



Issue 51
May 2020



Inside this month -

The one and only Mark Holmes joins us...
Interviews with Rob Hughes, Pele Johnson, Nick Maddix
Plus Andrew Murray, Russ Guise, Scott Grant and more

STAY ALERT



**CONTROL
THE VIRUS**



SAVE LIVES

Hello and welcome... issue 51 is here for your reading pleasure!!

As the Coronavirus pandemic continues and the country remains on lockdown as I write this, I am pleased to announce that your favourite online Talking Carp magazine continues to bring you the very best in carp reading to help you get that “carpy” fix.

This month we are incredibly pleased to bring you Mr. Mark Holmes... Quite a coup for us and for you as we gave Mark a blank canvas to write his thoughts...and he does! Add to that Russ Guise with the writings from his inner mind on how you can increase/decrease your chances so easily without realising it... we have given the thinking angler some serious food for thought this month.

Now add to that our usual writers such as Richard, Carl, Andrew and James with more hints and tips and some great stories from both home and abroad... now top that off as our intrepid reporter Mark Galli catches up with both Rob Hughes and Pele from Spotted Fin for a chat with each of those chaps, you can see we are bringing you a seriously packed out magazine!!!

You will notice that there is obviously no catch reports this month but do check out the “carp behaving badly” photo section...

If you have any “carp behaving badly” pics you wouldn't mind sharing send them in!!

Emails to the usual addresses

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Cover shot - Mark Holmes

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Being A Maverick Isn't Easy



by Mark Holmes

STANDFIRST: Long-Time Big-Carp Angler Mark Holmes makes his first bow in Talking Carp. Regarded as somewhat unorthodox in many of his tactics, here Mark discusses the problems associated with being unconventional.

One of the most repetitive messages I get from carp anglers up and down the UK, is how do they keep catching big Carp consistently? I think this is a pretty simple question to a very complicated answer. Let me try and expand on that a little for you. This next season, if Corona virus lockdown allows, will be my 46th consecutive year of fishing for carp. Now don't get me wrong, as with all 'normal' Brits, over that period of time I have had a job, a family, a marriage, a mortgage, a business and money responsibilities to take care of. That is very relevant because a single guy or an older guy with grown up children, or no children, doesn't suffer the family issues that 'pull' him away from fishing. I have often said that I have been a carp angler since 1975 but there have been times when I couldn't go as much as I wanted...but I was still a carp angler in my head. I coined the phrase 'A Lifer' and that's what I am and so many others are these days. However, not often do I write about a mindset approach to angling as often it can be over emphasised and mask just plain bad angling skills. In layman's terms, you can't overlook fishing 'shite', if you have a positive outlook. All that does is give you a false sense that you are fishing well. I try not to simply reduce my ramblings and other writers to the 'scores on the doors' but when it all boils down to it THAT is what matters. Now my fiercest critics, and there's a few out there, for all my idiosyncrasies can never turn round and criticise my catches. Yeah, they can try, as some saddos do, to belittle them but even when I look at my album, I get impressed LOL. BUT and it's a huge but, I realised a long time ago that I had to be a maverick to progress in carp fishing and keep the big uns coming. This edict would be my number one tips to others...



Smiths Common

A target in the Eighties for many NW Anglers. The one and only Chocolate Drop from Smiths.

become a carping maverick.

Now the literal translation of maverick is an unorthodox or independent minded person. Like most skills, and I believe it is a skill, you can work on it and become more proficient

at it. However, the most maverick people are kind of, born that way and I believe I was. However, once I realised that and opened my mind and embraced it, those ideas of how to catch a fish, became easier. After all, it's only a bloody fish! I first realised that I was a maverick way back in the Seventies as I set out on my carping life. To be fair though, in those days nearly every carp angler was a maverick compared to other coarse anglers. I mean, my first view of a carp, was with my Dad in 1970, when I asked him what those dark shapes were. He said, "I wouldn't worry about them Son, they're carp...you can't catch them!"

To bring this article away from the good old days or



Understanding fish ecology plays a huge part in catching the big uns. Holmesy will be explaining this occurrence with a Mid Forty Common and how fish ecology should come second nature to big fish anglers.



[A mid Forty from his editor days at Advanced carp Fishing...Another cover?](#)

yester year, being a maverick is not an age defined thing. Basically, you need to stop reading other people's ideas and start breaking down the problematic catching carp questions in order to come up with YOUR ideas and solutions. I can remember writing an article in the magazine Coarse Angler in the eighties called 'The question and answer syndrome' where I clearly identified that it is the QUESTION that's hard to define...not the answer. I still believe that today. However, what we must all do is break down the questions to their lowest common denominator, not just put I cannot catch this carp...why? Let me try and put some examples down for you to see how my mind works. Now I want to catch more carp than the person I go fishing with...always. I cannot help that; it's the competitive spirit within me. However, of course, if you go with your mates or a mate, you can't always do that. However, you can if you just go by yourself! LOL Now some will be

shaking their heads in disbelief here but that mindset of how to deal with a problem, shows a clear understanding of the end game.

Now let's magnify that hundred times and it's my philosophy with catching carp...there isn't a carp I can't catch. As an old friend of mine Ed Mathews once told me...I'll die...it'll die...or I'll catch it. That is the mantra that I view all individual carp as. Now don't get me wrong, some carp are harder than others to catch, some I will catch quick and others longer. However, there are no half-measures, I will catch my target. That single mindedness lies at the root of me being a carp maverick, rather than being different for difference sake. It really all boils down to the captures and when I'm often asked why I go to so much trouble to be different, a bait buff, a free thinker, it's all down to



Cold water Carp and understanding their behaviour is something Mark finds interesting as this Cotswold Thirty caught in January proves.

carp captures. I do what I have to do to make the capture. The reality is that all anglers have to have the ONE moment when they see the necessity to be a maverick. I was lucky or unlucky, that it happened to me when I was 14 years old in 1976. I had decided to have a day's roach fishing on the River Calder near Elland. I was catching well and lots of small roach. Indeed, for a youngster, a fine net of fish. However, a guy next to me was catching roach that you could only dream about. All over a pound and a couple nearly two pound. Now part of being a fledgling maverick is the ability to ask questions...even if they appear stupid. Like a shot I was round at his swim enquiring how he was catching much bigger roach than me. He put his rod down and said to me, "What's your name son?" What then followed was a conversation about how you shouldn't just ask direct questions without first getting the trust of the guy you're asking.



Doing what he does best , catching huge carp like this upper Forty caught on a bare hook...we kid you not!



Mark's always considered himself a general angler. This 2lb 15oz Roach reminded him of good times as a boy.

On that very day my interest in coming up with a bait or tactic different than those around me was born. Jon explained to me that 99% of anglers are fishing maggots, so where and how can you be different? He also emphasised that this stretch of the river, owned by Bradford No1AA, was fished by thousands of anglers, so he couldn't find an edge location wise. So, he chose bait. The resonating point was being different in order to catch bigger and more fish is not just carp

I apologised and motioned to move off. However, he told me to wait. During the next 10 minutes I got a lesson on how to fish hemp and tares. The name of the angler will mean nothing to some but to others, they will recognise him as one of the best float-fishing anglers of his generation. It was Jon Allerton from Selby.



Lately utilising liquid and sharing his knowledge along with grass root anglers have brought him the biggest 'buzz' if not recognition from all quarters.

related but fish related. The answers lie within provided you search deep within you. To this day I have never wrote or told anyone about that day but as I look back, that was THE light bulb moment within my head that made me want to be a carping maverick.

Now there are countless instances of my 'off the wall' tactics being ridiculed, laughed at, pulled to bits or simply dismissed. Now one subject that seems to be constantly spoken about is my bait knowledge.



The only carper to ever get consecutive weekly front covers is something that makes the Bradford lad smile.



at 56lb, this repeat capture from last September, brought a rare smile to holmesy's face.

However, it is only part of my fishing maverick-mentality along with watercraft, rigs, tackle and all the other imponderables. But because of that day on the River Calder, I know how important it is to be original with your bait.

Now to bring us right up to date, recently I have done shows and written articles about developing an all season bait or boilie for all round use. This is something that historically, I didn't believe existed. In fact, it is trying to prove some of my earlier thoughts wrong that keeps the passion for change or to be a carping maverick going. Ultimately that is the stage I now find myself. I am not that 'arsed' to catch another carp... it has to be THE carp or THE method that keeps it fresh.



The Black Cambs Forty is Mark's favourite capture. No where near his biggest fish but we can guess why he rates it...can you?

So, after many years with one bait company, when I changed and moved to Shimano, and heard the rhetoric, ‘He’ll catch ‘nowt’ on that crap!’ it was just the motivation that I needed.

Now it would have been easy to use the whole range of Shimano baits at my disposal but what I wanted to do was to prove that slight seasonal adjustments to one boilie, could keep it going as an all-season bait. Now those of you who have read or listened to my ramblings over the years, will know that I have constantly said, that what you use to catch a carp in February, bears no resemblance to what you need to use in August. Now I have not changed my clear thought of that, but I developed a system of controlling the attraction basis using



A younger Holmesy watching the water for signs of showing fish.

one bait, the LM 94. So, what I would like to do is in my next Talking Carp Article is take you through the clear 'brain thought', not corporate clap trap, behind each change of attraction over a twelve-month period. A twelve-month period that would sit on my list of achievements very highly and completely obliterates those who said I would struggle. Now the real reason why I didn't struggle is because I embraced and practised the true meaning of being a Carping Maverick. This ability is within all of us and starts with an acceptance that this tough route that can lead to ridicule and trolling but, in the end, you are



Understanding that carp eat fish means you realise they're predators. Mark has always fished for predators over the years.



The infamous Deadbait rig devised and used successfully to catch male predatory carp for nearly 20 years

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NEXT TIME

Holmesy looks at how the inherent senses of a carp change to match the seasons of the year. How understanding the difference between solubility, digestibility and the natural eco-systems within your lake, should dictate your bait approach. A no-holds -barred analysis of attraction, as opposed to nutrition, results in some astonishing results.



Another UK Fifty glistens in the Autumn sun...no words needed...or may be one...
stunning!



Yorkshire History right here. Over 35 years ago Mark was quietly, for him, going about his carp business



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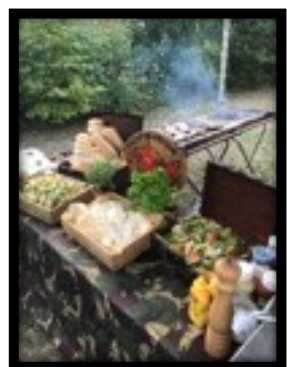
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A 'Lockdown'
Catch-Up with Mr.
Rob Hughes...
By Mark Carper

Having met Rob on two occasions, once at Drayton when I visited the England Ladies Team and once in the 'Lift' at the Holiday Inn Express at the NAS 8, I felt I knew him well enough to be very nosey and find out what he has been doing during this unprecedented time of what we affectionally call 'Lockdown'...or more specifically, what he has been doing for Angling...

TC: Mr. Hughes, welcome to Talking Carp Magazine and not for the first time either. I hope you and your family are all well and have stayed Safe at this time...?

As mentioned in my intro, we have previously met, although I am not sure I was as memorable on those occasions as you were...?!!

I understand from articles I have read and videos I have seen on Social Media platforms, that you have been keeping yourself busy along with others from the likes of the Angling Trust to put together a proposal to be presented to Government Ministers on why and how Angling, not just Carp Angling but Angling as a whole should and possibly could, reopen...

...How did that come about and how did you get involved...?

RH: I'm off work at the moment and wanted to use my time constructively and put something back into angling. So often in the past we have been overlooked or ignored. Now is a time that angling can step up. I'm helping the Angling Trust both with the proposals, as indeed are a number of people in different areas of expertise, and also to get the message out to anglers in general. The Trust have sometimes struggled with promotion across angling, but this is too important to ignore.

TC: How seriously do you feel that Ministers will consider the proposal put forward...?

RH: Very seriously. It's important on a number of levels. Health, mental health, socio and economic benefits etc, and the government fully understand that it's important for people's general welfare. Equally they have to balance that with people's safety. They are looking for ways that people can return to normality with limited risk to increasing the problem and rather than just opening the door and saying, "off you go", they take advice from a chain of experts. The AT as our national governing body, are the ones they listen to and who are part of the advice chain. Jamie Cook the CEO and Martin Salter, a former politician who know how parliament work, have spearheaded the work and are doing a great job.



TC: There is much talk about the situation of peoples Mental Health and Wellbeing all over the world during this incredibly testing time and I know about your fantastic involvement with organisations such as, 'Carp After Combat' etc. so has this been a focus to get people back on the bank too...?

RH: Mental wellbeing is massively important, whether you live with mental health issues or are feeling the strain of the lockdown. Everyone has troubles in their lives, some more than others, and we know angling is a great way to relieve the stresses and strains of modern life, but also in particular it offers many people a release from darker moments. I've been touched by all the personal messages I've had from people living with difficulties and it's important that the government know how important angling is to people. It's not just something we do, it's part of our fabric. A mechanism to help us cope. That's not lost on me.

TC: What affect has this Lockdown had on Fisheries, of all types and what do you see as a major knock-on effect of the current situation...?

RH: Commercial fisheries will be suffering financially of course. A lot of fisheries have suffered from poaching and illegal activity such as theft and criminal damage / anti-social behaviour and littering. The sooner we can get back, the sooner we can prevent these through self-policing and reduce the burden on the authorities who have to deal with them.



TC: ...and the Tackle & Bait Industry too, are you aware of any major impacts that could be far reaching...?

RH: Supply will be an issue as many goods come from overseas, but shops at the moment are relatively well stocked and manufacturers have stockholding inter warehouses. Most of us have got sufficient gear anyway, and there will be thriving second hand market as people want to turn old unwanted or unused items into cash in these tough times. Once we start again there will be a rush to the shops, and other countries re reporting increases in sales figures on year for year likes as angling is one of only a few activities permitted

TC: With your involvement covering many Angling disciplines for various Media formats, do you see a longer lasting impact for Angling in the UK and also World-Wide...?

RH: I think international travel and events will be seriously curtailed for a while. Quarantine, lock down and travel restrictions will see to that and we've already seen an events and competition calendar almost destroyed by the current situation.

Additionally, for the foreseeable future there will be a travel restriction in the UK so people may not be able to get to their further afield waters. Some feel hard done by with that, but it's the government that set the travel regs, not fishing, and we have to fit in with their guidelines, not ask them to change them for us. After all, it's better to have some fishing than none at all, and it will return closer to normal in the coming months

TC: Hypothetically, if Angling is not opened up for say another three months, what do you feel the impact on Carp Fishing will be then...?

RH: Just like the old closed season. We will have to wait and there will be a rush. I'm very hopeful we won't have to wait that long. Early indications are that the return to angling is being seen as a benefit by government and ministers alike.

TC: What are your current thoughts about the 'Ladies World Carp Angling Championships' being held this year as planned...?

RH: None at the moment. It's been cancelled. We're disappointed but can live with it. We will be back again next year.

TC: ..and for a more positive outlook, what about the news that the 'Welsh Ladies' are looking to make a comeback under the management and experience of Mark Wozencroft and the fact that Carp Team Scotland are in (or were in) progress of putting together a Ladies team also...?

RH: Brilliant news. Scotland have got a team in the pipeline too so we will soon be having a full home nations event. It's great to see the way that the ladies sport is increasing.

TC: Finally, what have you been up to on a personal level during this crazy time in life...?

RH: Trying to keep fit and healthy, following guidelines and not putting weight on / drinking too much lol. There's been a hefty amount of time put into angling of course, then as far as work and home life is concerned, catching up on all those back-burner jobs



that don't really get done. The garden and garage are looking ace and the van's mint having been clay bar'd and polished. I've re-spoiled but not tied enough rigs yet so that's the next job.

TC: Thanks Rob for the time to chat and hopefully, the hard work you have been a part of will pay off soon and we can get back to the sport we all love...!!

To follow Rob, you can use these links;

You Tube - <https://www.youtube.com/user/RHAPMEDIA>

Insta - @robhughesangler

*******Rob Hughes Interview Update..*******

The interview with Rob was completed prior to the announcement from the PM on Sunday, 10th May 2020.

We now know that Angling has resumed and we feel that the Angling Trust and especially, Jamie Cook and Martin Salter, who, in Robs words "were the driving force" along with Rob and several others, had a large part to play to put angling at the forefront of any agenda the Government had.

We at Talking Carp are express our thanks to all those involved.

..and remember, Stay Alert - Control the Virus - Save Lives

...and...Tight Lines everyone...!!



