds and the rod was now locked up solid. I gave Porky a shout as he was already out in

the boat, he came straight over I passed him a net and grabbed my life jacket before getting in the boat and going into battle. Even when we got above the fish it just went mental and was pulling

the boat about for fun. Eventually after an arm aching fight Porky managed to slip the net under a very angry mirror along with a shit load of weed. Once back at the bank Chris gave us a hand and the fish turned out to be one of the stockies weighing in at 26lb. Porky was on hand yet again and took great shots as he always does. That evening me and Chris celebrated with a few ciders and after a quiet night for us both Sunday morning was wet as the rain started to come down in the early hours and wasn't due to stop until mid-morning. Chris was all packed up by 12:00 o'clock and thanked me for an absolute cracking session.

I had a big decision to make, did I make the right decision? What happens is immense!! All will be

revealed in next month's issue so don't miss it.

I would like to thank the following companies for their products of which I use in my fishing.

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I wish you all a Great Christmas and New Year; I hope 2022 brings all of you happiness and good health. Not forgetting plenty of chunks in the net.

Stay safe and remember its only fishing.

Scott "Geezer" Grant



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Getting Yourself Ready For Winter

By Richard Handel

If you are planning on fishing over the winter months, choose your venue to suit your needs, once you've started your campaign, you will only make it a lot harder on yourself by moving waters.

90s Style

The key factor in successfully catching carp over the winter months is definitely motivation, without that, you will find the long winter nights and cold weather hard going. It's extremely hard work setting up in the dark and cold - consider this when picking your venue, along with how many nights you plan on doing each week. A single night and then head off to work in the morning, I've spent many winters doing two or three single nights each week. Believe me, you certainly need the motivation to set up and pack up in the

dark, don't forget you could be blanking a lot. If you choose to do a couple of nights in a row, you still may need to set up in the dark on the first night and carrying extra kit for winter can make this a lot harder. A tip I've learned is only to take the basic kit you need to your swim on the first night and then collect the rest the following morning. If this isn't an option just take less kit, it's amazing how much you don't really need.

The Swamp

Pick your venue with the above in mind, a long walk to set up in the dark came to be very hard going and you will be doing this all winter long. Oddly, a walk back in the dark was less of an issue for me, as long as I'd set up in the daylight. A trick I discovered, once

you were all sorted, had a bite to eat and the last drink of the day, pack it all away. It simplifies the job in the dark/the following morning and is less of a bind.

Cold Night's

The ideal solution is to find a venue with parking around the lake or even the luxury of parking behind your swim. The car park swim is always a favourite and over the winter months, especially on weeknights, is generally empty, fishing out of your car is a real bonus over the winter.

Being organized helps. Getting into the same routine every time you set up and pack away, it'll become second nature to you. One winter, I would do a ninety-mile round trip for a single night, set



a good vista you can find them and then go catch them the next time. Winter fishing can be very wet cold and damp, with lots of mud, higher water levels and can be extremely hard going when

up, and pack away in the dark. My reward was a spectacular mirror at the end of February.

Rewards

Setting up in the dark is easy, you're not really in a rush, it's already dark. If you've done your homework or even been fishing the venue all summer long. You know the swims and the layout of the water. You may, if you're lucky, know where the carp are and get a head start on other people. If you're new to the water, pick

a swim which gives you the opportunity to watch large areas of water. Don't forget to lean out in the early hours, I often will have a brew at 1 am and just listen for carp. They love sticking their heads out in the long dark hours of winter. If you're in the swim with

you push your barrow up and down long muddy tracks in the dark.

Dark Night's

Baiting up and casting out is simple, make note of all the horizon makers before winter



sets in and look out for the shadows on the water. The beauty of winter is all those crystal clear skies, with a little bit of light

pollution in the mix, it can be amazing how easy it is to pick out the spots. As long as your casting skills are good, you will build up your confidence so that you can arrive in the dark hours, cast out, bait up with great success and you will catch carp. Comfort is the key. I've written about this plenty of times before, if you're not enjoying your winter fishing, you will not last. I spent many a year under an umbrella doing single nights and after a fair few years, I realized that a full-on bivvy was so much more comfortable. Forget about the hardcore



anglers, just use a bivvy. It completely changed everything and with the simplicity of modern bivvy, it's a lot easier than it was ten or more years ago. Take a hot water bottle if you get cold in your sleeping bag, the modern ones should do you well. Forget the days when I would get two sleeping bags and put one inside the other. Use a bivvy heater for the hours you are sitting in your bivvy, you can't be laying there in the bag for hours. Just make sure you don't fall asleep with it on and definitely make sure you have some

ventilation. If you really want comfort, then use a piece of carpet or a thick picnic rug. I also place my rod bag and bivvy bag around the inside of the bivvy, this reduces the drafts and keeps you a lot warmer. An overwrap is a must for me these days - must be an age thing, but it keeps me going these winter months. Using a letterbox door opening is perfect, it keeps you warm, but lets the gas fumes out, if you have your heater on. You can also use your stove, if you need to keep the amount of kit down to a minimum.



You also can't be stuck in your bivy 24/7, you need good footwear and warm clothing. Remember base layers are the key, more thin layers work better than one or two, as it traps the air in and keeps you a lot warmer. I sleep in a very thin pair of soft trousers and in the day stick a fleece pair over the top in the extremely cold winter days. My feet get terribly cold these days, I blame pike fishing in the winter when I was a kid in wellies. I've found that if I'm stuck in the bivy, you need something thing between you

and the floor and an old unhooking mat is perfect for this.

High water

Once I would read for hours, now I watch Netflix, Disney, or Amazon Prime for hours on end. This oddly does help me

stay up more and listen out for those carp in the middle of the night. It goes without saying eat well, drink hot drinking and there's plenty of good warm clothing on the market these days, unlike the '80s and '90s, it was hard going then.

New Friends

My knowledge of winter fishing has been gained over the past 40 years of fishing and some years have been harder than others.





Simply because of the amount of effort needed to get to the lake; from walking up and down a mile-long track in the dark three nights a week, to simply fishing out of the boot of my car.

You have to do what's right for you and not others. As I said at the beginning, motivation is the starting point and it all builds from there. You will still have to work hard at finding the carp and using the correct bait

application. Simply put, if you're not enjoying it, you certainly will not be fishing at your best and no doubt not catch to your full potential. Winter is one of the best times in the year to fish, fewer anglers on the bank for me makes it just perfect

Great results

Hope this helps you catch some good lumps and inspire you to get out on the bank.

Until next time

Richard





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UNLOCKING THE RESERVE
BY TOM BLACKMORE

The key to unlocking any new water is knowledge and having had a couple of my best pals' fish the carp reserve already for a season and been able to pop over and see them regularly when they were fishing, immediately put me a step ahead. So, my first session was a quick overnighter towards the end of march. The weather was cold and with 40mph winds, I didn't expect much to happen. Out in the boat and 3 rods were dispatched to likely looking areas for fish. As expected, nothing occurred, and I packed up the next day excited to get back down in week or so for what would turn out to be the first bit of success. So, my plan was to go in with the Supa Fruit from DT Bait Developments but on that first session, I had been hammered by

the birds and I mean they didn't leave a crumb. Now this is to be expected on shallow waters, but I was frustrated as they were smashing 22mm baits up! We needed something to give us an edge and to slow the birds. The lake is very silty, so the solution was simple. I knew they would love the Supa Fruit, so I didn't want to change that I just needed to change the colour. So, a quick chat with the boss and the BLACK SUPA FRUIT was born! I obviously had to wait for the idea to processed properly but about a week later the Black Supa Fruit was ready for action. My mate, Michael, had already jumped on board with the idea and the next session we had planned he was going to arrive the night before me.

03:30am the morning

of said session and I was on my way to the lake when my phone started ringing. When I saw it was Mick, my immediate reaction was "what you had mate?" A fully scaled was in the net but we weren't sure what fish it was so sacked it up knowing day light was only a few hours away. His prize was revealed to be a cracking fully scaled at just over 26lb! Not the biggie but a stunner nether the less. I was out in the boat at first light after we had sorted the fish and opted for a swim called the snags due to the snaggy areas all around the swim. Solid bags from Castaway PVA, filled with crushed Black Supa Fruit and Supa Fruit DNA were placed onto three spots. Now, normally the lake is very quiet with only 25 tickets available. However, throughout the course of the day



I think we ended up with something like 12 anglers on which is just unheard of, but I was in my own corner of heaven with a piece of water no one could overly disturb.

Throughout the day I saw a few fish show themselves and quickly disappear within the blink of an eye but having seen the activity and being told they don't show much, I was confident I could get one under my belt. The night come

and went quickly and before I knew it, it was 8am the right-hand rod was bent round and a couple of bleeps on the delkim meant I was in! I picked the rod up and instantly felt a connection to the fish. Due to using braid and being locked up, the fish had kited the short journey to the left of the spot and into a snag under water. I could feel it on so dropped the rod tip down and managed to steer it out. After a powerful 20-minute battle of

going backwards and forwards to the snags it was in the net and my first carp reserve carp was under my belt. I grabbed Mick and Terry, got my camera sorted and then lifted the prize. One of the known fish in the lake and an A team member called "the old Grey". At 25.8 she was down a bit in weight normally being around the 28lb mark. But I was made up. First proper session and first fish being a known one. Result!

Leaving the lake, I was buzzing, and preparation was already underway for the next trip which was going to be later in the month of April and due to a cancelled French trip due to covid it was going to be a 4-day session. This was like winning the lottery as normally if I could manage two nights at a time I was doing well.



But with the confidence I now had that the fish would pick up the Black Supa Fruit and the birds would literally swim over the spots without even stopping I just couldn't wait for that next session to come about.

It was that time again and I was off heading to the lake early. It had been a couple of weeks since the last session so a few laps around the lake and a few trees climbed I didn't see a thing! Which is not overly unusual however

I knew a good bet would most certainly be the snags again. Due to the time I had in front of me, and if it did get busy, I had my own water no one could disturb. All three rods back out to the previous spots and I was fishing. Same approach using solid bags from Castaway PVA filled with crushed Black Supa Fruit. Hand dropped from the rowing boat meant I knew they were well positioned and there was minimal chance of any tangles. The first day went quickly

and with a few shows in the areas again I was confident it would happen. Just like the first take, this was a fierce one again nearly pulling the rod off the bank sticks. Instantly trying to find the snag. I

managed to turn this fish out and again for a good 15 minutes it was to and throw back towards the snag then it would come away then power itself back in again. Just when I felt like I was making ground and she was starting to tire the fish kited immediately to the right taking me around the corner towards the foot bridge. Had it of made it to the bridge it would have been game over. Managing to turn it at the very last minute she seemed to be

calming. A few rolls in front of me and she was in the net. Initially I thought it was bigger than it was however at 23.8 it was still a decent fish and another to mark off. Photos done and rods back out with three days ahead I was positive for some more. The next day come and went quickly with not even a liner. But at 3am the right hand rod pulled up a couple of twists and the fish was off. In all honestly it didn't feel like a lump, but you just never can tell. First fish lost. You win some you lose some.

The rest of the session was very quiet. The weather was up and down, and the pressure was sky high. We got to the final morning and out of nowhere the same right-hand rod pulled up

again. This time after a short but tense battle it was another common in the net this time one of the stockies at 16.6. Not the monster I was hoping for, but it was another fish on the bank for what turned out to be a difficult session. Two fish landed one lost. All falling for the Black Supa Fruit again. Only Mick had caught over the same days we were there landing four to mid-20s and losing one. But still no sign of any more of the A team just yet. A

couple of quick over-nighters slipped in where possible but no more fish to show for the efforts. The snags swim had stopped fishing altogether and the odd fish that was coming out was exactly that. One fish here and there but nothing to write home about.

The next real session I had come in the middle of May. The weather had improved, and the fish seemed to be moving about a bit more. This time I opted for a new swim and



one I didn't know a huge amount about. I spent a good few hours out in the boat and found some nice hard spots close to islands and snags. The usual baiting tactic of Solid PVA bags with crushed Black Supa Fruit and Pink Supa Fruit pop ups. The day went by and a few liners woke me during the night, but nothing further happened. The sun was coming up and suddenly, the middle rod shot forward. As I lifted into it the fish immediately swam towards me causing a moment of confusion allowing me to believe it had come off. As soon as I made contact the fight begun. Keeping low in the water and powerful lunges all I could do was allow the fish to take the upper hand. Suddenly it went solid. She was buried in the weed and she didn't want to move. A minute

or two passed and I was about to jump into the boat to try and get over the top of it when suddenly the pressure I applied paid off and it was moving again. The lunges continued and a few roles in front of me I could see it was a good fish. Gliding across the top of the water and into the net she was finally mine! A big sigh of relief when I looked into the net and immediately knew I had another A team member called "the half lin". As per usual a five-minute rest in