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THE POINT THAT MATTERS

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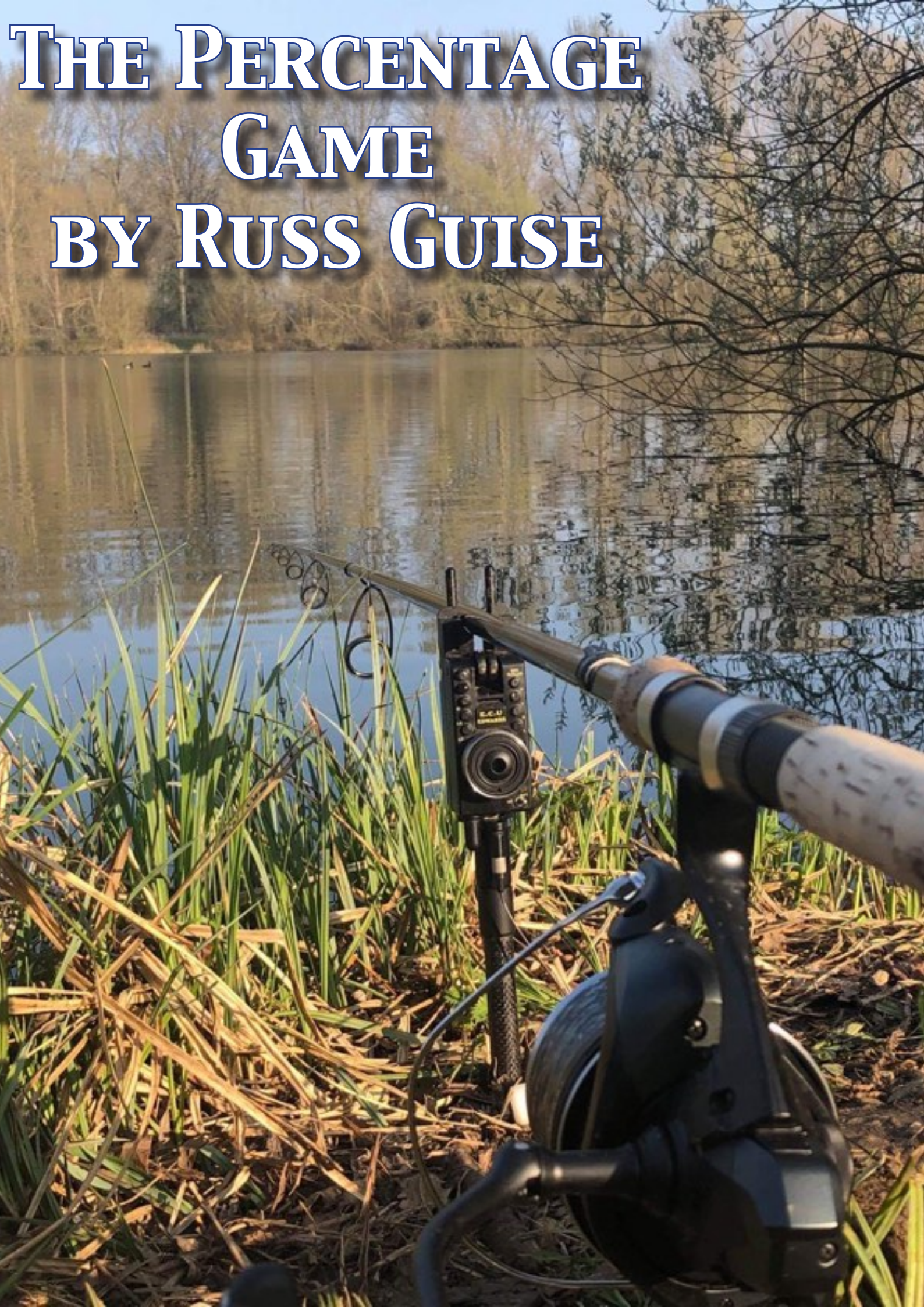
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THE PERCENTAGE GAME BY RUSS GUISE



Many years ago, I can't say when exactly because I honestly don't know when it happened as it wasn't exactly a lightbulb kind of moment but rather a general realisation of fact, it dawned on me that every time we go angling no matter what type of angling it might be; be it coarse for pleasure, fly fishing for game fish or one of the specimen disciplines such as carping, we (powerful statement coming up and as I write I'm not sure how this opinion will be accepted generally) only ever catch IN SPITE OF WHAT WE DO and not BECAUSE OF WHAT WE DO!!! and in the following piece I'll endeavour to explain that statement to the best of my ability... apologies in advance to those of you who disagree with the following ramblings but as always the words I

write are my personal opinions that I've arrived at through the trials and tribulations of over forty years angling and I'll accept someone reading this might disagree and think I'm talking utter bollocks!! If that's the case then all I can say is please, I urge you to put pen to paper or fingers on keyboard and write a genuine response using your own observations and experiences and forward it to Talking Carp for consideration for publication? There are always opposing theories, no matter what the subject matter and for sure in angling we're ALL still learning.

And so to task at hand... as the title suggests were going to be doing some very simple maths throughout this article and in doing so I'm going to assign a percentage value to

each situation we contemplate; obviously each venue and indeed all fish are different so while any situation could have a 5% effect on one lake it may well have a higher % or lower % effect on another lake and only you can decide the severity of consequence for your lake by building up an intimate knowledge of the reactions of the fish you are angling for by observation and data gathering at every opportunity. Imagine this, you find a lake full of your dream fish; not only that every single one of those fish is always ready to provide you a bite no questions asked. Whatever you present them, they will take it and you WILL hook them, so for us carpers it is a lake where all the fish can be caught as long as you put a hook in front of them all you

have to do is find them... so for example for me it's a lake with dark old mirrors with very few scales and from a spawning created from the black mirror (Colnemere) AND Mary (Wraysbury) with a little bit of Heather the Leather (Yateley) and Shoulders (Horton) beautiful Leney strain type ones (no commons involved as I can't catch the buggers) and every one is a bite. Ok we can all admit this would soon become a boring situation and would soon lose its appeal, we all love those red letter days when it seems as though the above scenario is actually happening but in general those sessions only come about by concerted efforts and many hours of piecing the bits of the puzzle together that all the less successful sessions

have taught us. Right now, for the maths...

Let's say that your current venue has a closed season, three months when no one is allowed on the banks, not even to bait up or walk around, it's fair to say sometime during this closed down period the fish that reside there will be at their very, very lowest level of caution having had a period of decompression stress wise because no anglers have been present and as such no threat level exists, no matter what they do they won't get caught or disturbed and for them life is good... they can just spend their days existing and doing what all animals do

when no threats are present... find food and eat it when needed, then a few hours later when hungry go find some more to eat and so on and so on, basically fish exist to eat and reproduce and if left unaffected by humans, they do just fine. Now sooner or later the closed season on the lake in question will end and anglers





period of time every fish will be at its most catchable even those fish that really don't get caught often, i.e. a fish that feels like it's in no danger will be easier to catch than one that's scared shitless of being caught all the time!

will descend on to the lake to try and catch the fish, once more signalling the end to the idealistic lifestyle the fish had enjoyed for a while. So here comes the maths. The fish in the closed season with no pressure or sense of danger we will tag as 100% catchable (as catchable as any individual fish can be), yes I know some fish are never 100% catchable but what I'm trying to convey is this, after a stress free

Now imagine the lake re opens at midnight on the 16th of the month like the old closed season, the fish don't know this and I'm guessing they don't care for the date but the second the rules of the lake allow anglers access again I can guarantee you this, from that moment the first angler arrives, the success/capture percentage goes down!!! Let's say the fishery is gated and locked and there's a

road or track to a car park, I'd happily say the gate opening for the first time in months followed by cars driving down to the car park counts for the first 5 or 10% deduction rapidly followed by another 5% or so with the slamming of car doors, a further 5% can be removed by the voices of everyone greeting one another and sharing expectations of the new season, the obligatory walk round the lake that everyone of us do on our return to our chosen venue at the beginning of the season removes at least 10% I'd say, what with all the foot falls and the movement of expectant anglers moving about bank side looking intently for fish to target, I'd say the next deduction would be the arrival of said anglers into their chosen swims with the required tackle for the session ahead and this

is where attention to detail and conscious effort comes in to play.

Let's say two anglers arrive in their chosen swims with the same items on tackle as each other; angler A proceeds to set up so that night time lights and daytime activities in the swim are shielded as much

as possible from any fish present, they also take upmost care to unload the barrow, set up their shelter pushing pegs in and generally ready themselves as quietly as possible to put rods out, while angler B unloads his barrow by chucking the bivvy off the top of the pile on to the floor with a big thud, drops there

bait buckets on to the floor instead of placing them down, orientates the shelter to look "Carpy" allowing any lights during dark hours to be seen from the water, proceeds to drive every peg in to the ground with a 2lb mallet and then do the same with their bank sticks. Then it's time to find spots to fish... angler A has polarised glasses allowing the best view of sub surface obstacles like weed beds, instantly ruling out some areas of the swim to not even bother exploring, minimising the amount of casts needed to map out the swim... angler B doesn't have polarised glasses therefore will be making numerous unnecessary casts in to thick weed. On top of this angler B is using a bright marker float to find an area to fish resulting in thirty casts or so to get the job



done, while angler A has invested in a Deeper Smart Sonar device (this is the bit where the anti-gadget brigade stop reading) that allows accurate information gathering about the swim topography with very few cast with a few additional lead only casts for confirmation of the sonar reading.

At this point angler A is a fair few % ahead of angler B in the chance of a bite stakes (in my opinion). Then the rods go out into a gin clear pond and let's say it's sparsely weedy in both swims and eight feet deep with deep margins of around four feet. Angler A and B both decide to fish

three on a spot, a big spot admittedly 20 ft wide and 10 ft across front to back fifty yards out in to the lake (I have to set some parameters for the purpose of the article but you all get that I'm sure).

Now I'm not going to get in to the realms of tight lines verses slack

or line tight or braid or lead core/ tubing etc, etc as we all have our own ideas on what's the best way forward in this respect but I am going to approach it like this; given that everything I've written is me trying to detail the things that are detrimental to any chance of a bite, then consider this, if you are

in the group of people that believe fish don't spook off tight lines they can see, then you won't worry if they see your line. If, like me, you would rather do your uppermost to hide your line from the carp's view (because why not?) saving me a few % if you get it right



and they don't see it, then a quality sinking, semi slack set up is the one. I know people say "oh I'm fishing at 120 yds the last thirty yards will be on the deck" but I've been on low stocked lakes and watched three of the five carp present in the place come in to contact with an anglers tight line only twenty yards from the bank and that was enough to put those fish in to the snags for two days!!! Because they have fins and they swim about where and when they want and if those lines had been slacker or weighted down, I truly believe the angler in question would have had a great chance of a bite. (Now I'm risking ridicule here, but I honestly believe it happens)

I firmly believe that there are fish that take caution to a totally different level. I've

seen on more than one occasion fish checking out a baited area then, without feeding, swim off and do a full circuit of the lake or bay they're in. In fact I once observed three fish do two full patrols of one end of a small lake I was fishing, one tight to the margin and the second twenty yards off the bank before returning to the baited area to feed and to this day I'm certain they were checking for lines leading to the bait!! Thankfully I was using Fluorocarbon fished

slack and got the bite I was after! So, in this scenario, I protected my % chance of a bite.

Right with a quick re read of the above the numbers now stand heavily in favour of the angler A who, while having no control over some aspects of the proceedings, has done their uppermost to limit the negative elements and is sitting on a much higher % chance of catching than the less stealthy angler B... And we've not even got on to setting



the banquet for the fish!!!

Let's say angler A and angler B have the exact same bait supply, both anglers are thinking the fish want a feed after the closed season and so angler B spombs out half their total bait for the session 15 and 18 mm boilie, sweetcorn, 12 mm pellet and keeps the small pellets for pva bags...so in short a large BLATANT bed of stuff that while it's giving off food signal is obviously screaming ITS A TRAP!!!!

Angler A puts the same amount out but over three times the area and in a few margin spots but everything has been crushed / mulched / blended down, leaving no items big enough to be classed as obviously blatant bait/ food trap but with all the food signal to tickle their taste buds. Now don't

get me wrong, on a long session where I'm planning to stay put and bore them out I'm happy with the blatant baiting approach, banking on the fish accepting the introduced larger items three or four days in to the session as they deem it safe but for the purpose of this piece I'd suggest the blatant baiting approach was simply a minus % wise. And when you factor in angler A provided ALL the food signal angler B did but in a totally non detrimental way % wise, I'm hoping you're getting my drift, then comes the hour to cast out... it's midnight and the expectations of everyone

around the lake are high, most have seen fish and thoughts of their target laying in the bottom of their landing net at hopefully a top weight race through each anglers heads. Obviously, it's dark (midnight) but angler A and B each have a different approach to their first casts. Angler B is utilising what seems like "a small



sun“ to shine a mega bright beam of illumination on to his reflective marker float which is deployed out in the swim as a reference point for casting and also allowing him to see the splash of his rig as it enters the pond. Angler A presents his rigs by clipping up at the required distance and using a skyline mark to denote the direction of his casts. Again many people believe that light doesn't bother fish at all and I'm not going to debate the issue here, instead I'm merely going to suggest this; an alien light shining into and around a lake is statement to the fact that things are not as they were around the lake during the closed season and as such a certain % of caution will be registered by the fish. It's obvious they're no longer alone!! I will state at

this time that although angler A has done his utmost to conceal his presence and hide his intentions from the fish in the lake it is a matter of record that fish have fins and they swim about their homes freely at all times, so unfortunately for him the negative actions of the other angler have sadly lessened his chance of success and here comes the point I'm trying to make. Imagine everyone fishing took the caution and precautions that angler A did to minimise disturbance and not elevate the threat levels the fish register, they would all be angling for fish with only a very low level

of caution towards feeding and therefore more likely to make a few anglers happy by morning or whenever first bite time arrives, whereas if every angler fished the way noisy angler B did, my guess is by morning, the cumulative results would be far less impressive. The short version of what I'm trying to say is this; it is our goal as anglers to ultimately catch our chosen quarry and



through my years of observations with regards to fish behaviour I have come to the conclusion it is FAR easier to catch the fish when their guard is down and not feeling as though they are under threat (100% catchable) than it is when they are shit scared of every food item, every movement every bump or thud they hear (0% catchable) but as I said earlier these are my opinions through my observations and I have no doubt some will think otherwise, indeed some will probably never have thought about it at all but that's fishing and I love every little bit of it!!!

Dealing with other anglers and their practices is all part of what we do, admittedly I prefer the quieter more considered type of angler to fish

alongside but this isn't always possible such is the popularity of our chosen pass time today, I am lucky I guess I like my own company and enjoy much of my time alone on lakes I know to be quiet or just me and the carp dog Esme doing our thing on a low stocked piece of tranquillity which hopefully holds one or two not so frightened gems . But sometimes I find it nice to have company or even be social and I'm happy also to join our ever swelling ranks on the busier venues and Maybe later on in my writing I'll go in to some detail as to the ways you can or rather I have used the noisy and loud anglers to my advantage but for now I'll leave with a quote I learned some years back from a very stealthy gentleman that used to catch a few fish... not his quote but

one he enlightened me to it...

"Go placidly amid the noise and the haste and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly and listen to others, even the dull and the ignorant, for they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, for they are the vexation to the spirit, never compare yourselves to others YOU may become vain or bitter for there will always be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans... "

Until next time

Russ Guise

Castaway PVA

System
Size: 35mm

Castaway PVA

White Foam Nuggets
4 Litres

Castaway

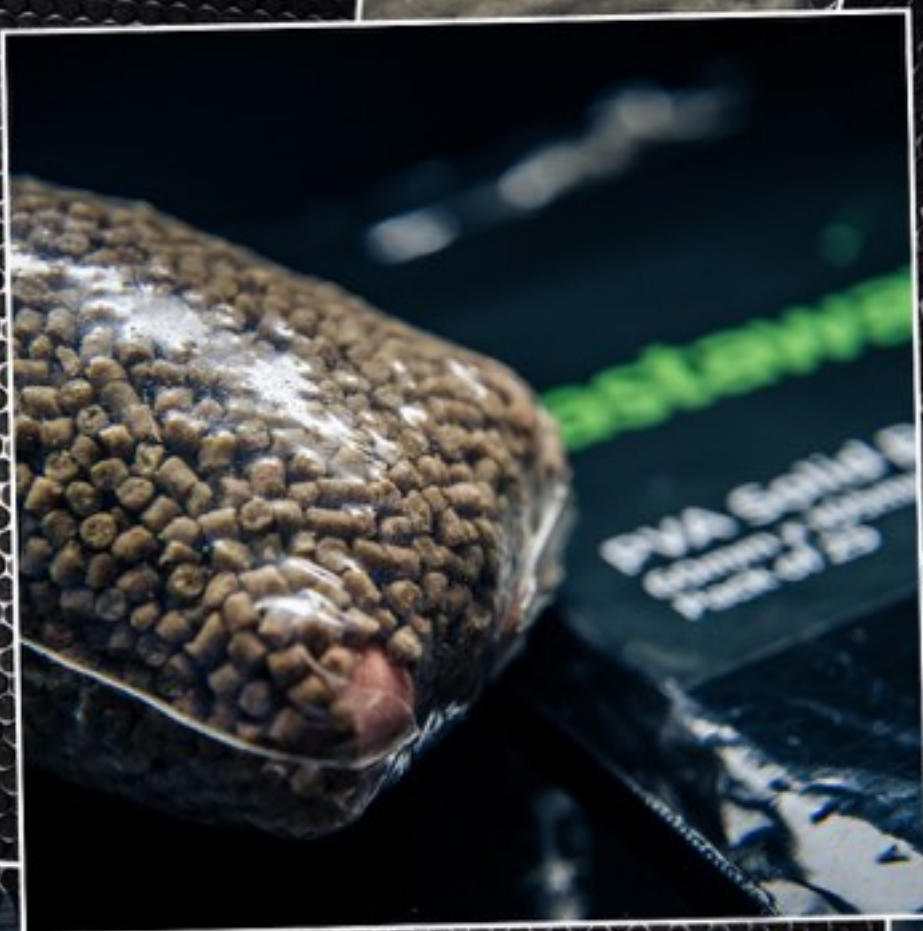
Slow Melting
Length:



www.castaway-pva.co.uk

System
Size: 35mm • Length: 7m

Castaway PVA



Fast Dissolving • Non Residue
Environmentally Friendly

Castaway

Fill Tub

35mm • Length: 25m

Castaway PVA

PVA Solid Bags
80mm x 120mm
Pack of 25



Castaway PVA

Bait Floss
Length: 100m
Fluorescent Yellow

PVA Rig
Tub

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Lockdown Lowdown



by Andrew Murray

Hi all, as I am sat writing this, I should be fishing at a lake in France we were going to have a try at this spring, it was in an area of France we hadn't been to much and there were some other lakes in that region we wanted to take a look at as well. Like most in the last few weeks, travel plans and fishing plans in general have had to be put on hold, and like most I am starting to feel the impact of being closed in. Hopefully, by the time you are reading this maybe there will have been a slight reduction of lockdown rules and we can move around more and maybe even think about getting on to the bank in due course. For our first fishing trip abroad this year we should have been going to Jurassik Carpe in France, we had booked through Armfield Angling, we have been on a few trips with them over the years, they have a good portfolio of waters, which do deliver what they say they will. From small lakes you can book for a small group of anglers, to much larger waters that can be more of a challenge. The reason for mentioning this, is that I have seen several reports of anglers who have booked lakes abroad this year. Obviously due to the lockdown rules their trips have to be cancelled or postponed etc.

I have seen a number of reports where anglers have lost some or all of the money they paid for their trips or having to pay admin fees to have the trips moved. When France advised about the extension of the lockdown rules, I was contacted by Carmen of Armfield Angling to offer me the option to move our trip. I was given a number of dates to choose from, we decided to go for an October date, hopefully by then we should be moving around a bit more. Anyway, our move was confirmed quickly and at no extra charge by either Jurassik or Armfield Angling, so fair play to



them both. As I said Armfield Angling have a good number of waters in their portfolio and there is help and advice with them all, all the lakes are well run as well, so if you are on the lookout for your next trip, take a look at their website. As a final note on this trip. The owner at Jurassik was fishing the peg we were supposed to be in this week and landed some stunning carp! I have attached a photo.

Throughout the last 5 or 6 weeks or so, there has been much venting of spleens on social media, me included! It seems people have fallen into two camps, those that believe we should all be staying in and obeying the rules, then those who think if they want, they should

be allowed to go fishing as they aren't hurting anyone, and/or 'this virus thing isn't serious anyway'! I'm not going to rerun the debate again; we have all had our say. I have fallen out with a lot of people over this, maybe with time and hindsight things will sort themselves out, I'm not sure personally, I'm not sure I want to stay in contact with people who think that all that's important is their own personal gratification, whatever they do. I think my view has definitely been quite harsh because of how poorly my wife has been with the chemo, we haven't been able to see any of our family at all, this has been quite devastating for us, not been able to see or hug the boys, much more important than going fishing in my mind. Probably, the main reason I have been so outspoken about those who thinking they should be able to go is the thought of my wife contacting the virus in her weakened state.

I don't speak about my work very often, I run my own business as Financial Planner





people have found this very surreal, because while we are doing this, 100's are dying every day. This quite time has also given me time to help make some decisions about my future, to do with retiring earlier, spending time with the family and definitely a lot more fishing trips.

and Wealth Adviser, as a Wealth Adviser I manage tens of millions of pounds of clients' money, working closely with them on their future plans and dreams, I speak to all my clients regularly. More recently over the last couple of months I have had many conversations with just about all my clients, given the market turmoil due to the virus. What's noticeable is that all of them are more concerned about their families and friends, that they are about their investments. The values will return, their relationships might not...

Like most others as well, I have filled my time with jobs in the garden, painting around the house, polishing the cars etc. Then come the evening when the updates come, opening a beer and listening to the latest figures, I think most

Probably like most anglers as well. A lot of time has been spent sorting and re-sorting tackle so it's ready to go when things change, there are only so many rigs one can tie though, and how much time you can spend 'playing with



your tackle'! Most of my main tackle and stuff had already been sorted as I had made a start on my season on the Pits, with my first carp of the year on my first trip. I did give my boat a once over and clean as it's not going to be used for some while now.

In my last article I had spoken about using the Method Feeder this year as part of my fishing on the pits, to use along with the Zigs, which caught me a lot of extra carp last year. The other thing I have decided to change this year was my baiting approach. As I have said before (many times), you must evaluate your fishing and make changes where necessary. I tend to do this over the winter, I have a look back and see how I think things went and whether I could have or should have caught more carp. I have already talked about the rigs and plans I was going to move to. As well as the Zig fishing and feeder fishing, I wanted a change of bait approach as well. That was where I was at before the lockdown, thinking I was on top of things and doing ok. During the lockdown I spent quite a bit of time going through older pictures and accounts of some of the catches I had in the past, going as far back as the

late 90's and early 2000's. I even re-read my book 'Catch Carp with Andy Murray', man I caught some good carp! And looked at account of the various events I participated in, as well as winning some matches and setting records. Now given I now have more experience and better tackle, why do I feel I'm not sometimes catching as well as I should be or used to? It's all well and good looking back at pictures of events and catches, it's easy to forget how much effort went into those catches. That I think is the key ingredient I have been missing occasionally and I have touched



on it a few times. Not effort on one session, but effort over a season, I'm not sure I apply that effort now, I may like to think I do but I'm not sure. When I was fishing a lake regularly I would be making sure bait was going in regularly, if I couldn't fish, I would still get down to put some bait in, even if it meant going at night to do so, or I would get a few others involved in putting some bait in. I would always look to have an edge, something that was a bit more than others were prepared to put in. Then I would keep going, even when others had stopped, I would keep turning up at the lake and fishing hard, treating every single trip as the most important, feeling that this would be the trip when I caught my prize. This was usually when I caught the better carp, I have been reminded of this whilst going through my old pictures. It's certainly true that I don't have the drive I did and maybe not the

time to apply some of these points. Maybe, and I think this is more likely true, I'm happy to get my trip in every couple of weeks and leave it at that. Do I want to re-kindle that desire to catch, regardless of the rest of my life, I don't think so, but I'm sure with better planning and a bit more effort, I could get out more. The reasoning for mentioning all this is to help you the reader think about your coming plans for the year, maybe it will help you put a few more carp on the bank in due course. I think one of the other things I need to think about is being more selfish for me. This applies to my UK and Foreign fishing, there

is no doubt in my mind I have been too easy going at times, especially when fishing with others. Sorry, I went off on quite a tangent there. Regarding my baiting approach I am going to make a change for this year. So, I am going to use the Essential Cell, heavily glugged and flavoured. Over the last



couple of years, I have used the boilie/crumb/particle approach with various baits from the Mainline stable, which has been ok but certainly not got me amongst the bigger carp, or as many as I would have liked. So, I'm going for small patches of highly attractable palatable baited areas, that can be put out quickly without too much disturbance, so less is more. This has come about from several thoughts and conversations with others and looking back on my fishing for the last couple of years. I have been with Mainline for over 25 years now, the company has certainly grown in that time. I have total confidence in all the baits they produce, there are so many now we are spoilt for choice. Here on the Pits, it does seem that the

anglers who catch over bait do so when they have had time to sit on it for a while, certainly more than the two-day session I do. So, this year (when we get out), I plan on working on the little and often strategy of fishing quite a bit more. That's the plan anyway, well see how it goes heh?

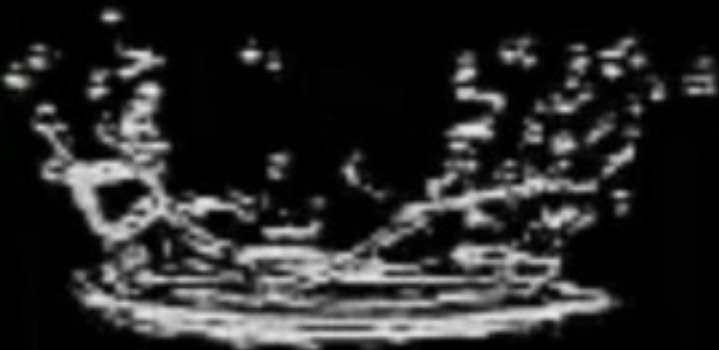
Hopefully, next time we can just talk about fishing and maybe even think about going, I don't know about you guys but I have missed those misty sunrises.

So, we continue to wait...

Stay safe and catch you next time.

Andy





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**Snow Carp steals the show
by Scott Geezer Grant**



Last year I planned a winter social with good mates Nick and Porky. The social was planned for February 2020, a really good time of the year with less anglers on the bank.

The venue chosen was Churchwood Fisheries where Nick is a regular and cousin of owner Steve Sands. With the dates finalised I arranged for Porky to meet me at the fishery on the Thursday, Nick will be fishing from the Friday straight from work. Nick and Porky would be fishing Churchwood and I would be fishing Jenkins.

With all the arrangements in place I was wishing away the days. The week before the prep work started, I called Matt Bowers and ordered 10 kilos of chilli hemp, crushed up 5kilos of nutjob boilies, got a bucketful of pellets and ordered a few pints of maggots. Come Wednesday night and I was doing my final prep work getting everything ready, I collected my maggots got my boilies out the freezer, checked and re-checked I had everything as come tomorrow when I finish work I will be straight home get the car

loaded, then have a quick shower before leaving for the lake.

Thursday was a manic day at work but as soon as I was finished the car was loaded in quick time, I got showered and I was off like Lewis Hamilton. I arrived at Steve's within 25 minutes and as I drove down the gravelly path to the lake and parked up, I took a deep breath and immediately felt relaxed. I had a walk around both lakes and although it was cold it did look good, I was as excited as always and once back at the car I started getting the gear out and went about setting up. Bivvy was the first thing and once everything else was done, I took my time getting the rods sorted. I had already decided that all rods would be fished with inline leads, the only debate would be what bait I would





use on what rod. As I had already had success on the maggots, I fished the right-hand rod on the maggot rig, the middle rod on a white pop up topped with maggots, the left-hand rod on a white nutjob pop up. The rods were boated out to their usual winter spots with a generous helping of bait and once completed the kettle went on. Porky had text me to say he was on his way so it was a case of enjoying my coffee and relaxing until he turned up.

Porky turned up keen as always, as he got out his van, he had a big grin on his face and said "I've been wanting to fish this place for years" well today it's going to happen mate. I walked him down to Churchwood and he had a good look about,

he couldn't believe how much the place had changed and how pristine the place was.

He knows how much effort time and money Steve has put into over the years as I told him, but he still couldn't

believe how much the place had changed (for the good I might add). We made our way back and he started to get his gear from his van, he decided to fish the left-hand side of the lake in swim 3. I left him to get himself sorted whilst I sat and relaxed in my bivvy.

A few hours later he was all set up and as excited as I was, we sat and chatted for a while, Steve popped down to see how we were doing and left an hour or so later. For dinner the Mrs had pre-cooked a lovely chilli so all's I needed to do was cook the pasta and heat up the chilli.





This was the perfect meal seeing as it was cold this would warm us right up. Early evening and we were both sitting down at the table tucking into a hot chilli, washed down with the finest spring water (well for me anyway). We both retired to bed around 22:00 o'clock and the temperature had really plummeted and there was definitely going to be a frost, I could already see white appearing everywhere. I went to sleep just after midnight and an hour later the right hand rod let out 2 bleeps, I jumped out the bag slipped on my crocs and was on

the rod, the line was tight and as I lifted into the fish I could already feel the line grating. The fish had snagged me almost immediately!!

I did manage to get some line back, and then it was totally locked up. I put the rod back on the rest and loosened the clutch, but even after 15 minutes nothing happened. I walked down to Porky as I needed to go out in the boat and didn't want to do this without another person knowing or being on the bank whilst I was out there, just in case something happened, I wouldn't want him finding me floating in

the lake in the morning, always safety first.

He woke up I explained what had happened and he said "no worries mate I'll be straight down give me 5 minutes"

Five minutes later Porky was in my swim asking where the fish was snagged, he already had his life jacket on and before I knew it, he was in boat and making his way out to the snagged fish. He loves going in the boat he's a born natural. I lifted the rod and he grabbed the line and started to gently make his way



down towards where the fish was snagged. When he got above the fish he could see the fish thrashing under the water and after a few minutes of trying to unsnag the line it parted just above the hook link!!, he came back with the tubing and lead, so at least the fish isn't towing loads of line around, but to be honest I was gutted and more annoyed that the fish has now got a rig in its mouth, which I know it will get rid of but doesn't make me feel any better.

Porky made his way back to the bank I thanked him for all his help, and he made his way back to his swim to get some sleep. I wasted no time in re-rigging the rod and getting it back out on the dance floor. It was 03:00 o'clock in the morning before I finally got into bed and fell

asleep. Friday morning when I woke up it was cold, and when I came out the bivvy it was like winter wonderland, everything was covered in frost, I put the kettle on and got dressed as wearing a pair of shorts was just

too cold. I made porky a cup of coffee and took it down to him, he was already awake and he didn't even look like he had been asleep!!

We both done our own thing for most of the day and early



afternoon Nick turned up raring to go. He came flying past with his barrow loaded and after a brief chat made his way down to swim 4 the big double to the right of Porky.

As always, I let him get himself set up and sorted before I put the kettle on. A few hours later he was all set up and ready for a social. Dinner was all sorted as I had brought along a homemade curry courtesy of my Mrs, she spiced it up a bit as I requested due to the cold weather. The boys do love a

curry and I was hoping they would love this one., I hadn't rebaited the rods and had planned to do them all tomorrow morning at some point

Later in the evening we all sat down to a lovely homemade curry that the boys wasted no time devouring and it had the perfect kick. Compliments to my Mrs on another top-notch meal. We all sat talking until the late hours, the weather was a lot milder than the previous night and was going to be frost free.

I had a better night's sleep without being rudely awoken in the early hours, I made us all a morning brew and actually drank mine watching the water which is something I like to do every morning when I am fishing.

Once Nick was in the world of the living, he cooked his signature full English breakfast and this is something not to be missed, it sets you up for the rest of the day. Porky couldn't believe his eyes when Nick dished his plate up and he wasted no time devouring it. Early afternoon I decided to bring the rods in and have a change about. I used my other maggot rig on the middle rod, kept the same rig on the right-hand rod, and the left-hand rod I decided to change the hook bait colour from white to fluorescent





pink a colour that has proved fruitful for me in the past.

Each rod was boated out with the boat loaded which included, chillie hemp, crushed boilies, whole boilies, pellets and a few handfuls of maggots, this should get the fish going. Steve popped down to see how we were all doing and after a few cups of tea he said his goodbyes and made his way back up

to his house. Both Nick and Porky were now sitting in their swims and I was doing the same, although it was still cold it was pleasant as the sun was making brief appearances which made it feel a little warmer. I

was going through my bait adding more food dip to my boilies when the left-hand rod went into melt down, a one toner that scared the life out of me. I span round and grabbed the rod and to me surprise it was the left-hand rod the pink flouro had done its magic again. The fish kited left straight out into open water which made things so much easier. The fish stayed deep and to be honest from

the onset I knew it was one of the better fish. After 5 minutes or so the fish surfaced, and it looked a good fish and a few minutes later I slid the net under a pretty chunky mirror. I secured the fish in the net and called Nick and asked him and Porky to pop down, within minutes they both appeared and there I was smiling from ear to ear. We zeroed the sling; I then lifted the fish from the water into the cradle. It was a fish both me and Nick recognised as the "Snow Carp" one of the lakes A Team members.

I removed the rig and Nick done the honours and both me and Porky watched as the needle swung round to a healthy 22lb. I was so happy the fish is so pretty and to be honest any fish in these cold conditions and at this time of the year is

always welcome. Steve came down and took some great photos then the fish was treated and released. Both lakes were fishing slow from previous years and I was hoping the lads would chip in and hopefully both bank a fish. The weather was cold and sunny and according to my weather app Storm Ciara was due to arrive early hours the next day.

Saturday night saw us

having a proper social and it was good to catch up with the lads and as always, the talk was on a water we all fish and love the mighty Bayeswater. A very special place with a very special stock and some of the country's finest carp. We retired to our bivvies in the early hours as the wind started to get up and we knew the Storm wasn't far away, an hour later I was all snug in the bag and

Storm Ciara arrived, the wind was ridiculous and I could hear trees crashing in the forest behind me. I heard a couple of almighty crashes before falling asleep.

Sunday

morning you can see the devastation the storm had caused with trees down in the forest and branches everywhere. Mark the head groundsman surely has his work cut out for him as he's the one who is going to have to clean the whole mess up. As it was my daughter's birthday the previous Friday, she had got us tickets to go and see BGT star Kojo on his taxi tour at Queens theatre. It wasn't until the evening, but I was taking her out for a birthday meal beforehand, so come 12 o'clock I wound the rods in and bid the lads farewell and that I would be back in the morning. Before leaving I walked round and baited the areas I was fishing, from the bank, this will keep the areas fresh with bait and give the fish a free feed with no lines in the water.



My daughter had a great evening and Kojo was as funny on stage as he was when he was on BGT. The next morning, I was back over the lake arriving just after 10 o'clock. All the back lanes were flooded and there were trees down everywhere the storm really had caused some damage. Once at the lake I went down to see the lads to see if anything had been caught and both were disappointed so it was left to me to try and catch another to raise the spirits.

All rods went out with the same rigs and the same hook bait arrangements, with the storm now passed the pressure was a healthy 996 and the wind a south westerly which is always nice in the winter. Heavy rain was due later in the evening which again could either wake the fish up or make them even

more dormant.

That evening the rain came down and it rained for the whole night and it was heavy, at times I was thinking if I do get a take I'm

going to get absolutely soaked, but I didn't care if it happens, I've got a fresh change of clothes. Come morning and with the rain very light and the pressure still falling I decided to



cast a rod in the cat lake, as always, the ever faithful nutjob was used snowman style with a Fluro pink pop up on top. Steve had popped down for a cup of tea and just as I was brushing my teeth the rod was away, I lifted the rod and played the fish firstly with the toothbrush still in my mouth!! There was no way I was throwing it on the floor!!

Steve was royally taking the mickey and taking photos at the same time, after a few minutes I had a baby cat in the net, again not a massive fish but to catch a cat at this time of the year just proves the bait works and never ceases to amaze me. Later the same day saw me packing up and heading home. Porky packed up at the same time as his session had come to

an end. He was so thankful to have the pleasure of fishing such an awesome fishery with facilities second to none. No doubt we will all be back there again but hopefully next time we will all catch.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Steve and Helen for allowing me to fish and the hospitality they showed, so thank you



both.

If you would like to fish either Jenkins, Churchwood or the dedicated Cat Lake visit www.churchwoodfisheries.co.uk

For bookings call Steve/Helen on 01277-375499

If you would like to try the ready-made "Ronnie rigs" with the coloured kickers from

sharp tackle visit their website for a pack of 4 hooks its £2:99 which isn't expensive at all.

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

www.galaxybaits.co.uk
www.sharptackle.co.uk

In The Margin Particles (you can find on Facebook)

With all what's going

on in the world today stay safe, practice social distancing and hopefully soon when the current restrictions are lifted, we can all get back to what we love doing Fishing!!