the net while I made a phone call to Mick to come and do some photos. I slipped her into the retainer sling after weighing her in at 33.6! Buzzing! Mick arrived shortly with his stuff to join me for the second night. After a few snaps we let her on her way to come back hopefully a bit bigger. Later on that afternoon, I'd said to Mick I will probably redo the right-hand rod as I wasn't sure I'd got a clean drop or not. As I was sitting tying up a fresh rig and bag





the right-hand rod flew forward. Clearly I'd second guess myself as I was now into another powerful fighting carp. The fight like all the others was full of powerful lunges but it didn't take long, and number two of the session was in the net. What a result. Another cracker of a mirror at 22.0. I went home a happy man. This was to be my last session for a while with my daughter due to be born in only a few weeks the rods went away to focus on her arrival until I managed

to get out again in the future. It was now middle of August and I was back out for a single night with my 4-year-old. He had been desperate to come fishing with me so I decided we would do a night together. After heading out in the boat and getting the main rods sorted, we opted for a bit of float fishing for the roach. After bagging a few and him being happy we settled in for the night. A quiet night ahead but soon to be woken at first light by a take on the right-hand

rod. This time we had fished the car park swim on the corner of the island. The weed was all on the surface, so the battle was short due to the fish burying itself in it. Eventually a huge ball of weed and the fish were in the net. After scrapping it all back we finally uncovered a lovely common swinging round to 20.6! I was made up a fish on the first session with my boy and his first look at a half decent fish. What a moment and what a memory. The next few weeks and months went by with little fishing involved due to various personal things going on. I managed a tough week in France where we eventually got among some fish to 36.10! Having returned from that trip I couldn't wait to get back out again and I had my mind firmly set on a

night over the reserve. Upon arrival the weed was still clearly a major issue it was now mid-October and it was still on the surface with no real sign of going anywhere. DT had just released a new 3mm pellet and felt this was the ideal time to start introducing it. With the bird life now at a minimum due to nature taking its course I didn't need to worry to much about the disruption. A solid bag filled with 12mm cold water green beast and 12mm supa fruit mixed with 3mm cold water and supa fruit pellet and a generous helping of supa fruit dna were dispatched out to each of the chosen spots. Inside the bags were white cold water green beast pops on Ronnie rigs. Having not got to the lake until 4pm I was limited for time before the sun started to set. So, it was imperative

the rods went out first time as I wouldn't have much time for a mistake. With the rods set and dinner on the weed started to move giving off the odd liners. Following this the swans then decided they wanted to play let's attack each other across all my spots. Deflated I went to bed feeling as though the opportunity of a bite was already gone. After falling into a deep sleep and being woken several times by the swans when I heard my delkim let out a burst I immediately thought swans again. However, when I looked across the lake, I quickly realised the

swans were no where to be seen and my rod tip was bouncing! Fish on! Lifting into the rod much like the others the water in front of me erupted as the fish powered from left to right trying to find haven in the weed. Due to the use of braid, it made guiding the fish through the weed a lot easier and I soon had it out in front of me. The water being crystal clear I could see a solid bodied mirror



rolling and swirling in front of me. The usual game of back and forwards begun with long deep lunges and a refusal at first to move to the upper layers of the water. The battle continued for what felt like forever. It was a powerful fish that was for sure and it wasn't going to give in easily. Eventually the battle was won as it slipped over my net cord. I peered in and knew it was a good fish. It wasn't until I lifted it that I felt it could hit the 30+ mark and I wasn't wrong. She went 30.9 and I was made up. Having just returned from France to land another of the A team and another 30 it was all looking up. After a few snaps and a few messages exchanged I was reassured this was "the baby leather" and at very healthy weight to. Shortly after this I packed up and made my way home.

My phone didn't stop for the most part of the day with messages of support and a well done from friends and the team over at DT and Castaway. Another victim to the pulling power of the mighty DT Bait Developments supa fruit and cold water green beast and assisted along the way with Castaway pva

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All the best,

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THE MAKING OF THE THAME'S WARRIOR



THE MAKING OF THE THAME'S WARRIOR

So, at the age of 7 years old I didn't have many thoughts in my head except for transformers and teenage mutant ninja turtles but one fateful day my cousin invited me to try a pass time of his...Fishing. Little did I know this would turn into a lifelong addiction.

When I told my mum what we had planned that day she laughed and said that I would be so bored that I would be home within a couple of hours. We left that morning heading off to a local little river within not much more than a float rod a Tesco bag of tackle half a pint of maggots. My cousin set the rod up as best he knew how, flicked out the float no more than a rod length out and passed me the rod. I was expecting to be waiting all day before we even got a bite let alone some action. Within no more than 60 seconds the float tip was dragged under the ripples, and I had hooked into my first ever fish. A small roach of no more than 4oz, but unbeknown to the roach he was also the target of something else and not just me. As the roach came within a few feet of the bank, from the depths appears a jack pike of maybe 4lb hell bent on stealing my first ever capture.....and he did. I felt the strain on the line but as I'm sure you can all guess it was only a matter of seconds before the line just pinged and snapped me off.

From that moment forward the addiction began!!!

It was a slow progression due to my lack of knowledge and experience but when I took my first trip to the local tackle shop with money, I had earned from reluctantly helping with housework that I realised the extend of the world I had ventured into. My Friend Adam and I (that I persuaded to come with me) went into the shop walked around trying to make it look like we knew what we were looking for but ended up just getting a random spool of 2lb line, some hooks, and some maggots. We rushed from the shop to the spot we had seen several Perch a few days before. We start to freeline maggots based purely on sight and had several small perch each helping our confidence to grow. After a few weekends pursuing the perch and having increased success, we realised that what we were

doing was stalking fish!!! this became a new but connected obsession. It wasn't long before the next big steppingstone presented itself. Whilst sat quietly hooking small perch a much larger dark figure enveloped from the weeds in the shape of a Tench of a few pounds which leisurely munched up the maggots on the end of my hand line and an intense but learned battle ensued. With the line embedding itself firmly into my fingers nearly drawing blood the Tench ran up and down for what felt like ages but was likely to be no more than 30 seconds but then unfortunately ended with the line breaking.

The Addiction intensifies!!!!

I had continued to follow my new hobby and started to ask people from my local area if they fished or knew people that did just to try and gain some knowledge and potential leads. One story that kept coming up was



one of a lad of the same age as me landing a 34lb Mirror Carp by accident from our local stretch of the Thames which he had placed a picture behind the counter in his shop. With weeks of deliberation and anticipation I went down to his shop to see if the rumours were true?

Upon my arrival I was greeted with a picture of what can only be described as the biggest and best fish I had ever seen at that point in my life. An old scaley mirror with a belly and scars to match its notoriety. This had me reeling to get myself back on the river with a rod in my hand to chase down one of these beasts myself.

My friend and I with this in mind managed to scrape together a few slightly better bits of tackle but we were still considerable under gunned. We found the spot he had caught his 34lb from and without the knowledge of poaching swims rules we fished as best we knew how. We fished day in and day out for a number of weeks and secured our first bunch of Thames blank. We continued to persevere and soon realised that we may be better at making a hobby of blanking rather than fishing.

With our hopes of a Thames carp vastly deteriorated over time we mustered the enthusiasm to do another night session in the forementioned swim. After a few hours of not even a liner one of the reels screamed into action like we have never heard before. After the initial seconds of surprise, I lunged



Thames Warrior

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for the rod and pulled into a fish that was going like a freight train. The fight was like no other with power that I never imagined would come from a fish. I played the fish with some serious trepidation as I didn't want to lose this opportunity. Before I knew it the fish was heading towards my net cord. To say I jumped and screamed would be an understatement. My first Thames Carp was finally here and in my net.

This enhanced my passion and commitment more than ever. For years I spent hours and hours researching swims, tactics, catch reports and more whilst obviously getting on the bank as much as possible. Over the next 10 years I had dozens of carp up to 26lb

The obvious next target for me was a Thames 30lber, some would say the impossible! But after the experience I had gained since my first I felt this target was within in my reach.

So once again we ventured down to a swim we had fished for a while, and I decided to go against my initial thought and fish a little outside of my comfort swim. Paul was a little shocked that I was giving up my swim but deep down I knew it was right. Out came the £10 beach dinghy and off I go to bait up and drop the rigs. Later that night around 2am the alarm sounded only to greeted with a well- known adversary of the carp fisherman, A Bream. After dealing with that I boldly went out on the dinghy again to set the traps. Safely back on



the bank and relaxing again I was able to get my head down for a few hours until first light when I was woken by my alarm jumping back into action but this time it was telling a different story. I lifted the rod and immediately felt out of control with the fish kiting left and right on its way downstream. By the time I managed to gain a slight control over the fight in the corner of my eye I notice a group of rowers heading toward my line at speed. Without even thinking I plunged the rod tip into the water getting the line as deep as I possibly could and just hoped that when I lifted back up the fish was still on. To add to the stress of the situation an early morning narrow boat came along the same line behind the rowers. I repeated the process with the same amount of hope and anxiety. Finally full control of the fight fell into my hands, and it wasn't long before my reward was in the net and secure. Looking down I realised that this was not just a fish, it was the biggest fish I had caught to date. Could it be 'the impossible?'



I gathered the net and moved the fish onto the mat, as I removed the hook, I knew that this really was the fish to beat my target. After confirming that it tipped the scales over the magic 30lb mark, I contacted another friend to come down and take some pictures and then I waded into the margins and released the fish of my dreams.

After a number of years continuing to chase Thames carp relentlessly with a good amount of success we end up at the 14th of January 2019. This day was one for the Record books in my opinion. I

Thames Warrior



had finished work early and had most of my gear with me ready to go so I made my way to the train station to grab the next one to get me to my mooring and set sail on the boat, Sat there waiting for the final stop to arrive my inner Angler told me that there was a certain area/spot that I should fish that day so who was I to disagree. I arrived at my boat done the standard pre-flight checks and then headed out to the swim my subconscious had decided on. As any fisherman knows the anticipation was a killer and the boat couldn't carry me quick enough to my destination.

Arrival finally came at around 3pm and there was a showing of bird life which is always a positive. Moored up and rods unwrapped I was prepped and ready/ to set the lines. Fresh hand sharpened rigs were tied on, a Big Boy 6oz Flat pear placed onto the lead clip and pot fresh Pop up on the screw I was stood on the back of the boat rod in hand ready to make my first cast. The first went out in close quarters with a little under arm toss, the second was placed on the next spot in the same manner (Accuracy is key). As the light faded and the winter night set in, I received a single beep on the first rod which soon after melted away worse than a scene from terminator 2. I grabbed the rod and immediately was bent in half making it clear I was into one of the Thames specials.

Within a minute of two I felt like the fish was playing me rather than the other way round but suddenly the tables turned, and it was almost time to net this now realised beast of a Thames carp. As the net done its job it was apparent that this was yet another Thames "Warrior" fish!!

Once I had contained myself the sling was out, and the scales rattled round to an endorphin inducing 32lb 4oz

At this point I had resided myself to the concept that Thames fishing really could not get any better than this. A month to the day later I returned to the subconscious chosen sweet spot and got myself set up. The only difference this time was that I consciously decided to try out a hinge stiff rig for the first time on the Thames. Once again with the rods in place and

the evening drawing in, like clockwork one of the rods announced itself to life with a single tone spectacular and I was bent into another Thames train. The fight however was short lived and unexciting. I managed to net the fish fairly easy and was certain that this was my second WINTER 30lb+ from the Thames. When the photo shoot took place, it turned out that not only was she a pure Thames Leather but a 33lb 2oz Personal Best. It just goes to show that when times seem hard the rewards are there to be had.

You Get What You Put in

My journey till this point was about me and my targets. With the success I had been having over the years and assisting friends to land their first



Thames Warrior

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Thames carp, turned my thoughts to making this into a more selfless situation and offering my experience and knowledge to people that aspire to achieve the same goals that I once thought unreachable. I found myself in a position where guiding and watching friends and others catch meant as much to me as it did to them. To witness the excitement on someone's face in that moment, took me back to my first Thames carp and how I felt. Guiding would allow me to share that feeling over and over again with others when they experience what I felt all those years ago as a 17-year-old.

Carp fishing the Thames started off as a pastime but become not a hobby but a way of life for me. I have spent the past 20 years honing my knowledge and tactics with results that speak for themselves. If you are looking to have an all-out Thames Fishing adventure or even a little taste of Thames carp fishing, then look no further. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced angler THE THAMES WARRIOR can cater your trip to your ability and your targets.

The River Thames has made me truly realise that the time of year, the weather and the conditions are not what dictate your catch rate..... it's you, you dedication and knowledge.



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Viva La Résistance



by Peder Lichtenberg

The vast French water.