All the best

Geezer



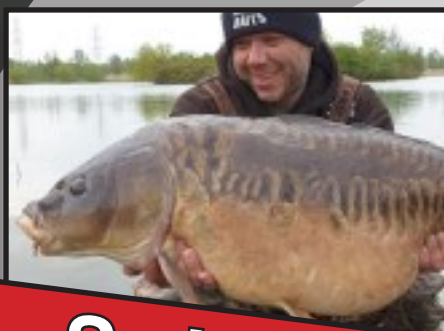
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Sharp



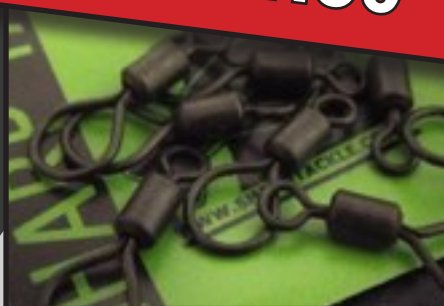
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**Spotted fin –
Interview with Pele Johnson
by Mark Carper**

Having used some of the Spotted Fin, Catalyst boilies, with some success and also using the 'Classic Corn' Syrup last year on my Floating Pellet and Dog Biscuits with great success, I took the opportunity to speak with Pele, the owner of the company during the Northern Angling Show in February this year...

TC: Mr. Johnson, welcome to the pages of Talking Carp Magazine for the first time and thanks for giving our readers the opportunity to get the background low-down on your fairly new, in terms of bait companies but incredibly well established and popular company, Spotted Fin.

PJ: *Thank you Mark it's a pleasure to see your magazine coming on so well also with a strong following.*

TC: Thanks Pele, issue 50 was uploaded last month and that is not bad going at all...

I find that a good place to start is always at the beginning so tell me a bit about you and your fishing and bait manufacturing background to get us started...what got you started with Spotted Fin...and which came first, the Course/Match range or the Carp range...?

PJ: *Well actually I don't come from the angling industry originally but worked in the City most of my career after spending some time in Her Majesty's Forces. I have a passion for all types of fishing from sea fishing, tropical flats fishing, lure fishing, fly fishing and carp, match etc. and was intrigued by the creativity required to build an angling brand, so putting the two together was one of my bucket list options and here we are.*

Weirdly it was actually match fishing that came first in a weird sort of way. I had been playing with some complex home-made groundbaits and boilies and I got to know Russell Grimes a top match angler and we just started playing with some ideas and the groundbaits started to get some testing and at the same time we were testing some liquids for a boilie I

was making just for myself and friends. Just home stuff but once we saw the results it got me thinking that maybe there was something in this.

I was fortunate at the time to be able to retire early and wanted to do something different and it looked like both the groundbaits and the boilies were worth exploring. I love playing with the ingredients and doing things a bit 'off the wall' and there was a bit of a mind meld with some ideas in the match side that we put into the boilie, which eventually became the Catalyst. And 4 years later

TC: I am surprised you have only been going for the past four years as you are certainly one of the well-known brands out there. In terms of the range, obviously there is some cross-over but what percentage of the company is directed to the Carp Bait development and production...?

PJ: Well actually they are two very distinct parts. Although I oversee the whole company, various people are involved in each area and each has its own distinct path, organisation, budget and anglers. We see ourselves as a brand rather than as a match or carp company and want people to feel comfortable that whatever they fish for, they can be a part of the brand ethic and "Team Fin".

We have been working outside of both match and carp recently exploring other areas that the brand can get involved in to diversify and spread us across a wider audience too.



TC: To give some perspective, at the end of your first year as Spotted Fin, what quantity of boilies were you producing and in what flavours and types...

...and how does that compare to what you produce currently...?

PJ: Well, originally on the carp side we only had the Catalyst which is our flagship boilie range I guess. It took us about a year or more to establish it and probably we were doing not much in terms of boilies in tons, maybe only 8-10 tons that first year.

We launched the boilie in April 2016 and didn't really complete the full range until 12 months later so it was a trial and error thing and working out what worked and what products sold.

Now we are in to our 5th year and have 'Smokey Jack' the fishmeal and the real show stopper 'Classic Corn' and I can tell you that we roll a hell of a lot each week and for the first time even in lockdown we have struggled to keep a full stock of the Classic Corn in these last few weeks.

I don't know if we are dreading it or excited about the lockdown finally being removed at some point as we know the demand for Classic Corn



across Europe has been extreme even during these times. To put it bluntly we reduced to a skeleton staff during this period but we haven't stopped or changed rolling schedules and I suspect we will have a demand issue for Classic

Corn soon its going that well.

TC: I have to say, I have not had the opportunity to use the Classic Corn boilie, but the syrup is a favourite of mine and the quality and smell of the boilie was very impressive when I saw it at the NAS8 a few months back.

How much bait do you export outside of the UK and to where...?

PJ: *We export quite a bit to countries like Ukraine, Poland, Hungary and Romania and as far North/East now with our newest partners in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. I do know some of that ends up in Russia and we are looking closely at that country.*

On the West side we go as far as most of Europe and even the USA. In the Americas its mostly Carp and in the European theatre it's a mix of both. There are about 15 or 16 countries taking our products at the moment. I would say we sell about 75% in the UK and the rest across the globe. We also sell ingredients and flavours to other bait making operations, so we have that side which does well everywhere.

TC: What do you credit as being the major factor in the rise of the brand in a very short space of time in this industry...?

PJ: *There are a few factors that have come together for us to be where we are*



now. I know that's a little bit of confidence to say it, but we believe it. There are some great products out there, but we came into this knowing our products had to be either as good as the best or better and that is one factor of how we got to be here.

If we can't satisfy that criteria, we don't do it. Why make something second best? We also setup a big investment plan to drive the brand hard into the industry. You have to push hard from all angles excuse the pun....

Our packaging is expensive and high quality and if we are going to spend that kind of money on packaging, it makes you realise that we are not going to put any old crap in the bag..!

Our customer service is strong and the way we have setup our processes make us look and feel professional. I also think our brand has been well thought through and has some great ambassadors both in the company and outside that have made it what it is. Everyone from how we market ourselves to how we sell ourselves is passionate about what they are doing and that comes through in everything. It's important that our staff, our shops, our customers, all feel like they are part of something new and dynamic and we work hard to make that a reality.

The amount of people wanting clothing or caps or something to show they are part of 'Team Fin' has been astonishing. Even if they don't use the baits people want to feel like they belong to something and are a part of it. We are quite approachable also. No-one knows who makes the baits really at some of the big bait houses but we try and connect with our customers, showing them that we are a big company who can handle themselves but are approachable enough to listen to all our customers who want to talk, right from our staff, to our management to myself. We are all visible, approachable and knowledgeable about everything we do.

I think another factor is people want to see change in this industry. There is a lot of the old guard still around from the beginning and that is not representative of how other industries have been shaped recently. Look at Dyson, Apple, Google Tesla all coming into markets with new idea and

and new ways of doing things, that are proving successful. All brands that most hadn't heard of or were obscure or new and then bang they are top of their fields and if I am honest, there has not been a lot change over the years in angling.

On the flip side, I have watched the Sticky Baits growth with some interest and think they have done an outstanding job in getting to top spot in this country. They are a strong brand and I think we possibly have similar values. I think the fact they have done well and we are now entering the top segment of the market, it just shows people want to see quality, they want strong marketing, they want to feel like they belong to something new and are happy to have change and want to be a part of that change. Of course, keeping yourself there and growing is another thing altogether. I think the next 3-5 years will see a lot of change and turnover in the market.

TC: In terms of the Brand, why “Spotted Fin”...?

PJ: *That's an interesting question. Well, what we are doing now is only part of Spotted Fin. The name came about when our initial project initiation team and our marketing advisors were developing another suite of products, outside the bait industry (story for another day) and we wanted a brand that would connect with people across angling whatever discipline they chose to partake in. The “Spotted Fin”*



part is actually about “seeing and being” with the fish and works, I believe, across all fishing disciplines.

The tag line “Fishing From Every Angle” is about our determination and drive to deliver products across all areas eventually with a twist on the ‘angle’ part and have something for every angler out there.

TC: In terms of ‘Bait Development’, who is the driving force behind that for the Carp bait range...?

PJ: *That would be me. We have 3 ranges. The Catalyst was developed by me actually at home over months of reading and understanding the physiology and nutritional requirements of carp, working with the knowledge of university data and complex nutritional supplements. As I said before we came at this from a very different angle.*

Smokey Jack was a combination of myself and one of our consultants when he was with the brand and Classic Corn was a flavour, I found right at the beginning, so it’s been used as a hook bait for at least 4 years before it became a boilie range. Once we realised the potential of the bait, we knew it had to become a range in its own right and I took myself off to develop basically a Classic Corn version of the complex Catalyst base mix but in a nut base.

Most of the hook baits liquids etc. I develop with my team and anglers around me. So I guess I am the carp driving force, but lots of people have an input and I have spent a few years learning from the likes of Russell Grimes, Simon Willsmore and Jamie Hughes on the match side as well about baits and uses and have been heavily involved there also.

TC: Is there a specific reason as to why you only have three options, with ‘Catalyst’, Smokey Jack’ and the latest offering (and my personal favourite) of ‘Classic Corn’...?



PJ: Too many bait firms nowadays are pushing loads of different products trying to find a seller and claiming it's the "next best thing". We have been around 4 years in terms of being visible (although we go back further than that as a programme) and to get to three full ranges designed, fully tested and

working has been a real challenge in that time frame.

It does sometimes amaze me the sheer number of flavours and boilies some other firms have I don't think that will ever be us. We will never have more than 4 full main ranges I don't think. It's too much hard work Lol !

I think too many boilies out there are designed just to catch the angler nowadays and my intention was never to go down that route. We have a very different approach to all this. We are going to develop exactly what we think is the right bait for the right situation and hopefully people can stay with the brand and choose a range for that season or that purpose and feel they have also got other well-designed options.

Also, to be fair there is a sort of symmetry between the three current ranges and a lot of people I know fish Cat "N" Corn or Smoky-Cat, I even know one team member who is fishing Smokey-Corn if you get my drift...!

They all work together wonderfully or as stand-alone products but you're not going to find us bringing out Banoffee, or Crunchy Krill etc. Our boilie ranges are well developed and well thought through from beginning to end, across marketing and bait development and across supply chains and sales. Everything needs to hum and work together and that is what you see in our ranges. I will let you into a little Talking Carp exclusive

and say on record there have always been 4 full boilie ranges at Spotted Fin, that we developed right from the start.

TC: *Four...??!! Maybe we will keep that for another time too along with the “product development” story....*

....How long do you ‘Field Test’ a bait prior to going public with it and what type of waters do you test on...?

PJ: *Testing is quite an interesting subject, and it is quite a vigorous process – something we test across different platforms. I think when an angler thinks of testing, they are thinking about “does it catch carp”..? Well, yes, clearly that is the really important bit and there is no point just throwing something out there without knowing that but there are other facets to consider....*

...Does it mix and roll ok at speed...? This is important so that you can churn tons out at a time without issue...

...What is the supply chain like, and can we source the ingredients easily and regularly in bulk...?

Is the pricing stable for the ingredients or do they fluctuate...?

What currency are we buying them at, and do we need to hedge the market to ensure financial stability in the bait...? (This is something we may do regularly, especially with the concern on the dollar and euro exchange rates at present).

Can the marketing and sales staff understand it and sell it well...?

Will it sell into shops and distributors...?

Does it package ok, does it change colour or shape over time..?

Will it last in a bag for 2 years and still be useable...?

Have I accounted for allergies in people, does it meet the EU bait additive directives...?

One thing I often hear is, “well I can buy my mates boilies for £4 a kilo, why should I pay those ridiculous prices that the big companies charge??”

Well, now you can see just some of the different things a big brand has to think about and that’s before storage, staff, labour, health and safety, asset management, machinery, pest control, heat, light, water, social distancing etc.. When you’re selling tens of thousands of bags of something, it has to be right in every single bag across your supply chain across every part of the company. I have products I have developed that are just crazy successful baits, but I could never bring them to market without them costing stupid prices and being a pain to make.

We are fortunate to have some world class match anglers and we test things through them as well for Carp. Whether it’s being caught on the pole or on 15lb line 300 yards out on a popup, a carp is a carp taking into account natural food sources and numbers in lake, and those guys are Jedi’s when it comes to bait use.

Do not underestimate how useful they are in carp testing as well as match products. In fact, I would now go as far to say if you’re just testing by trying to catch specimen carp fishing alone, you’re not going to be able to test a product to its full extent properly in a well-defined timeframe. Chasing bigger carp is too finicky a process to know if a bait works well just by that method, without doing it for months and months. But that is just my opinion.

With our match side, I have seen a multitude of new options come to us and faster testing processes because these guys know what a peg is doing and what weights it can handle on a particular day when the wind is blowing east to west and its sunny. You can tell straight away if a bait is at least acceptable to the fish and in conjunction with fishing specimen lakes you get much better and quicker data packages to work with.

Try sitting on a 12-acre lake for a week and tell me you know a bait is working effectively. Yes, you have your Drayton’s and Thorpe Lea, but you can catch on foam or corn and bag up at those venues, although they

do offer some value in whether a bait puts the carp completely off. We test a hell of a lot, but we also have learnt to test very quietly and discreetly with trusted individuals, sometimes one part of the company may not even know another part is doing a particular test.

Very early on, we realised that walls have ears and we needed to be prepared for this. I have a couple of places I personally put bait out and watch how fish react to it, from crowded ponds full of commons where a slice of bread would be demolished in literally 5 seconds of hitting the water, to low stock waters where you don't see the carp but you know where they sometimes go and you know if bait has been disturbed and in what way.

One day I may get our media to show what we do. Sometimes testing is quite frantic and I would be a liar if I said everything was done over years and years, some parts are long term and some parts can be tested much quicker but it all has to come together at the end of a relatively lengthy process in terms of the whole thinking and development life cycle. It depends on the product, the testers, people giving the right feedback. There are an enormous number of factors to consider in testing...!



TC: Is there any difference between the make-up of your Freezer bait and Shelf-Life, other than the obvious preservative in the Shelf-Life...?

PJ: *None at all. Both freezer and shelf life are exactly the same base mixes. We want to make a load of say Classic Corn base mix and then roll it in whatever is needed that week dependant on orders. Much easier to have one base mix for a range. Shelf life is so advanced compared to what has gone before "back in the day" and I would be happy to use either.*

TC: Without giving too much away, can you tell me a little bit about the 'Catalyst' and the process you use to 'Brew', if that is the right term, the liquid that goes in to it and what is meant by the term 'Active Bait'...?

PJ: *Yeah, it's a bit of a "jackanory" really but I can tell you a cut down version....*

...Originally I was testing the liquids which were also going to be used on the match side with Russell and one day he mixed a couple of liquids on the bank we were testing and basically it was like feeding time at the zoo when he put the products into the lake. When we worked out what he had done we realised we had to mix a couple of components in a particular quantity, which when put together essentially 'brew', a bit like a fine lager, and create something a bit special and that's how the catalyst was born – the Catalyst is actually the liquid that goes inside the boilie. Now we have it going into lots of things. Match products, carp products, you name it Lol. It is such a successful liquid combination.

TC: Does the same liquid go into the Dips and Glugs or do you use a basic glucose liquid in those, like many other companies do...?

PJ: *Yes, the Catalyst is a food dip and a particle syrup. I the food dip*

it is the same liquid that goes into the boilie. It's not a cheap liquid but then when it was developed, we didn't envisage having a large factory and people buying the product.

There has to be some glycerine in certain products as basically it acts like an inert preservative (although it isn't) by coating at molecular level, the liquid product you mix with it. Trust me, with the catalyst you need that unless you want your bait bag to look like a hand grenade has gone off inside it.

Putting just Glycerine in a jar with a flavour and charging the earth for it I do not agree with but sadly it is done quite often. Our Particle Syrups are made with Corn Sugar or you may know it as Glucose, which is lovely thick and sweet...! For The Catalyst and Smokey Jack we have to do that very carefully. It has a tendency to blow the jar up if we get the mixture wrong....!!!

TC: You are already well established in the Carp and Course/Match bait world and have a range of Terminal Tackle and Clothing too, so what is next for Spotted Fin...?

PJ: *Well that would be telling...! We do have some plans in place for venturing out into other disciplines and up to the start of this pandemic crisis we were in the middle of testing and organising a range of products to compliment what we do to deliver in the next year or so. We have to see how that now pans out as we react to what is going on this year and deal with this pandemic, which I think will have a significant effect on the industry.*



It's going to be interesting times for everyone as we all adapt.

MG: Something that I have discussed with many a 'Named Angler' over my time doing these types of interviews and that we hear and read a lot about, especially on Social Media is the talk of 'Sponsorships' and 'Team Spots' and 'Deals' etc. etc. and I am sure you get plenty of enquiries on a daily basis from people wanting to be part of 'Spotted Fin', so what is your advice to someone that wants a place with Spotted Fin and do I fit that profile(HaHa)...??

PJ: Well yes Mark, we do get a lot of interest especially as we now have become more well-known and established. You know for me, it's really simple...

...If you have some value to offer a company, in some way, you're likely to be looked at a lot more than someone just requesting a sponsorship deal or consultant position because they think they deserve it. We are a business and decisions need to be made on a business level. What value do you offer? Can you catch fish people are interested in hearing about? Can you take sharp, in-focus pics that are interesting to the eye and don't have a tree sticking out your head? Can you communicate your thoughts during testing well so everyone can understand what needs to change? Are you even prepared to offer feedback? Some I know seem paralysed that if they offer bad feedback it reflects on them...!

We actually need people like that. One of our consultants has no problems telling me when I am wrong, and I don't mind hearing it, however hard it may be, because it may potentially stop a car crash, as long as it done the right way.

Do you offer some other value such as being someone the brand can rely on to help at shows and events? We have people that work tirelessly for the brand, build things for shows, always helping, always first there. To

me that is priceless.

Can you write articles or feel comfortable communicating on camera? Sadly 99 out of every 100 messages I get about “being sponsored” ends up on the cutting room floor so to speak, as the angler has not thought through these key points. The essay is usually always about the angler and how well they are doing and they have declined to address... “what can they actually do for the brand”.. and “what can they bring to the brand”. Catching fish is a percentage of the equation. We need anglers who can offer a lot of value in a competitive market.