For the first part of our trip, it was time to return to a massive French reservoir that I have been longing to fish again since I managed a 10 day blank a couple of seasons ago. I would have been there last autumn, chasing my first carp from this lake, but the COVID situation put an end to that.

So, after a 14-hour drive, my friend Thomas and I were finally at the banks of the Great Lake. We met up with my good French friend Julien who had been scouting the

night-sections trying to find a vacant area to drop into.

Luckily one of the more desirable areas had been vacated the same morning and after using most of the day boating our gear to the swim the sun was setting and we decided to get a good night's rest and get the rods out the day after.

The whole next day was used for finding spots and boating the rigs out to areas that looked like they could hold carp or that could be routes they may use to get from one area to

another.

Our chosen bait was 22 mm shelf-life N-bend boilies from DT Baits combined with tigers. It's a combo I have done very well on big lakes both back home and abroad. Hook baits were double 22 mm matching hard hookers.

Unfortunately, nothing happened the first night and I decided to use the rest of the day to map our area and find a few new spots and I found a spot with



a harder bottom and the odd tree stump that looked absolutely carpy as can be, so I moved a rod on to that within safe distance to the old debris that was present.

I decided to go lighter on the bait with a kilo of boilies and 5 handful of tigers spread over a big area.

All that was left to do was just cross our fingers and legs and anything else in the hope for one of the lakes jewels.

Just before fist light I was torn out of my bed chair by a one toner from the rod I had moved the day previous. After a manic and panicked wrestle, I eventually had my waders on and headed out through 30 yards of deep mud.

I stood with

the rod in my hands connected to what could be my first carp from this iconic water. I quickly jumped in the boat and set the electric outboard to full power to get to the fish through the foggy mist that covered the lake which was making it impossible to see more than 10 feet in front of me. By some stroke of luck, the carp stayed on the hook and after a short battle, I was rewarded with what I assessed to be a mid 20lb common, it

might not have been the biggest or even the prettiest carp I have ever caught, but it was exactly what I wanted and now we had worked a part of the intricate puzzle. After looking for similar spots for Thomas and Julien we managed to land 10 carp in the last 6 nights to mid 40's, which made it a great trip with loads of great moments in an amazing setting! It was now time for the next leg of our trip.



Gigantica

At this year's annual social at Gigantica I was lucky to get a better number in the draw and there was no hesitation when the "stink" swim was vacant.

My setup to start out with was Longchuk tapered mainline for distance work with a length of Dark matter tubing, Hybrid QC leadclips and quite short 5,5-inch German rigs tied from the 25lb Dark matter tungsten

material with a new test hook with a micro ring swivel on shank locked in place with a medium hook bead – I almost never experience tangles with this set up, even casting long distances. For hookbaits I use 20 mm homemade N-Blend matching wafers that were threaded onto the Micro ring swivel with bait floss and then blobbed with a lighter - simple but very effective.

First things first I needed to get the

marker float out and find a nice spot where I could present my rigs. So, I decided to wrap up at 34 wraps and feel the lead back from there. Casting out and hitting the clip, the lead came crashing down so hard it had to be gravel and pulling the lead back towards me revealed a big area with nice clean and firm bottom. I decided to fish a few wraps shorter and after getting the rigs positioned perfectly, I spodded out 6 kilos of 22 mm N-Blend boilies to get a nice big spread of bait.

That night I settled in and was awoken by a one toner just past midnight, which saw me net my first fish of





I could feel straight away this fish was acting different from the others, fewer headshakes and waddling back and forth, so I carefully played it between the other two lines. The carp now decided to use its weight in front of the swim,

the trip, a lovely dark mirror just under 40lb – A great start. While I was getting the rig ready for recasting the middle rod was off which resulted in a mid-thirty mirror. I use a few casts to get the positioning of the rigs as perfect as I could in the dark and decided to spod out a few more kilos of boilies over the spot in hope to keep the carp feeding – and it worked, the last rod melted off and after a short battle a 20lb common was in

the net. I recast that rod and climbed into bed and had only just closed my eyes when I had another blistering take. I grabbed the rod and battled what was on the end this time I managed an angry 40lb common. With this amount of action, I figured they were clearly on my bait and I decided to leave that fish in the net and get the rod out quickly. It was while I was wrapping up the middle rod burst into like and was off.

and I applied extra pressure to keep it away from any debris on the slope in front that could cut the line, suddenly a massive mirror surfaced just in front of the swim, and I couldn't lift the net around it first time of trying, it was a huge fish. Eventually after awkwardly manoeuvring the net I got it in. The width, depth and height of the carp was unbelievable, and it went 72lb on the scales - the last take came just before first

light making it a total of 6 bites in one night. So, after doing photos I redid all the rods and spodded out another 6 kilos of boilies to top up the spot – Now I had not in my wildest dreams thought that this kind of action could continue, but I went on to land 22 carp in total over 7 nights, including 2 x 70s 3 x 50's and 3 x 40's. A crazy trip with very little sleep as all the bites came in the

dark. To my mind the key to it was recasting quickly and spodding after every second fish this seemed to keep the carp coming back for more. It was now time to head to our last location.

Graviers.

With the temperatures dropping fast in France I didn't have very high hopes for this late trip

it was now November.

The Gravies was Firmly in the grip of frosty nights and disheartening weather. Arriving at the lake after a 14-hour drive we were met by a beautiful winter sunset, as we expected the banks were covered in a light frost with steam rising from the calm lake surface as the last autumn warmth was being sucked from the water. I quickly got my



rods set up and boated the rigs out to areas that I knew carp frequented and scattered around 50 DT Baits 22 mm Coldwater Green Beast boilies with a few good handfuls of sweetcorn that I had pre-soaked in Green Beast DNA liquid for 7 days prior to the trip. The idea was to get a decent spread of bait with some additional attraction rising of the corn to get the fish down on the bait and then hopefully get on the bigger baits. I then proceeded to spread 2 kilos of 22 mm boilies over the whole area of

the lake I was fishing so if they moved around, they would find the odd bait lying around. Presentation wise I went Simple long fluorocarbon D-rigs with a 22 mm Coldwater hard hook bait and a 15mm zinger pop up on top (a combination that I have found works exceptionally well in cold water). As expected, the fishing was hard during the

week, as the water temperature continued to drop during the week, they eventually settled at 6 degrees. I remained resilient and stuck to the plan, baiting on a regular basis. Thankfully it all came good in the end and I managed to bank 3 carp to just over 54lb.

Three amazing venues in their own right and some fine memories and trophies collected along the way.

Thank you for reading

Peder.







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Reviews

Featuring -

Float Fishing

&

Fantastic Mushy Fishing Bait -

Anthony Wood

Float fishing is it a forgotten form of carp fishing?

By Anthony Wood



Float fishing is something that I don't see mentioned in carp fishing very often any more, I don't know if it is losing popularity or if I just don't see it mentioned. Whichever the case, it is a shame as there are a few ways to fish with floats and they are all relaxing and enjoyable.

I enjoy making my own floats but they are nothing compared to some of the amazing float makers out there. One of my favourites is Ian Lewis who owns and runs www.facebook.com/HandMadeFishingFloats and all of the floats pictured are his creations.

The first float from Ian that I actually got especially made for my zander fishing is a short inline float with a yellow top that takes 3SSG to sit right in the water. It worked fantastic for my deadbaiting for zander but I quickly worked out that it was also perfect for surface float fishing for carp.

With the float taking 3SSG it had enough weight to cast out a decent distance (not huge but enough for the lakes I fish) and is perfect for fishing bread, pop ups or other floating bait on a 3ft-6ft length of hair.

Another float that is one of my favourites in the collection is a quail egg float which literally has a quail egg as the main body (it wasn't Ian's idea



as he had heard the idea before but wanted to see if he could do it). This float is perfect for surface fishing or another method that I like which is leger float fishing. Leger float fishing is very similar to your normal leger fishing except you use the float as your indicator instead of using an alarm on a rod pod, this makes for the perfect stalking set up and frees you from being stuck next to a rod pod when the fish aren't in front of you.

What is funny about the quail egg float is that Ian actually sent it me to see if I could break it (through normal use) as it was a new method of curing the egg shell. The crazy thing is that I did try and even tried a few not normal uses and I've still got it to this day and it is still in very good condition as you can see.

I also have a selection of 'normal' floats for close in margin work next to reeds, etc for fishing maggots or sweetcorn in the edges of a lake or for trotting down a river.

I don't know why more people don't float fish for carp as surely it can get boring just sitting behind your alarms waiting for that beep to happen.



With float fishing there is constant movement on the float, you can adjust the depth, you can move around, you can see every little interest shown by the fish until that exciting moment that you see the float shoot away under the water, you strike and then hopefully feel the fish on the end of the line. Float fishing really is exciting so why not give it a try?

You can pick up floats from your local tackle shop from as little as 50p and they will do the job but for me there is just something about them that doesn't complete the float fishing experience. Once you are into float fishing there is something special about using a float that has been lovingly hand crafted by a master of the art. If you want a float that is a little bit more special than a shop bought plastic float, I highly recommend having a look at Ian Lewis's floats on his website

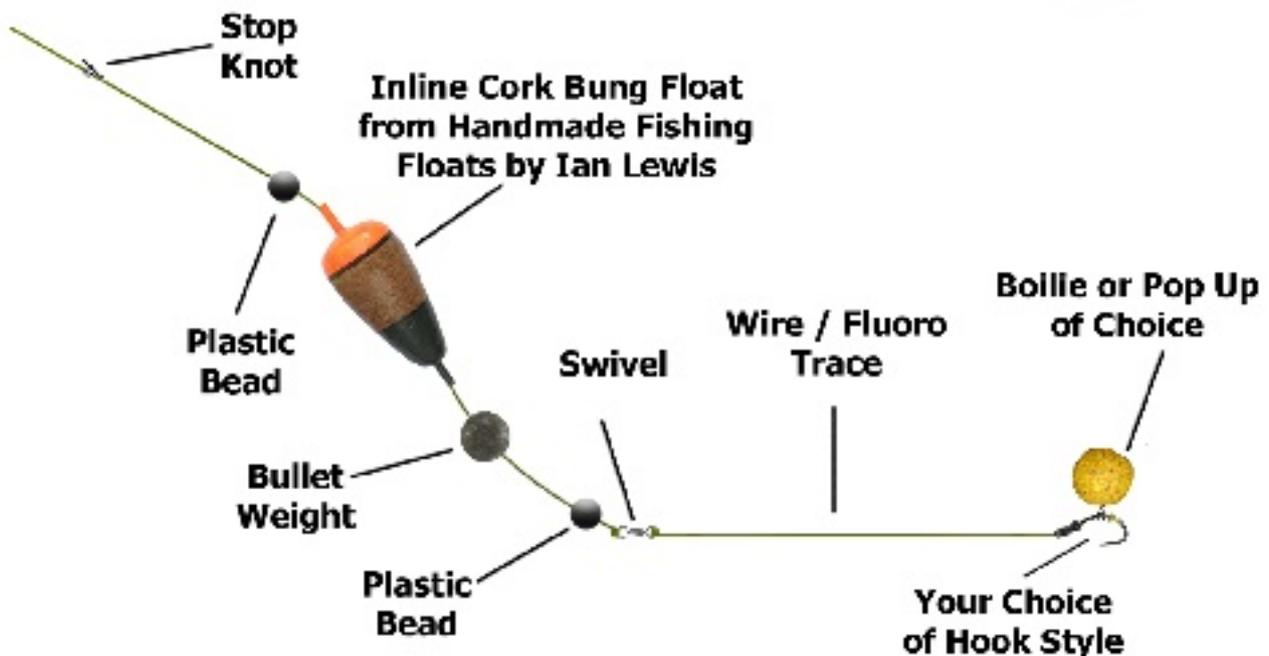
www.handmadefishingfloats.co.uk

Float Fishing Leger rig

Anthony Wood



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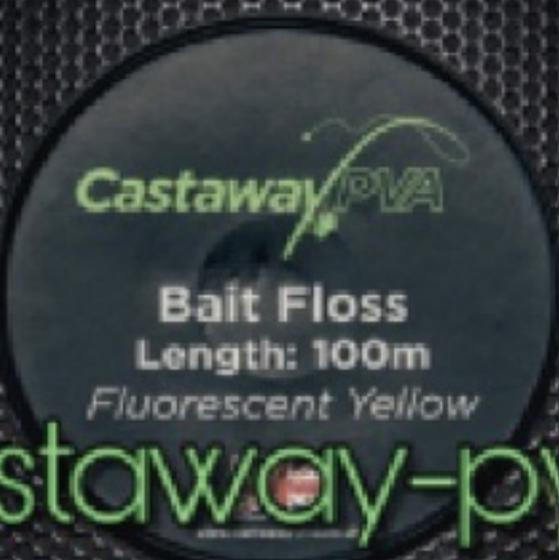
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Castaway PVA

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A delicious snack or a
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bait

Reviews



By Anthony Wood

Reviews



As always with my reviews, I bring you something a little different in the fishing game and this is something that has given me an edge on many occasions (everything I review is stuff I actually use myself and isn't always something you would expect to find lol).