All that said, we do have an active team and we do promote from within when we see someone who is learning and progressing, but we are getting more stringent on sponsored anglers as I think the industry has become one of, “come over to us and we will give you even cheaper bait, or make you a consultant” and that sort of way of thinking doesn’t sit too well with me. If you have desires to work with an angling brand you must look at it from the brands perspective, they hold the cards. and if you’re not continuing to provide continuous good value once you’re in, then it’s an easy route back out onto the market. At the end of the day we are not charities, we are trying to make successful brands and a living out of what we all do.



TC: Wow... There's a lot more to it than people realise I'm sure, and, I noticed you 'skirted' as to whether 'I fit the profile'...So I'll take that as a 'Must Try Harder'..!!HaHaHa

Pele, I think we will leave it there for now, and thank you so much for such an interesting and detailed 'Chat'. It has been a pleasure and an eye-opener to hear the 'Spotted Fin' story and I look forward to getting some more 'low-down' on the new projects and the fourth Bait in the coming months...!

I wish you and the company every success in the future and cannot wait to get back out on the bank with the new 'Classic Corn' boilies. You and your family stay safe in these unbelievable and unprecedented times and thanks again.

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An open green plastic fishing tackle box is shown, lying flat. The interior is lined with dark grey foam. On the left side, several fishing lures are hanging from a horizontal bar at the top. These include lures with red and white floral patterns, a red lure, and a yellow lure. Below the bar, various fishing weights and small lures are organized in rows. On the right side, more fishing weights and small lures are hanging from a horizontal bar at the top. Below the bar, various fishing weights and small lures are organized in rows. The box is open, showing the interior compartments and the organized fishing gear.

12 Important Steps For An Easy Fishing Life

by Richard Handel

Some years ago, when I was working long hours and needed to make sure that every fishing trip counted, so I noted down a few steps to make my life easier going fishing. This ensured I wasn't just going through the motions - to be honest, I'm sure that at some point, I was doing this, and it did affect my catch results. However, I found the process of putting my kit away clean, tidy and already for the next session, helped a great deal. With this in mind, I have made the below steps to help others;

1. Always keep your kit organized and ready to go. Make sure you're topped up and any important items replaced or topped up. I do this as soon as I get home from my last trip before it all gets packed away in the cupboard.

2. Do your bait a few days before as it will help you be confident that it's all perfect and you can then keep in the fridge or freezer until you need it.

3. Make your rigs at home. This will ensure you can then make them to your standard. It's so much easier than trying to do this on the bank. This way, there is no need for all that extra rig kit on the bank.

4. Take the minimal amount of kit you need e.g. rig boards and a few leads (there's no need for more than 10 leads). I use a small tackle box with enough rig bits for 10 rigs.

5. On your journey to the lake, always zone out of work and into fishing. Some may even say it's like meditation

6. Check the weather beforehand. You can start to build up a picture of where the fish may be and your swim options. Don't get too carried away with the swim options, this is never a good thing, you will never decide.



7. Always load and unload the car in the same way (I even store my tackle in the same way and also set up like this). This will form a pattern which then becomes normal, it will help you to create a stress-free fishing life and there just too much stress in the world these days.

8. When fishing, write a list of things which need to be topped up or replaced when you get home.

9. It's very important not to rush; take your time and get into a routine when baiting up. Below are pointers to help you start your routine;

- A. Always have sharp hooks
- B. Check rig presentation in the lake or you could use a jar of water.
- C. Pop up/Wafer check
- D. Run the line through your hands, this is to check for any abrasions or nicks in the line. If you find any, replace straight away, you don't want to lose the fish of a lifetime!

10. Lay your bivvy/brolly out the same way each time. You will always know where everything is every time, day or night. At night, it's really helpful to have your boots, headtorch and weighing equipment all set out.

Doing this will help you through the Winter months when you need to set up and pack up in the dark.

11. Every so often, sort your tackle bag out. Overtime stuff slips back into your tackle bag and you find yourself taking more than you need, this happens to me all the time.

12. If possible, have separate bags for bits of kit. If you're only doing a day, you can remove your brew kit, cooking kit and torch etc. This has really helped me a lot and is very simple to do. In the past, I had one giant barrow bag with the lot in and it just doesn't work for short trips.

These things are very simple; however, they will help you and make fishing much easier. You will enjoy it a lot more and I'm sure this is the key to better angling. Simplifying the processes and breaking it down into steps, will (may be) stop you arriving at the lake all stressed out. This I know from experience will not help and it's also not the point of being on the bank.

Hope this helps

Richard

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RIG TALK
BY JAMES QUINTON



As we are all still in lock down due the Covid19 situation, I thought it would be a good time to go through my set up and rigs I use and in what situation I use them. You have heard me mention some rigs, mainly the infamous Chod rig. So, let's get talking about the Chod rig.

Ask yourself this, what is chod? It can be as simple as leaf detritus on the lakebed, low lying silk weed. If the lake is known for being weedy or has a lot of eel grass. Or it's your first visit to a new water and you're unsure what your casting on to or want to cast to showing fish, then it's time to deploy the chod rig.

So, in weedy situations you will often see people use the solid bag, nothing wrong with that if you

like using them. But here is my theory on the chod vs slid bag in weed. Ok so you have cast a solid bag out, but to me the weight of the bag has dragged it to the bottom of the weed quickly. The fish are cruising around the weed but not always at the bottom of the weed bed. And I feel the little food parcel can be quite obvious, especially as they get used a lot, whereas a single pop up sitting in the weed layers is something they don't see too often these days.

Along with the solid bag people will use a leadcore leader, which will also drag things down more, and to me just looks unnatural. This is where I will happily use a naked chod set up. The fluorocarbon main line will happily hang on the weed looking less obvious then the more

modern day tactics people use these days. Starting to sound abit old here!

Ok so on to my set up for this style of fishing. I use the Thinking Anglers products, for me they work very well in the situations I fish. I do not get their products at any discount, so this isn't a product plug. Korda also produce some nice products for the naked chod as do Avid. So as mentioned I use fluoro straight through, I've always loved using it as a mainline, it has less stretch then mono, sinks very well and is very hard to see once it's settled, depending on what BS you use you can still get a good casting distance with it too.

So, working down from the tip ring, I will have some putty just spaced out a bit, then I will have the first line

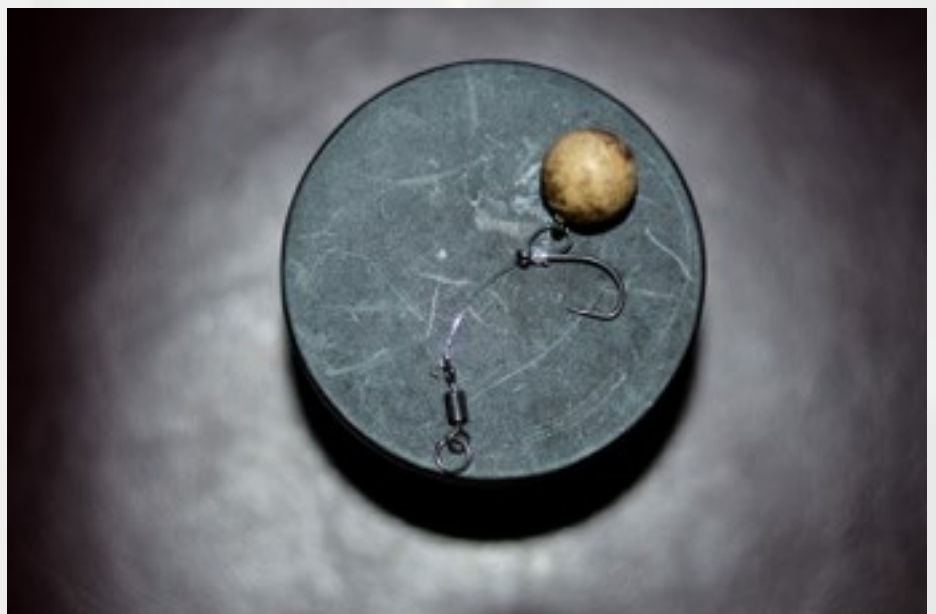
gripper bead. These are a tungsten bead that sits on a bit of silicon tubing, the bead can pass over the silicone in the event of a breakage or lost fish. Then i will slide a PTFE hook ring swivel, these allow for a complete 360 degrees of movement. It's this swivel that i will tie my chod rig onto. I then follow up with another line gripper bead. The bead distance set up can be where some people go wrong. I will go over how I set mine up later. So then this brings us on to how I like to set up my leads.

I always make sure I can drop the leads, this I feel is really important when using a chod. If you imagine, you're playing a fish, you're at that moment when you're getting ready to net your prize, then your rod springs back and your fish just lays there, then

slowly ghosts away. The reason why.... your lead is still attached and bounced the lead out. We have all been there! This is why it's so important to be able to drop the lead when using this rig. So, for my arrangement I will slide a cut down a bit (cut it in half) of the C-Clip silicone piece you get with the C-Clip system. Then I will tie on one of their heavy rings. I will then use one of their C-clips, they do these in either a 3lb clip or 6lb clip. I mainly use the 3lb clip with a 1.5oz lead. I can use this for close in

work or up to around 50 yards. If I feel I need a bigger lead to go further I will use a 6lb clip. The piece of silicone will slide nicely over the heavy ring and clip making for a neat set up. The clip opens up if it's come in contact with any weed or obstacles on the way in, giving you confidence of getting your prize in the net!

So that's what I use, but how do I set it up in regards to bead distance and in relation to the lead? let's go lead upwards. We



have attached the lead via a C-Clip and the silicone is neatly over the heavy ring, above this is one of the tungsten line grippers which I will place around 4 to 6 inches away from the lead. This will give me confidence knowing the rig hasn't settled too closely to the lead. Having the bottom bead away from the lead also give a chance for the lead to settle amongst the weed and your rig settling nicely above it and not getting drawn down into the weed or other dirty areas. Then obviously is your rig which will have been balanced to sink slowly, giving it time to settle over any debris or weed. I like to put the putty on the barrel of the swivel meaning it can still turn a full 360 degrees. Hook size is personal preference, but I will happily use a size 4 with a 14/16mm

bait, in winter I will go down to a size 6 as I would be using smaller hook baits. I like to attach my hook baits via a bait screw, it's just quicker for me. On to the second line gripper bead and this is where some people can get it wrong. Deep silt I will usually have around 18 inches between beads. If I'm fishing over a dirty bottom like leaves etc then again, I will space them between 18 inches to 2 feet. If there is weed, then I will reel some in and measure the tallest strands. So, if you have bought in

some and the tallest bit is say 6 feet, then I will have a gap of 7 feet. This method also works with eel grass, so if you have got eel grass of about 4ft then I will always go about 1ft further, meaning my beads are 5ft apart.

It seems a fair bit of distance between beads, especially if you haven't used chods before, but with that little guide on distance you really are giving your rig the best opportunity to settle at the best point. Also remember you aren't looking to feel a drop



with this style of fishing, the fish will show you where to cast, not where you think you should be fishing.

Your rig is out, and you have given plenty of time for your line to settle and sink, sometimes this can take 15 minutes. I will have my rod in hand and sink the line as normal but will pay out a foot or so of line till I feel everything is settled and nice and slack. This is when the rod goes on the alarm and bobbin attached. What I want to achieve is a nice slack line, you will see the line hanging limply from the rod tip and your bobbin will almost be nicely settled out the floor.

Why do I want it slack? If you have your line tight or even semi slack, you're going to jeopardise your presentation, a tight

line could suspend your rig to high up or even drag it into the debris or weed. A slack line will ensure everything is settled perfectly.

A question I get asked a lot is 'will I get a screaming take'? The answer is often a no. Because there will be little resistance between the lead and rig your bites are going to be almost bream like. You don't want to ignore little bleeps with

this rig! I have had the odd screamer from a chod bite, but often they will be lifts from the bobbin and a few bleeps.

To pick up those bleeps I will have the sensitivity of my Delkims up so they can detect the smallest of movements. I will often have my rod tips up to so my line can settle over weed beds nicely if needed to, not quite like Jim Shelley though!





all winter, they get covered in mud and all sorts and never needed a service yet or made funny noises like other brands I have used.

the paint wears off quickly and they bend also! I match these up with the solar titanium heads and arms, you get so much Variety when it comes to setting them up, and can be used in every situation, which is great because you don't need to carry a different set of bobbins and arms etc. This set up is all very light and means if I need to move I can without dragging loads of heavy kit! Everything else I use, like terminal tackle, a few pots of pop ups stove etc can all fit in one of the Thinking Anglers bags, so I only ever have one bag to carry too.

So, what set up do I use then? Rod wise I use Shimano TX5, a very lovely rod to cast and play fish with. I like to use a 3.25 tc. This is quite light compared to what some people use but I prefer a softer rod especially for playing fish under the rod tips, it compensates those last lunges better than a heavier rod which sometimes will just pull the hook out! Reels I use Shimano XTD 1400s, such a lovely reel to use for the money and heard wearing too! I use them

These will be loaded with X-line fluorocarbon in 12lb or 18 if it's a very weedy and snaggy water. It's a great line and settles very nicely, worth the money in my opinion. I use the solar P1 bank sticks and these will be used as singles. I find them very strong and can take a beating regardless of what ground there being pushed into! I have used other brands but find



I like to travel light and at any point I will only ever have 3 pots of pop ups, I have never seen the logic of when people have about 10 pots on them! It makes you second guess yourself all the time and you start blaming your baits and hook baits etc when in reality it very small things like location and rig choice could be. You guys and girls should give this a try.....ask yourself if you had to use just 1 colour of pop up for the rest of your fishing days what would it

be? Once you have answered that take nothing but that colour, in a couple of sizes and your favourite flavour combo.

Total confidence in your hook bait, so everything else is down to application and location.

I hope that has given you abit more confidence or the enthusiasm to use a Chod rig. It has caught me some amazing fish which hopefully the you agree with in the pics! And if you wanted to

know what my colour of pop up would be, it will white, but I'm not telling you what flavour combo, we all have to have secrets!

If you enjoy my articles or want to know more, please let me know! james.quintas on insta

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After seeing the shocking images regarding the plastic pollution in our seas and waterways on BBC Blue Planet II, we at Rig Marole, as like many other anglers thought we should do something to ease the problem. Even though it will only be a small contribution, we feel any difference is the right way to go. Therefore we looked at the most common used plastic item in carp fishing end tackle, which is the lead clip. Our lead clips are actually made from metal due to their unique design however most are plastic.

Fortunately, for us we have a great contact who supplies the NHS with biodegradable implants such as pins, screws and plates for surgery all of which break down inside the human body once they have done their job. With the information on the material used it gave us the idea to utilise this product for our lead clips. The outcome being they are strong enough withstand any angling usage but once in the water are of less danger to wildlife due to being totally biodegradable and eco- friendly. With testing, we believe they should start to break down in freshwater after approximately 8 months.

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Bait choice
by Carl Milton

These days we are spoilt for choice on bait. Every time I step into my local tackle shop my senses are alive with all manner of smells and colours. It reminds me of stepping into our local village shop as a child and heading to the pick and mix penny sweet area. Not to mention every time I venture to the supermarket, my mind is always active to things that could make a good bait. With so many options how do we ever choose?

There are many factors to consider boilies, particles, meats or naturals? If you go down the boilie route which flavour and colour? Which bait company? I'll try to answer this in the course of this piece.

In terms of boilies, particles, meats or naturals, I've caught on them all. I first consider

the time of year. In the colder months fish's metabolism slows down, so they often don't need as much to eat, and the theory goes that a slower metabolism makes it harder for them digest food. In terms of boilies, when I started carping the rule was always fishmeal in the warmer months and fruit baits in the colder spells. There has been plenty written about this in the past by people who are far more qualified than me to comment on the science behind

this. But my take from what I've read is that fruit baits are more digestible, and the flavours release more easily into the colder water too. There are no hard and fast rules though, fishmeal based baits have evolved in recent years huge amounts and can also score in the winter. But certainly, don't rule out non-boilie based baits too. Maggots are the classic example in winter, many people have had mega success on these, but don't discount meat based baits and



particles too. Before deciding you need to consider some factors. Other species present is a key consideration; maggots can be out of the equation if there are lots of silver fish present for example. I once fished a water that had so many silvers that bait selection was simple, ultra-hard boilies with extra egg albumin to toughen them, or tiger nuts were the only options. Anything else and the silvers would eat it within minutes. Similar can be said for waters with crayfish.

Doing your homework on previous captures is a massively helpful tool too. With the internet at our fingertips, a few minutes spent looking up previous captures on your water, or time chatting to other anglers on the venue can prove fruitful. Although I must add please don't walk into

someone's swim and ask, 'what bait you using mate?' Most anglers will help others if you approach them politely, but you are likely to get there back up if you go in all guns blazing. There will be times though when an angler has spent considerable time and money establishing a bait, and will not want to give this away, so also know when to stop asking too. Sometimes you need to establish your own bait. This can be very rewarding and a fantastic edge, but that is a whole topic in itself, and one I can

maybe cover another day. If, however you do find out that there is a going bait, that the fish recognise as a food source, and other anglers are introducing lots of, this can be a good start point.

We've already talked a little about flavour. My personal take on bait flavour these days, is that if I find a bait that works in the warmer months, I stick with it in winter too. Baits have advanced massively over the years and work all year round. But there are also very successful anglers



who do change bait for the winter. But winter fishing for me is more about locating the fish. Normally if I can find them, they are catchable. I think confidence is absolutely paramount with bait. Find something that you know works and don't keep changing. It's easy to tie yourself in knots and change every session. I like to only ever change one variable in my angling at a time, if things are not going to plan. If you change too many things at once you will never learn which of the changes did or didn't work. Normally bait is the last thing I change. Find something that works and stick with it.

Bait colour is again another article in itself too. I don't mind admitting my mind has been changed by a mate of mine over

colour. I used to think fish's eyesight was poor and bait colour made little difference. But I've altered my take on things. Especially as colour has played a key part in some special recent captures. In summary carp are inquisitive and I'm sure colour can draw them to a bait. However, if fish have been hammered on bright baits, something blander in colour may prove successful. In most cases I think it pays to be different.