You may have seen lots of anglers creating their own “mushy” groundbait to attract the fish into your swim which include all sorts of goodies that will bring the fish into your swim but hopefully not over feed them. I have several of my own recipes for mush as I'm sure others do as well. My secret weapon however, is a PopBabies portable blender.

I found the PopBabies USB rechargeable blender a few years ago when I was actually looking for something to help me create smoothies and milkshakes whilst I was camping or fishing (which it is absolutely fantastic for). There are a few different brands available but after trying about 5 different ones the PopBabies one just simply outperformed and outlasted the other ones.



The blender itself is made from BPA free food grade ABS material with 304 stainless steel blades and comes with an ice tray and funnel. It is quite a small yet powerful blender but for best results use pieces of fruit, veg, etc no bigger than 2" as it handles them better. Fill no more than three quarters full, turn upside down (once you've put the lid on), switch on and slowly turn the right way up. You may find that after 30 seconds or so it stops, check that you have the consistency that you want and if not simply turn upside down and blend again until you have the desired consistency.

Well, I've told you about my secret weapon but how about a few ideas to go with it to get your head thinking of ways that you could use it for yourself. The first and most simple is creamed corn and as you can see from the photos it is simply sweetcorn and either milk or cream. Add the sweetcorn to the blender followed by the milk, turn the blender upside down, switch it on and slowly turn it the right way up.

Another great creation is garlic hemp. Preparing hemp is easy if you have a flask, fill the flask half full with uncooked hemp seed, fill the flask up with boiling water, leaving enough room for the hemp to expand. Chuck a couple of peeled garlic cloves in and put the lid on.



Leave the flask overnight and you will have perfectly cooked hemp seed in the morning. Half fill the PopBabies blender with the hemp mixture, put the lid on and turn the blender upside down, slowly turn it the right way up and blitz the hemp, garlic and hemp juice, repeat this until there is no hemp mixture left to blend.

You can use the blended mixes (including your own creations) to make slop mixes, groundbait and much more.

If you want to try one of my smoothies, use the ice cube tray that is included with the blender to create little one inch ice cubes. Fill the blender to around 150ml with almond or soya milk, add about ice cubes, a tbsp of chocolate powder (optional) and then add half a banana diced into small pieces, add some strawberry pieces and mango pieces until you are around the 300ml-350ml. Just a tip here, frozen fruit pieces work better in the blender but don't worry too much if you can't get them. Blend until you have a delicious smoothy, if the blender continuously stops then you have probably overfilled it, empty a little out and try again.

You can buy them in the UK on <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B074HZYD77> or you can find out more on their social media pages www.instagram.com/popbabiesofficial and www.facebook.com/popbabiesamazon.





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Scott Grant



Managed to get out for a 48hr session over the Dell. I opted to fish a swim that has plenty of weed , pva bags of boilie crumb, fished in conjunction with a handful of banoffee boilies and chillie hemp. Just as I was packing up the right hand rod was away, after a boat battle, Ben netted the fish first time. Turned out to be "Buster" at 41lb.



David Pendegrass



UK 51lb 2oz mirror, lucky one as had packed up barring the rods when the middle rod pulled up and after a a battle with the weed, she went in the net!!



Shauno Anten



To say I'm happy is an understatement, anyone who knows me and has fished with me knows that I love a social and to have a laugh on the bank with mates, but that does not detract from the fact that I put a 110% into every aspect of my angling, well this last session is one that definitely paid off for me resulting in a New PB common of 30lb 6oz and my 1st UK 30, This unit was caught on the Nosh' Em Baits Nutty Plum Range using my ever faithful critically balanced slip D rig 15mm boosted Nutty Plum bottom bait 'snowman style' topped with a white Nosh' Em baits 10mm Fruit and Nut popup with a generous soaking of the Plum booster shot and the N-Rich Sweet Plum Booster Powder over 3 good pouchfuls to a well known spot of Nutty Plum 10&15mm boilies covered in the Nutty Plum glug and liquid food.

Slip D rig consisted of a size 6 Nash longshank twister to 15lb Nash Skinlink and a tungsten anti tangle sleeve

I must ad that this capture is also an unknown 30, which means I had the honour of naming this fish which is now named Becks Common after my partner.

Peter Conn



After 4 years of trying and coming so close I finally managed to get the ghostie common from my local syndicate. Over the moon is an understatement. Rnt and wicked whites with a trimmed down pear drops pop up from Madbaits on a Ronnie. And what better way to have it than with my son.



Nic Roberts

**Commonwood Fishery
Wrexham**

**31lb 8oz common carp new
UK Pb**

**1st year on my new
syndicate water**

**Trimmed down white cc
Moore pop up cast close to
the reeds over a bed of live
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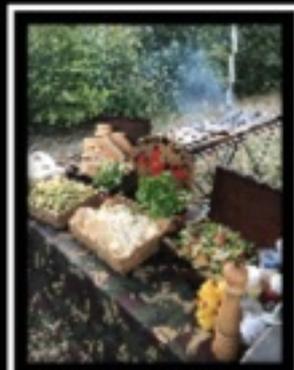
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Andy Grenfell

Andy with a fish known as "The resident" from the epic Gigantica.

Andy fished a pink Coldwater Green beast hook bait over a bed of 15mm and 22mm N-blend drenched in matching DNA liquid to land this insanely long 45lb brute.



Andy Greenfell

Team member Andy with lovely dark mirror of 32lbs 8oz known as “Elliott” caught over a mix of chopped and crumbed N-blend, Cold water green beast and the Peach and sour cream.

Dave Gray

Dave managed three fish from his new syndicate, this being the pick of the bunch at 30lbs 10oz.

Dave used a mix of Cold Water Green Beast and Supa Fruit chops and crumb with matching pellet and DNA liquid.





Marcus Doughty

DT Baits friend Marcus managed two lovely dark fish from a tricky quarry in recent weeks. Both fell victims to the awesome Cold Water Green Beast.



Simon Peters

Simon with a very welcome common which made up part of a three fish hit. Simon used a pink 12mm Cold Water Green Beast pop up hook bait fished over matching chops, crumb and pellets.