Choosing a bait company can also be mind boggling. It seems every time I blink that a new bait company crops up. Personally, I would rather stick with one that I know is established, and that I know produces consistent high quality bait that I can completely trust. I'm sure many of the

newer companies that spring up also produce fantastic bait. However, my fishing time is limited, and I need to ensure the bait I use is one that I have complete confidence in, so that I can focus on other aspects of my angling when I do get on the bank. Overall, there are many variables to consider in bait selection. Put some thought into choosing a bait and once its chosen stick with it. Confidence is king.

Until next time best wishes

Carl





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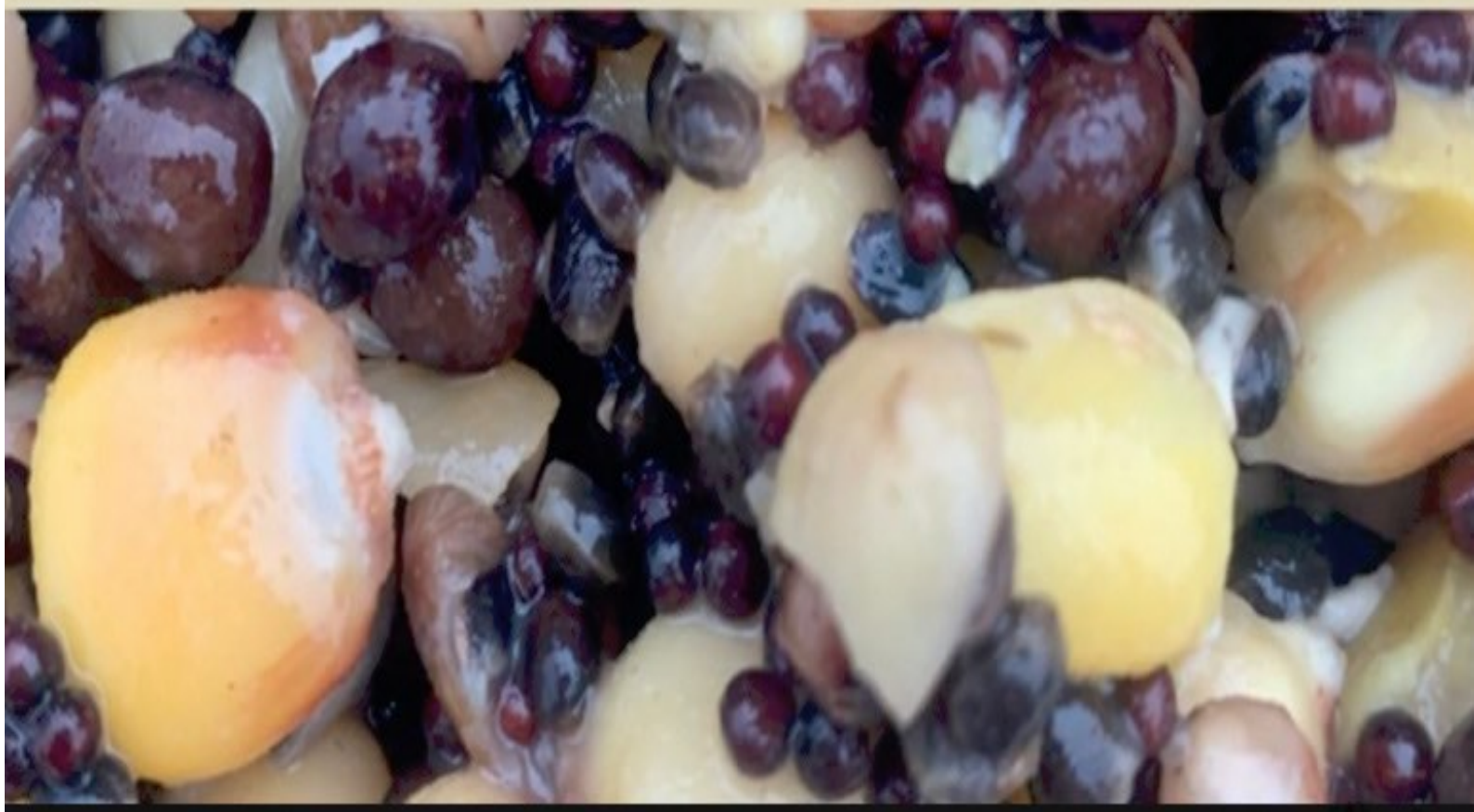
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**27 YEARS
IN THE
CATCHING
BY PHIL
BAIN**



Where to begin with this capture. You'll have to bear with me for this one.

Not wanting to start on a cliché but, as the title suggests, it all began 27 years ago. I was very lucky to have grandparents whose bungalow backed onto the grand union canal. Trips to Willowbank, just outside Uxbridge, were frequent. The property was stunning. Typical grandparents they doted on us. On the odd occasion we got to go into Grandad's garage I'd always cast my eye up to where he stored his rods in the ceiling mounted racks. You got a sense from this stuff being out the way that it was important but still, we didn't show much interest. In a spur of the moment in the summer of 1992, my dad had bought

me and my brother a couple of starter rods. Not having a clue about fishing himself he deferred tuition to my grandad. He was a kind-hearted man, incredibly patient, the perfect instructor for two young, impatient little sods. He didn't mess about. The rods were always ready to go and given that he had the space to store them it made perfect sense to have them at Willowbank, poised for action. Before we could begin, we'd go into the garden and dig up our own worms. No need to pay for them was his principle. With a tub of garden lobs, a net and a disgorger we'd head out onto the bank, straight through the garden gate, dogs in tow.

There we would spend our afternoons trotting a float along the canal. Struggling at first, I could have

all too easily given up (giving the inclination at that age to stop trying without instant success, after all, patience is a skill that's learnt), but my grandad told me to persevere. Having watched my twin have some success I was desperate to catch. Then it happens. Knock. A tremble of tiny waves moving out from the float and then bang. The floats under water. You're connected. This is why to this day float fishing is still my favourite method.

Sitting behind alarms has its place and the fish are usually of a much grander size but nothing beats the moment your float darts away. It was only a small perch but that had done it for me. In the coming weeks and months roach, dace, bream, ruffe, gudgeon and an insanely **good**

followed (for my brother, I've never forgiven him!). It wasn't until one day when we were walking around the island that I saw my future target species.

It was probably a Sunday morning. Like a lot of kids, we'd been dumped on the grandparents on a Saturday so the adults could go on the lash. We'd almost completed our loop around the island with the dogs and were approaching the last stage, going through a padlocked gate that was next to the old mill. This morning we took a small detour. One of my grandad's friends was fishing on the side of the mill pond. The setup was very alien. Where was his float? He was also very keen for us to remain quiet. We were ushered forwards in silence to have a peek

in his keep net. These weren't perch or roach, they were carp. Three of the most stunning commons you could care to imagine. None of them was massive by any standard, the biggest probably 6lb, but the quality of these fish, the dark to gold colouring and the simple fact these fish resided in the same stretch of water as all the small stuff we'd been catching was pretty mind blowing to a 10 year old novice. I'd like to say this was the point that kick started my descent into the pursuit of carp but sadly girls and drink got in the way of what I'm sure would have been a stellar campaign. The fact that in later years a property developer would completely destroy this idyllic spot only adds to the feeling of regret of not taking that opportunity. Fast forward 27 years....

Now 37. 7 years previously to this date a friend, Sean, had got me back into fishing. Starting back on the float I continued where I'd left off, catching roach at the Lizard fishery in West Drayton. I wanted to learn. I started fishing strawberry luncheon meat on the float and managed to bag a respectable tench. Still not what I was after. I decided to bite the bullet and invest in some gear and hope that with some guidance from my friends I would catch a carp. The day came at Wood Lane fishery in Iver. Not a challenging lake and I caught a few but these fish didn't match the vivid memory of those canal carp. Back to the present. I'm a syndicate member at Rodney Meadow. I'd been lucky enough to catch multiple 30's. Spent a small fortune

on upgrading gear. I feel at this point I'm a semi decent angler. A couple of redundancies and a move later I find myself working for a company on the Slough trading estate. My new employer had outgrown its current warehouse and had decided to move. As luck would have it, the new building was located in Uxbridge, right next to the grand union. It turned out upon inspection of the new building that the cafeteria had an outside area with around 100 metres of essentially unfished, private bank. Upon finding this out I checked with senior management to see if it was ok to fish this stretch. They had no problem as they were convinced, in their words that 'you won't catch anything out of there'. Great. A friend of mine at work wanted to get into fishing

and I couldn't think of anywhere better to teach someone. I borrowed one of my daughter's light telescopic rods and we set about catching as many as we could with maggots. I caught and lost a pretty special eel on pepperami, but I don't want to dwell on that, it still hurts! I'd often go out just to have a look on breaks and see if anything was happening. One afternoon in mid-September I had gone outside to sly a quick fag. It was a lovely bright afternoon,

around 3 o'clock. The sun was still high enough to shine across the surface of the canal and broke across the water in bands between the barges moored on the opposite bank. As I stood looking from left to right, I saw one. Bold as brass, a beautiful blue/grey mirror, probably a low double, was slowly sauntering its way up the middle of the canal about 3 inches below the surface. This sighting was all I needed. I knew now I had to switch from the



the light float gear to something a bit more substantial. This was followed up by another clear sign the following morning. I had started to trickle in a bit of bait, under a tree to the left of the clear spot we'd been fishing from. This morning, I walked over and straight away could see a big plume of mud right on the spot. Lunch time I would set a trap as now didn't offer me a large enough window, I just hoped the carp came back. Despite what I'd seen I wasn't overly optimistic. It had become set in my head that the fish would only feed in the morning. I tied a fresh version of the waffer rig that I'd been using on my syndicate. The business end was a size 6 wide gape and a micro swivel, to this I tied a 16mm sticky baits krill white one (it was only later that a

friend pointed out that I had unintentionally mimicked bread). I chose this colour purely on the basis that I thought it would be highly visual. I trimmed off the edges of the boilie to allow it to bleed its flavour into the water a bit faster. I took the rig outside at lunch. I had a very brief lead about and found a nice clean spot, just to the outside of a small patch of grass growing close in. I swung the rig out underarm, felt it down and that was that. I rested the rod against

a small fence running along the bank. No alarms. I was certain if something happened the clutch would let me know. I'd pulled a table over so I could sit and wait. Like I said, not expecting a great deal. I ate my sandwiches and was idly looking at my phone. My friend Jamey had joined me for a chat. It must have been about 20 minutes into the hour break when it happened. I was still trawling through twitter or Instagram when Jamey said very calmly, 'Phil, your rod mate!'. I



looked over to see the rod see-sawing on the fence, the clutch giving out line. I got myself up and lifted into the rod. Quick tighten up on the clutch. The line kept ticking off. The fish came up quite quickly and dived back down again. It was a common! I didn't care that it wasn't the mirror I'd seen, any carp, any size from the canal was all that mattered. I realized that I still had 8lb line on the spool from a river session and I wasn't going to be able to bully this fish. The water was very clear, this didn't help my nerves. This felt like my first carp.

My legs had gone, and my heart was in my mouth. Jamey had taken on the role of gilly. This carp was storming about. I knew it was a decent fish, I didn't know at the time just how decent it was. The fish was taking me in a figure of eight up and down the canal. Jamey's cries of 'it's a lump' and the fish's natural compulsion to try and dart into the vegetation were not doing my heart any favours. The backdrop to this scene being the staff canteen, a few had drifted outside to see what all the commotion was. One said 'what you got

there? Moby dick?' and 'who's winning, Phil or the fish?'. I could just about blurt out 'it's a carp' such was the level of anxiety I was under. The common had decided that it did want to try and lose me in a patch of cabbages in the margin, but I was determined to steer Mr Carp away from this area. The fight had been going on for 15 minutes and still the belligerent common was not giving in. I'd had the fish's head up several times but each time I thought it would take a big hit of air, the fish got its nose down and carried on powering along. Another 10 minutes passed and finally Jamey, who had been patiently following the carp like a linesman up and down the bank, slipped the net under the common. The whole time this fight had been taking place not a single barge



had come passed. When it's your time etc. I dropped the rod and my arms and let out a huge 'YES!!'. The only thing Jamey said after looking in the net was 'mate!'. I went over to see my prize. Mind blown. I still had no idea how big the fish was. Jamey kept watch over the fish while I ran out to my car to get my mat and scales. I got back to the captive, let the bail open and the line fall off. I popped the arms of the net off the pole and wound the net down, making sure beforehand that no fins were misbehaving. It was as I lifted the net that I realized just how heavy this carp was. I took the net over and carefully laid it down on the mat. What a moment it was pulling the net away to see that common. I can't begin to describe just how special this fish was. I know people like to talk certain fish

up but this common was scale perfect and the most incredibly dark top to golden bellied common I'd ever laid my eyes on (in the flesh). The rig had done its job, bang in the centre of the mouth. The micro barb giving after a small tug, carp care added to the wound. I slipped the carp onto the mat so I could tare my fox scales (didn't have my bloody sling so the net would have to suffice!). Lifting the carp back into the net I attached the hook and raised it

up. The green digital display said 24lbs and 11oz.

My first canal carp was a 20!

I honestly would have been thrilled if it was 6lb, but this was a bit much. Holding the fish, seeing it's condition, the shape of it, the pattern of its scales and the sneaking feeling that this fish had probably never been caught made me realise that while this fish wasn't the biggest



I'd ever caught, it was easily the best. We took photos, some of the guys from the offices took their own photos, their level of disbelief matching my own. Both sides done, back in. I'd run well over my time, but I didn't care. What had just happened?! I believe that once you've invested time and effort into trying something and then finally getting your reward, that sense of pay off never leaves you. Fishing

is all about delayed gratification. The bonus being that the memory of a capture never leaves you. Also, with fishing it's heightened because of the unknown, having mates around helps too. The mystery is what keeps you going back. Of course, you can target certain fish with different tactics and tackle, but you can never, ever be 100% sure. This is true of any venue but especially the canal. What this fish means to

me because of where and how it happened, well, it means a great deal! The same canal my grandad taught me on, the years it took to get to this point, the fact that my first attempts at targeting these fish resulted in this one, it's hard to get your head around. I wish it was something more people could experience.

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Phil.







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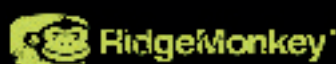
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**Belgium Bound –
by Sam Hewerdine
(aka Chasing Scales)**



Towards the end of summer 2018, I was given the rare opportunity of a week without my wife and daughter.

After becoming a Dad less than a year before, fishing had really taken a back foot in my life, (as it should, family over fishing always) but with this being said, the wife given a chance for a last minute holiday to Dubai and was going to take the little one too.

I was still on parental leave so had just over a week to myself, fishing was obviously on the cards but then it hit me, it's not often I'm going to be wife and child free for a week, especially as little one was not even one at a time, so a few texts to some friends across the channel and some very last minute planning the ferries were booked.

Making the most of the time my ferry was booked to depart Dover at 4am Monday morning, this wasn't bad seeming the wife only found out about her trip Friday afternoon, with that being said this left very little time to actually

prepare, amongst planning and packing and trying to find a dog sitter, let alone helping with little one too, but we will touch on the preparations a little bit later on.

I could have easily been lazy and done a few nights at Bluebell with it being just down the road from me, or some other notorious day ticket but that sense of adventure hit me and with the bags packed I headed to Dover just after midnight, planning on getting there early and filling my boots on McDonald's breakfast knowing full well like most of my fishing let alone a Euro adventure I won't be eating much at all, just toasties and coffee.

Leaving the house with a stinking cold, endless diversions and to finally see the McDs was closed for refurbishment, the trip hadn't started the way I wanted, although I was offered an earlier ferry, but with this going to the wrong port, I declined and grabbed 40 winks in the car, followed by another 40 on the ferry.

Entering France at morning rush

hour is never fun, but as I headed east the traffic soon thinned out and the road signs started to show some familiar names, Gravelines, Niuewpoort et al. I won't bore you with turn by turn directions to Ostend, but by the time I arrived in familiar surroundings we were touching 10am and I was exhausted.

After a very warm welcome from Gio (Of Monkey Climber fame) and family, a freshen up and some lovely fresh coffee, I set up a light base camp, packed the rods in the car and hit a few spots I only touched on the year before, with some tips from my friend Sam, who fished there a month or so before me and had some huge hits of some awesome canal carp the confidence was high.

The usual suspects were visited, Blue Bridge, Power Station and a few more that will remain nameless, I was doing this on a hit and run basis, bait all spots, then return and drop a rod in for 30 minutes to an hour. Only using 2 rods, but having 2 set up with; a

chod, a snowman and bottom bait set up, giving me versatility for each spot.

Whilst catching some rest at the Power station swim on the main canal, I was soon reaching for the rod, feeling the pressure drop off my shoulders thinking I had caught on my first day, on the main canal in Ostend, I was soon brought back down to earth when my net was filled by a Belgian slab of a bream.

My spirits were soon lifted again, not by a carp but a passer-by who has seen my post on Facebook and was coincidentally a follower. Bjorn stayed for a while chatting about local fishing and being very generous with tips and places to fish. As for the fishing, none of the other spots produced more than a



beep or two and with the size of the barges on the main canal and the lorry traffic behind me, I caved into the comfort and retired to base camp. Putting the rods out with a sprinkling of bait, I set out for some shut up.

I didn't quite realise how tired I was with less than 2 hours of kip in 48 hours, I slept from dusk until around 10am, expecting a fish or the morning traffic from the cycle path feet from head to wake me, it wasn't until my friends dad produced some more of that coffee I finally opened my eyes.

First full day and I was hungry for

carp, I decided to have a decent breakfast European style, pastries and bread, and set up a game plan. Fresh rigs, sharpened hooks, twice the bait and twice the spots. I could have easily dropped onto the 2 park lakes I've visited in previous years but I wanted a canal carp.

One spot in particular was rocking the week before, but getting rig to it was the problem, this involved leaving bait and rigs on one side of the canal, which was private property and casting over the spot dropping the rig and running back, this all sounds ok, but on your own and with a bridge that opens for boat traffic this was a big risk



and with fish safety and my rods at stake I opted back to previous spots and a couple of new ones.

Back at base, I grab a coffee and sit looking over the canal with the 'polars' on, no rods just chilling in the lovely mid 20's heat, and low and behold a lovely looking chunk of a common slowly drifts past my feet, although it wasn't around for long it gave me hope and the rods were back in place, deciding to spend the rest of the afternoon as the bivvy. Living in relative luxury I cook up some dinner and catch up with Gio.

He tells me he's been baiting with tigers and using them on the hook to keep the bream away, clever old

me didn't pack any tiger nuts, but Gio being the top bloke he is, grabs me a bucket full that he has just cooked up that day and tells me to knock myself out.

Not wanting to put all my eggs in one basket and with the Belgian rod licence only allowing me to fish two rods, I put two tigers on a long hair using a size 6 long shank hook, with a little piece of silicone on the shank blowback style and just in case this wasn't to the canal chunks taste, I opted for a chod rig on the 2nd rod, loaded with a pink Monkey Climber, Estrella pop up. Using the logic of Gio must know what the carp in these canals like and he makes the bait himself, so using his recommendation of tigers

and his own pop ups, confidence was high and I felt I had given myself the best chance I could.

I settled in for the night, a call to the wife and daughter, some fries from the local 'Friterie' washed down with a couple of 'Jupiliers',



with very little in the way of signs of carp I thought it was going to be another quiet night.

That was until my left-hand rod loaded with the tiger nuts screamed off like a freight train at around half 4 in the morning, an absolute one toner.

With the adrenaline pumping and the frustration of the previous couple of days blanking already becoming a distant memory, I position the net in place and continue the battle, with the fight being very solid and slow, it fish was giving me signs of a big girl, as the smaller ones usually kick out and thrash a bit more.

My optimism soon began to fade, with no sign of the fight coming to an end I hadn't even glimpsed the fish yet, with the rod bent over the to the left hand side of my setup, there was no worry of crossing lines with my snugly sat rods, but this didn't stop me worrying about snags and the potential of the fish the take the line across the canal wall, which had happened to me the year previous.

Feeling pretty confident in my hook hold and worrying about another blank, I start to bully the fish in battle and the tables started to turn, slowly but surely I was gaining more line that i was losing, eventually i saw the fish break the



water, the bad news was this was 40 yards up the canal, despite the canal being only 15 yards wide, I was fishing in a semi rural part of the country with nothing in the way of boats or bends so the fish had only one of two ways to swim, and if anyone has caught from a canal before they will know if you give them line they will take it. Usually I would move closer to the fish but with fencing, wet banks and people gardens in the way this just wasn't possible.

The minutes grinded on but eventually the fish was within reach of the net and it wasn't too long before it was in it, catching glimpses from my head torch and street lamps nearby, I saw a nice chunky common, not the elusive Belgian mirror I've hunted for several years now, but a very welcome

common carp, not the size I had let me imagination lead to believe i was doing battle with, but far from a little pasty.

On the mat, a few self takes in the dark (which turned out terrible), the common took the scales round to 27lbs and ozs, no giant but for those who have fished the canals, this is a fair size carp, and after the days of bream and blanks, 12lbs would of been welcome, let alone 27...!

With daylight creeping around the corner, I placed her in the sling, triple knotted it to the lamppost and set about having a victory brew, messaged Gio for some pics and placed the rod back out there.



The pop-up rig produced nothing over the next few hours, so I switched both rods to the tiger nuts, with good results, albeit not until the next evening which was also my last. Without going into the finer details, two more Belgian bangers graced my net, unfortunately none were to be the much-desired mirror I was searching for but each more welcome than the last.

As the final morning arrived, the pack down was quick and easy and the goodbyes are always easier with a few carp under the belt, as I sat in Gio's kitchen finishing my last coffee, I realise it's 9:15am and my ferry is at 11am... in another country.

The mad dash back to France, with a quick stop for chocolates

for the wife and a present for my daughter, because after all family comes first.

Made it with a few minutes spare for a freshen up and change of clothes at the ferry terminal. Although I was still the worst smelling person on that boat.

All the Best

Sam

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Dad and
Daughters 1st
Carp trip by
Chris Hays



So, after much deliberation and several conversations with both my wife and my daughter I finally succumbed and agreed to take Lacey my 10 year old carp fishing for the day. Now I knew straight off the bat that this was going to be both stressful and create a new range of issues. Lacey is a very well behaved child and is generally good at keeping herself occupied and entertained, but the thought of sitting from dawn till dusk next to a lake was daunting. Lacey did not share the same concerns as I did, and she was adamant that she really wanted to come and that she would not get bored or fed up. It was time to put her word to the test and take her. Prior to the trip I thought carefully about the lake that we would be fishing, as I wanted to present her

with her first carp and a memorable day, well my choice of lake paid off and not only did she catch her first carp she also bagged herself a little treat, more about that later.

My Lake selection was one of my club waters which is renowned for producing fish all year round and is commonly referred to as runs water, perfect I thought for teaching Lacey all my knowledge on carp fishing, well the bit I have picked up over the years. I have been carp fishing for around 8 years

and I've had mixed success, one thing is for sure I have defiantly learnt a lot and could assist somebody in not making the same mistakes that I made however as the old adage goes "you learn from your mistakes". The lake was one I was very familiar with and had fished several times; I know which areas of the lake produce good fishing, and what tactics have given me success in the past. Now we knew which lake we were fishing it was time to decide when?



My wife was pushing hard for the trip, so we decided the following Saturday that we were going for our first full day's carp fishing. As luck would have it the weather forecast for the day, we were planning to go was clear blue skies, 25 degrees and the best part, no Rain! Now with it being August I had hoped for a dry day, but we all know the good old British weather doesn't normally cooperate but on this occasion, everything was looking good.

The week leading up to the trip Lacey was brimming with enthusiasm and was dreaming of landing a giant carp like she had seen on so many of the programmes she had joined me in watching. The joy of youthful imagination and positivity. I double and triple checked my gear during the week to ensure we had everything we needed; I pre-tied a few rigs and prepped around 3kg of bait covering them in nice splosh. The bait I had chosen to use was my tried and tested

Pokernut 15mm boilies from Cherry Carp, I have been using Cherry Carp baits and end tackle for a few years now and I've had fantastic results and more importantly it's never let me down.

Saturday morning finally arrived and as I crept into the kids' room at 6am to wake Lacey up I was expecting her to be flat out asleep and I was primed ready for a battle to get her out of bed, how wrong I was! She was wide awake bright as a button. We got dressed, had a quick breakfast, loaded the car and away we went. The trip to the lake is around 40 minutes door to door and we used this time to sing like a pair of maniac's full belt to varying different songs from the iPod. Before we knew it, we had arrived at the lake and were greeted with an





empty car park and a choice of every swim. The lake is approx 2-3 acres in size and is only 40-50 yards across with lots of lily beds and features to aim at. As I have fished the lake several times before I knew exactly where we were going to fish and so we headed straight to my preferred swim and set up. As I was setting up, I set Lacey a few tasks to keep her occupied, I asked her to find a 4 leaf clover, 2 frogs, and spot a kingfisher.

It kept her busy for around 20 minutes before she realised, I had sent her on a red herring. The 20 minutes it had allowed was plenty to allow me time to set the rods up and have the rods wrapped up to 12 and 9 wraps accordingly. Having fished this swim several times I referred back to previous catch reports and wrapped up to target the same areas. My plan was to fish 2 pots and then set up a 3rd rod for Lacey to have a play

with and learn to cast etc, if either of the 2 “active” rods were to go off then Lacey would be the one to strike and play the fish with my assistance. I cast out both active rods and fired out around 50 whole boilies over each with the throwing stick, my approach on this lake is

to repeat this bating process around every 30-45 minutes. The lake has a good head of carp with an average weight of around 14-16lb and the big girls being around 26lb. I was using Ronnie rigs on both rods with a 15mm White Pokernut pop up on one and a 15mm pink pokernut pop up on the other. Once these were set and bait applied, we moved along the bank and I handed Lacey

the 3rd rod. Now picture the scene from Harry potter where he is in the wand shop and the shop keeper is helping select his wand, at first the rod went everywhere, then she managed to clip me round the head with it, next minute it's on the floor but she was getting a feel for it. I steadied her and starting explaining how to cast and why we did things in a certain order, as Lacey had floated fished with me briefly in the past, she has cast a float rod before, so it wasn't

totally alien to her. Obviously with this rod being longer and having led attached (no rig though, I wasn't that brave just yet) she needed a bit of time to get used to the rod. We talked through the casting process a couple of times before attempting our first cast. We got in position, rod back behind us, bail arm open when beeeeeeeeeep, one of the active rods was away. The panic that ensued over Lacey's face is an image I will not forget in a hurry.

The reality hit her, and she suddenly started to panic, we quickly moved across to the rods and I talked her through the striking process and what to do. She listened to the instruction really well and with seconds she was actively playing her first carp, the power from the carp and the fight was difficult for Lacey to control as the carp was trying to get into the lily pads, I aided Lacey with the rod and after a 5 minute battle which according to Lacey was hours her prize was safely in the net, we had been graced with a cracking little mirror. With a fish safely in the net here came her next lesson and one which I explained was probably the most important, fish care and fish handling. She sat listening intently and was absorbing everything I was saying like a sponge, we



we broke down the net, slid the sling underneath and moved the fish to the unhooking mat. Once we lay the fish in the mat and moved the net out of the way she could not properly see her prize, she was looking at it in total disbelief, she was astonished that there was fish this big and that she had caught a whale! We weighted the fish and it was a cool 13lb 7oz mirror, I then showed her how to hold the fish and we took several pictures. We released the fish and she was more excited than ever to catch another one. We put the rod back on the spot and fired out more bait. Whilst waiting for bites we returned to our spot slightly along the bank and she practised holding the rod and casting. By the end of the session she was comfortable holding the rod and

she was casting with around 50% success, Lacey landed 5 fish between ranging from 8lb 5oz to 16lb 3oz. She had fished from 8:30am until 4pm and had not appeared bored at any point, we decided that as a treat for a wonderful day we would stop at McDonalds drive thru on the way home before unloading the car and finishing with a movie night. We packed up the training rod, chairs and had brought in the furthest rod (12 wraps) when beeeeeep

the remaining rod screamed off, Lacey rushed to the rod and stuck into the fish, I was standing directly behind her to assist but the fight on this fish seemed more intense than any of the others. I assisted her and even I was struggling at times to control the fish on the end of line we, we got the fish away from the reeds and into open water but it started taking line again, Lacey was already tired from a successful days fishing so I took over to try and get the fish in.



I played the fish for around 10 minutes before it finally started to surface, I got a glimpse of what we had hooked.

The shape and formidable barbels/whiskers affirmed what I had thought, we had hooked a catfish. I knew the lake had catfish in it, but I had never landed one from here. I turned to Lacey and told her that he was in for a treat; I steadied the net and brought the fish over the top of it. It was secured and was a truly fantastic end to a superb session. I got the into the unhooking mat and unhooked, but Lacey was nowhere near me, She was visibly in awe of this

amazing creature that was lay steady and still in our unhooking mat. We weighted the fish and she was 25lb 2oz – What a result. I then showed Lacey how to hold the catfish and she took some pictures of me holding it before we changed roles. Watching her hold the catfish had me beaming and all the fears I had of bringing her for a session had vanished. She had far exceeded what I thought she would do or could achieve, to say I was a proud dad would be a massive understatement. We finished taking the pictures and

returned the majestic creature back to the lake for so another angling can hopefully feel the epic delight both Lacey and had just experienced. All in all, it was a fantastic first session and has hopefully opened up the possibility of us fishing on a more regular basis.

Cast away your worries and land your dreams



Mirror	13lb 7oz	Pokernut pink pop up	Ronnie size 6
Common	12lb 7oz	Pokernut Pink pop up	Ronnie size 6
Common	8lb 5oz	Pokernut pink pop up	Ronnie size 6
Mirror	16lb 3oz	Pokernut natural pop up	Ronnie size 6
Catfish	25lb 2oz	Pokernut natural pop up	Ronnie size 6



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Onto Pastures New



by Alex Luscombe

As this is my first piece of writing I thought I would start by introducing myself. I'm Alex, I've been carp fishing for the last 13 years. I currently work for Angling Direct and I'm a recently qualified Level 2 Angling Coach. In addition to this, I studied and qualified in Level 2 & 3 Fish Husbandry and Management at Easton College. A lot of my fishing is quick evening sessions or overnights due to having 2 kids and working full time. I like to fish for carp that don't often get caught and have a story behind them, which brings me on nicely to the lake I joined last April.

I first heard about the lake in 2018 when a good friend of mine had been fishing there alongside a mate of his. They had been tackling the water

together with only 2 fish to show for it in a season. The lake is around two and a half maybe three acres in size. The stock is 12 carp with plenty of tench, roach and perch for a few of the old boys that would match fish it on occasion.

In late March 2019 I went for a look around to see how I felt about the place. I stopped at the top of the track as it overlooked a lot of the lake and it looked incredible. The sun was beaming down, lily pads all over the

lake in full flourish and plenty of bird life. Although I only had pictures of 2 carp that resided in this beautiful lake, it had so much mystery and character. I had to give it a go.

I did my first night at the end of March, arriving quite late down the lake. I opted to fish the first swim as you come into the car park as it had a nice set of pads about 10 yards out to my left and a lovely little bay to my right. It also gave me a view of the whole lake so any signs of fish



fish I could move. The night passed completely uneventful and so did another two nights after that. I was starting to wonder what I could do differently and with that I made a plan. I gave myself three nights on the bounce, which is like gold dust for me, but I needed to work out how these fish behaved.

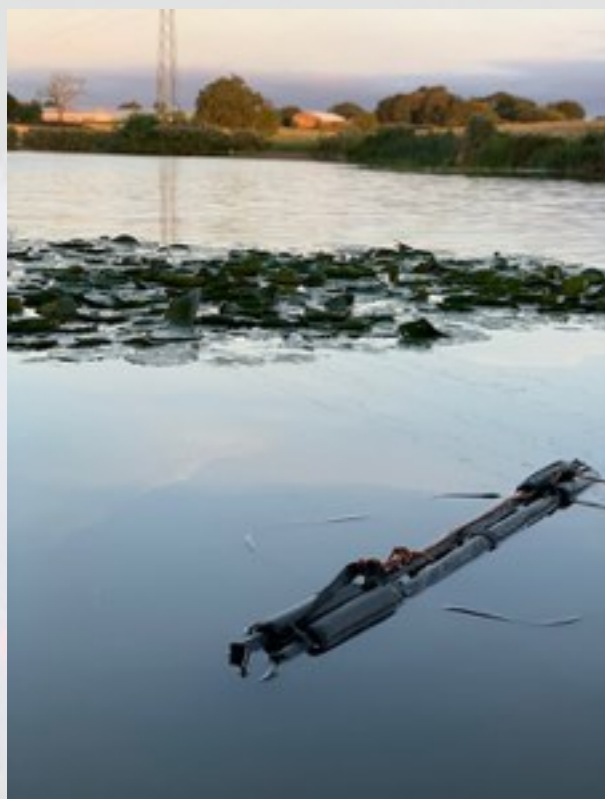
I arrived around 1pm, wanting to try and find some fish. The lake is quite long and at the far end is a little bay; it absolutely screams carp. I headed for the back bay, checking the sets of pads and margins as I went. I got to a swim which is the biggest on the lake, it's more open and has a big electric pylon behind it. As I crept into it, I saw a rather large common 2 or 3 yards from the bank right in front of the swim. In hindsight looking back,

it was the biggest fish in the lake. I knew exactly where I was going to be spending the next few nights.

My first night was again uneventful but early morning of day two I decided to map out virtually the whole lake. I was on my own and I knew I needed to work out an area which the carp liked. The swim I was in had a small over hanging tree just touching the water and from the margin standing over it you could see a big drop off. After plumbing it I knew I had to have a rod on that spot, so I put a little bit of bait in ready for the evening. I also found a lovely area in the far bay too my right which I would keep an eye on over

the coming days. The margins were virtually all gravel with a long silt gulley through the middle but no exciting features.

The evening drew in for my second night and I had both rods positioned perfectly. A small wafter on the drop off by the tree and my faithful snowman by some reeds too my right. Around 10pm my alarm went into absolute melt down on the right hand rod



It was on for about 5 minutes when a tench popped up. Not what I was after, but it was massive, chucking the scales around to 9lb 8oz. After five more nuisance tench on the left hand rod around 6am I had another absolute screamer. This time it felt like a better fish. It moved out into the open water and then headed back for the spot it got hooked. I tried some side strain before the hook pulling. I was

absolutely gutted. I reeled both rods in and tried to get some sleep. The third and final day was upon me and I felt closer to catching a carp, but another day and night passed by with no action except a couple of small tench.

I didn't manage to get back down until early September due to changing jobs, fishing elsewhere on day tickets and not having enough motivation for the place. I started

trickling bait back in the bay where I first started closest to the car park. For some reason this particular night I had a feeling they were down there. A warm wind was blowing straight in the corner and I felt more confident than ever. The water was really down so I had to use my waders to net any fish because it was too shallow in front of me. My left hand rod was placed just too the back of the pads too my left and the right



hand rod was placed to another set of pads up the right hand margin, just up from the bay.

It was 11am and the left hand rod signalled 3 bleeps before the bobbin was wedged in the alarm. Although I was fishing semi slack lines because I was fishing probably 10 yards out, I still had to be locked up because of the pads. I ran down picked up the rod and tried struggling into my waders. I waded out right to the edge of the pads, my knees were trembling I knew this was a carp. I saw it pop up and bundled it into the net, didn't give myself a chance to lose it. I peered in and it was a nice scaley mirror that weight 18lb 8oz. Turns out it was one from the photos that my friend had shown me earlier in the

year. My ever faithful snowman had done the job. I got myself sorted, did some night time shots and slipped her back. I got the rod back on the spot with a few handfuls of bait over the top and never anticipated what was next.