Adam Andrew



Christopher Leitinger - Trigga Ice and Tecni Spice



Derek Pye - CO-DE Whole, chopped and crushed boilies, pellets heavily glugged in activator and wafter hook-baits



Giordano - CO-DE 18mm Hookbait



Graham Mabey - 12mm Pineapple and N-Butric pop ups



**Lee Upstone - 30lb04oz - Single Bfm salmon caviar bp 18
bottom bait incorporating crushed boilie pellet pva sticks at
range**



Maria Harrag - BFM and Hemp Sludge

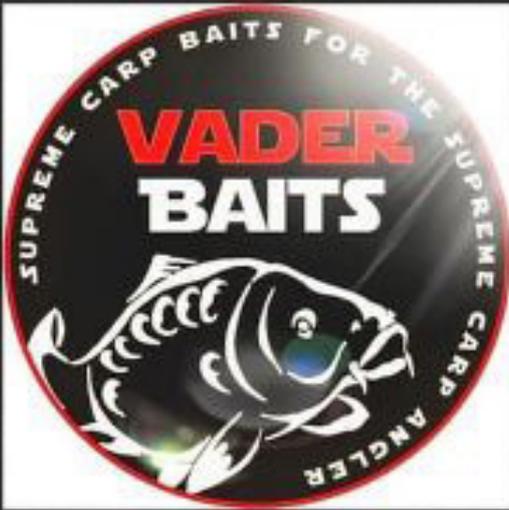


Matteo Baronio - Trigga Pineapple & N-Butyric

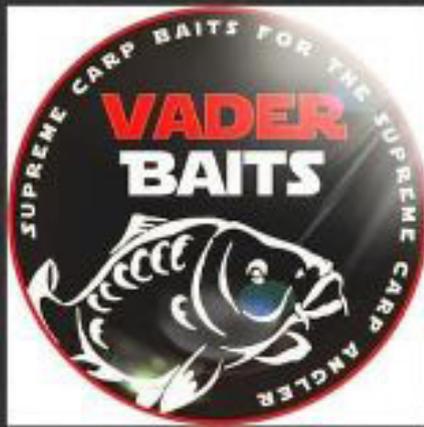
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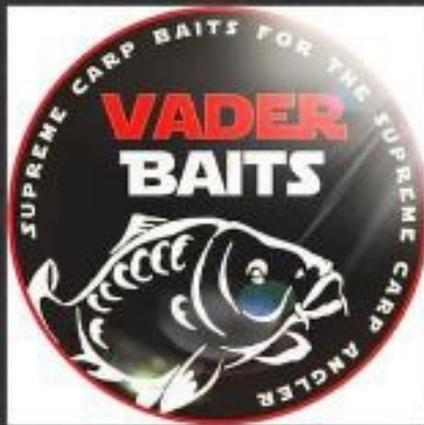
**THE LEGEND RETURNS
MARCH 2022**



Team member Dan hit Crockerton and landed his 1st carp and setting his 1st pb in carp angling! And what a way to get off the mark with a beautiful ghost mirror at 13lb 6oz!! The fish was tempted by 14mm and 18mm Le Nutz boilie on a rig with a 14mm Le Nutz waffer! Well done Daniel some super skills mate and learning fast!



Team member Nathan was on the Vader Baits social at the weekend at Creedy lakes. His first fish came on Friday night at 11pm in the shape of a 12lb 8oz common from his island spot! The fish was tempted by a Grafter snowman setup, a 14mm Grafter boilie topped with a 12mm Fluro pink Grafter pop up teamed with a solid pva bag of Grafter boilie chops and crumb, grafter micro and 6mm pellet and Grafter glug. The next fish to grace the bank came over 24hrs later at 1am on Sunday morning in the shape of a 18lb common caught on a single 18mm Le nutz boilie teamed up with a solid pva bag of Le nutz boilie chops and crumb, Grafter micro and 6mm pellet and Le nutz glug . Just as day light came seen Nathan's next fish again a common carp weighting in at 21lb 8oz caught on a Le nutz snowman setup a 14mm Le nutz boilie topped with a yellow Le Nutz pop up teamed with a solid pva bag on Le Nutz boilie chops and crumb and Grafter micro pellet and 6mm pellet with Le Nutz glug!!!



Team member Phil was on the Vader Baits social at the weekend at Creedy lakes. He managed to bank 8 carp in total..! The biggest being 21lb 8oz. All the fish fell to a pastel coloured wafer in pva bags of Le Nutz micro pellet over beds of Le Nutz boilie.

Le Lees Carp Fishery

Welcome everyone to LE LEES Carp Fishery.

We are a new venue officially opened in 2018. It is a family run venue, by myself, Matt, Tracie my partner and my son Thai.

Its been tough and we have been working hard to get the place ready for fishing this year. We purchased the place 3 yrs ago in a small rural village in brittany called Le Croisty.

With limited stock from a few pounds to 36lb. It is a 2 and a half acre lake, set in 6 acres of wood surrounded by fields. island in one corner with lilies in 2 corners,

The depths range from 7/8 feet around island gradually shallowing to around 2ft. We had the lake netted in 2016 and removed all the small roach, rudd and carp under 10lb. We put back over 80 carp from the netting in november that year and by february 2017 we introduced the new stock which ranged from 28lb to 48lb.

Our carp now go over 50lb. We estimate the lake has 150+ carp. We did not start this adventure to earn a ton of money, we started this for the love we have of fishing and to bring pleasure to others like minded.

We are a drive and survive venue for this year, with plans to introduce 5 small cabins as the venue grows. There is a caravan with cooker, water and toilet. We understand that fishing here in France can be very expensive, which is why we have priced our place to help make fishing here more affordable.

Le Lees Carp Fishery

Our price over the winter months (november 1st to march 31st) is 130 euros PPPW. 1st april to 31st october 150 euros.

We also do an evening meal at 70 euros pppw. Lake exclusive for upto 5 carpers with an evening meal is 750 euros pw.

Book a weekend from friday to sunday for 70 euros PP, or ask us for days to suite you and we will give you a great price.

A 50 euro PP deposit (non refundable) secures your booking.

Anymore info required, ferries, directions, reviews and more pics please visit our FB page.

Thank you for reading and we hope to see some of you on the bank landing some of our fantastic carp here in france.

Tight lines and may the carp gods bless you all.

Best wishes

Find us on Facebook for further information.

Matt, Tracie and Thai.



Le Lees Ca



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Send your articles and catch reports by
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