Just as the sun was coming up the left hand rod was away again but time it put up one hell of a fight. Going from left to right before taking 20 yards of line. It felt like a powerful fish. As he touched the net cord, I made sure

he was going in first time. I took a breath and peered in. Some of the biggest pectoral fins I had ever seen. And to make it all the sweeter is it was a completely unknown carp. That's what made me keep coming back. I never knew what was going to pop up. The mystery was the buzz and made it that little bit more special. I waited for first light with a cup of tea before doing the photos. 25lb 10oz of awesome mirror carp. I was blown away.



I went on to catch a small common and a small mirror on two separate occasions after that in the same area with the same faithful snowman rig. It was never about fishing for the biggest carp in the lake, it was all about what could be in the lake because nobody really knows. I was fortunate

enough to catch some awesome carp but after COVID-19 appeared I decided that this year was time for a new adventure and this one involves a very special big common.

Till next time...

Alex



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The Story So Far by Justin Carter



Back in March 2019 whilst finishing the last couple of weeks of a winter ticket at Northey Park in Peterborough, I underwent a life changing experience when falling from a tree and landing on my back. After being airlifted to Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge for a spinal cord operation, it was here where I was told that I would never walk again and had been left paralysed from the waist down

Thankfully I am a strong character and with a wife and two children, I picked myself up and got on with my life and a year on after undertaking rehabilitation I am now back too as much normality as I'm ever going to get with returning to work full time, driving and being a husband and a father to my family.

Fishing has always been a massive part of my life for the past thirty seven years and not being able to just get in a car and just go to a lake at a drop of a hat can be mentally testing at times and 2020 was the year where I wanted to get back to the bank more frequently, with trips booked abroad and in the UK.

This past year has been about rebuilding my life, both day to day and maintaining my fitness and this has only been made possible with the help of a local charity that has provided me and the family with the support, advice and ongoing treatment for my spinal cord injury that I would have struggled to have found elsewhere.

I owe my life to the NHS and they gave me the help to rehabilitate

myself back into the real world, but there is only so much they can do on a tight budget and unfortunately when you leave the hospital you are very much on your own in the real world.

The Matt Hampson Foundation acts as a lifeline to me and many others with spinal injuries and other disabilities and is funded solely from donations and fundraising events and one of the biggest fund raiser is the 26 mile London Marathon, but with that being cancelled this year charities have instead set up the 2.6 challenge.

The 2.6 Challenge can be any activity you like based around the numbers 26 or 2.6, from walking 2.6 miles to doing 26 push ups.

For me I want to do something to give back to this charity for what they have given to me and am going to do 2.6 days fishing, which may seem easy to many of you and something I use to do most weekends, but with being in a wheelchair on the bank it's not an easy task anymore, with uneven

ground, cooking and sleeping and a session is something I haven't done yet, so will be a challenge in itself to me and to prove that despite a spinal cord injury anything can be possible.

Some people may think that this is an easy task and although I will enjoy being back

out on the bank and having some banter, physically it is a lot more testing and upper body strength is used to the maximum and for anybody who thinks differently then I welcome you to come to the event and let me tie your legs to a wheelchair so you have no use of them and then spend the



day fishing like you normally would.

Before the accident I was a supporter of Mike Smiths charity 'A Bite out of Cancer' donating money equivalent to pound and ounces and again want to continuing supporting this charity.

Whoever joins me for this 2.6 challenge as my carer as such I will donate from my own pocket the overall weight we both catch from the 2.6 days of fishing to A Bite out of Cancer and also the same amount again to the Matt Hampson Foundation.

I'm never usually one to ask for anything in life, but with this being a challenge for charity, I was hoping that you may be able to donate to my charity of choice, The Matt Hampson Foundation, even if just £1.00 would be

a huge help by using my Just Giving Page. <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/justin-carter3>

I am hoping to have a few prizes to also add to the event and anyone making a donation to my just giving page I will draw a couple of names out of a hat at the end of the challenge and thank PB Products, Carp Online and Sharp Tackle for making very generous donations of prizes. I was also lost for words when contacted by Lee Pettit at Westmoor Farm Carp Fishery in

Lincolnshire offering me a four day stay in a luxury accommodation and four days fishing for two in a double swim as a prize and will raffle this off shortly to help raise additional funds for the charity cause.

To be continued....

Justin



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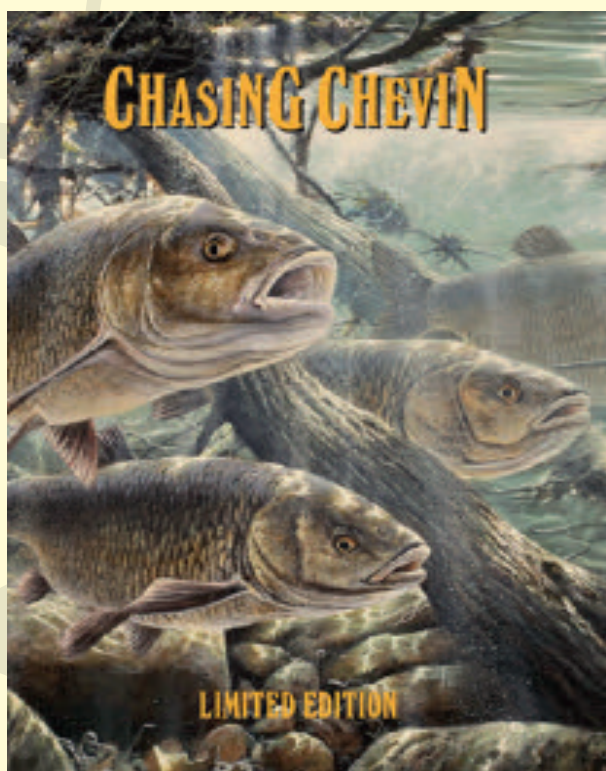
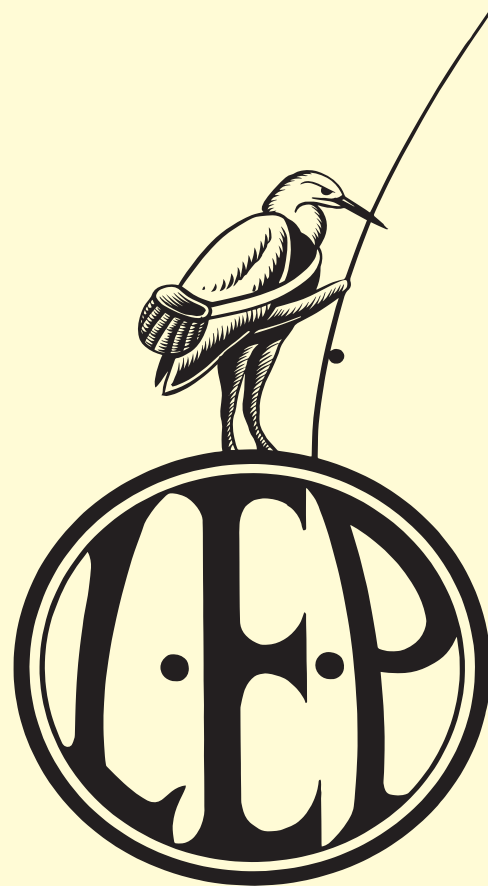
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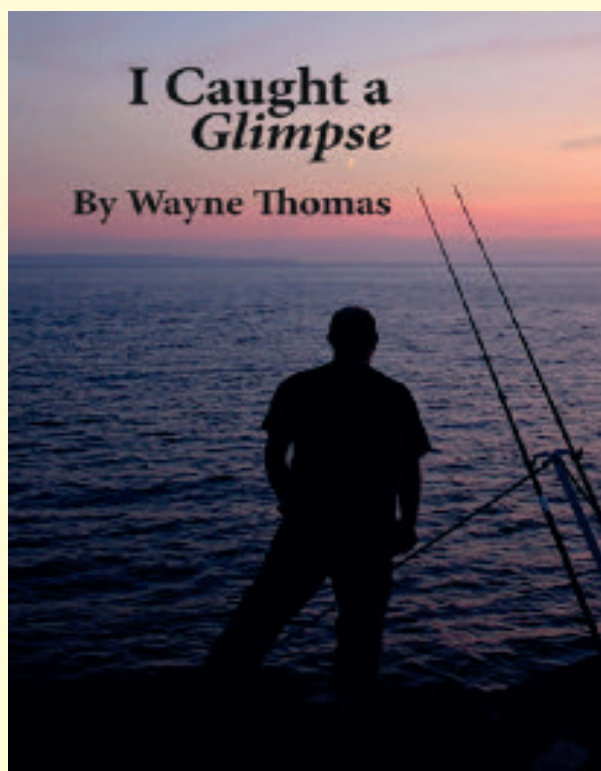


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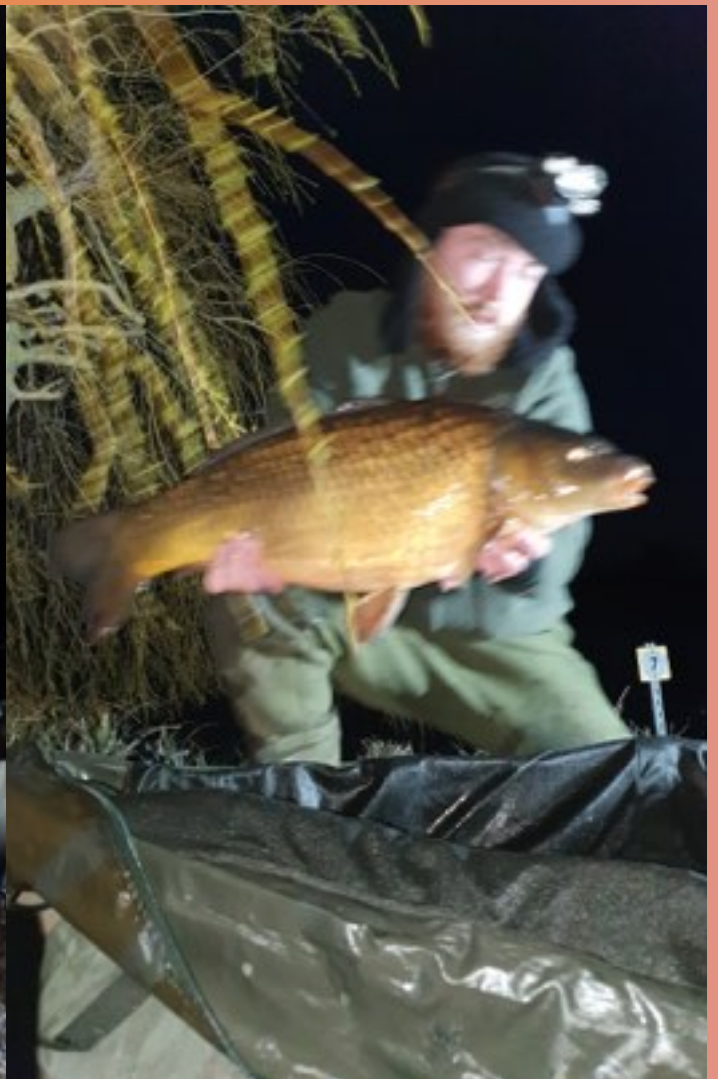
Michael Whitney 1



Michael McMahon



Jordan Burnie



He's so used to catching tench he wasn't sure what to do with this carp... **Mr Brian Dixon**



Bradley Aggis Christiansen



Bradley Aggis Christiansen





Venue: Petit Pretre, France

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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.

At the moment we are doing a deal for any week this year (if booked before the end of February 2020 you will ge your fishing plus an evening meal for £150 per person).

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





Well, we are now 8 months into 2019 and what a fantastic few months it has been. The biggest out of Lake Chira this year so far is a 47lb along with many other 40s, 43 and 45 many upper 30s and 30s, the fish have definitely got bigger and still as beautiful as ever and the great fight of the Canary Carp as always is truly amazing!!

Many holidays with the guys either staying on the bank 24hrs a day or having one of our accommodations, either apartments or a beautiful Canary House with pool that can sleep up to 6 persons, great for fishing the days, cooling off in the pool with a few cold ones and bbq!!! something for everyone, either with the lads or bring the family.

You can also book any duration short break on the bank or with accommodation.

If you are coming to Gran Canaria on a holiday, we offer day excursions either carp or bass fishing and we have a separate day trip area where we offer an all inclusive day including your pick up and drop off from your hotel or meeting point, a guided mountain drive, 2 rod Nash set up with all relevant tackle and equipment, bait, end tackle, license, light lunch and refreshments and you are fully guided, 8 hours of fishing in the beautiful mountains, peace and tranquil and some of those stunning Chira carp!!

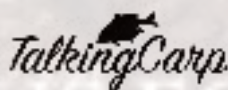
We do have the odd weeks left for 2019 and we are already booking for 2020. We do have our offer on for a minimum of 4 anglers we offer a free apartment for the duration of your holiday.

So if you want to turn your dreams into reality and see what everyone is talking about and catch some of the famous Lake Chira carp, look no further and contact Ali or Dave at Carpgrancanaria.com, info@costadelcarping.com or 0034637939680 Facebook, Instagram, message or Whatsapp.

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Tight lines

Dave, Ali, Joe and the team at carpgrancanaria.com.



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TalkingCarp

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**NORTHERN
ANGLING
SHOW**



**Nick 'Reedy' Maddix –
Post Northern Angling Show 8
Interview**

So... we have a late entry sent in this month which we felt needed to be included... here it is. ENJOY!!!!

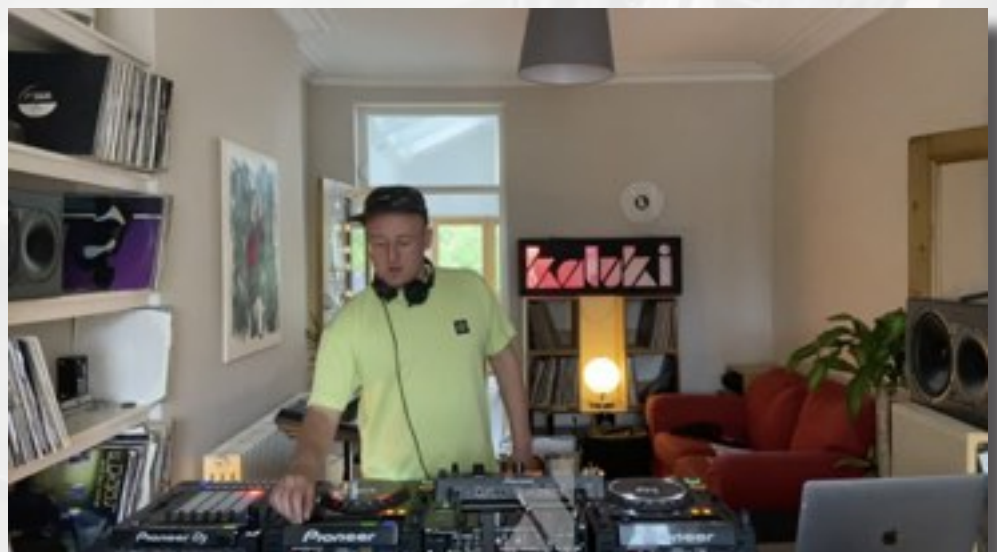
Back in November 2019, in Issue 45 of the Magazine, I caught up with Nick Maddix, or 'Reedy' as he is better known, to get the inside track about what it takes to set up and run one of the biggest angling events in the Country.

Reedy is one of the owners/directors of the 'Northern Angling Show'(NAS), and in February 2020, Event City in Manchester opened its' doors to the show for the eighth time....!!

February 22nd 2020....wow, that seems a lifetime ago now and to think just four weeks after the incredible NAS8, the UK went in to Lockdown....!!!

I had planned to catch up with Reedy in early March to get the Post-Show low-down, but as I am involved in the Health & Social Care sector, things in my 'day job' became a little hectic and still are if I am honest with my Wife working for the NHS and both my kids working in Social Care, we as a family have been working more than ever, even me...!!

Nevertheless, I did manage to catch up with him and here is what he had to tell me about the show, the situation moving forward, and his other interests linked to the world of music...



TC: Nick, welcome back to the pages of Talking Carp and thanks for taking the time to speak with me in these unprecedented times....

NM: Thanks for the invite again Mark – indeed these are unprecedented times, a scenario I hope none of us have to go through again in our lifetimes. From myself and I'm sure everyone reading - massive hats off to you and your family members working in healthcare / the NHS! Thank you!

TC: As I said at the start of this piece, the NAS8 seems a lifetime ago now and I guess you must feel very lucky to have been able to complete the event, unlike many of the other shows that were planned...?

NM: You're right, it really does seem a lifetime ago and I count my blessings everyday that we were able to host the event before the UK lockdown, we could be in a sticky situation had the event not gone ahead! I've been following what is happening in the events world since 'lockdown's' have been in place and it has literally cost billions in cancelled events, festivals, performances etc!

TC: I spent the whole weekend at the show from the Friday and from my perspective and that of my friends that visited and also the ones that exhibited, it appeared to be a huge success but how was the NAS8 for you...?

NM: Thanks for the kind words and I'm glad to hear you enjoyed it. Overall NAS 8 was another huge success - the event ran smoothly, our exhibitors were happy and so were the visitors which always makes for a good event. Logistically we improved on previous years and we picked up on a few bits we could do better which I believe is important to the

longevity of the event.

TC: In terms of preparation and planning, did it all go accordingly...?

NM: As with any event there are always a few minor hiccups but overall NAS 8 was probably our smoothest yet. The team that help out on the weekend have become an integral part of the NAS family and as we all gain experience the event just gets smoother and easier every time. Massive thanks to any of our helpers that are reading – you know who you are and we genuinely couldn't do it without you!

TC: How many visitors did the show attract and did it pass expectations...?

NM: Total attendance across the two days was just over 16,000 visitors which on the quiet we were confidently expecting. Now we've gone over 15k a few times I'm fairly confident the show will achieve that figure each year but has potential to grow as we aim to expand into other disciplines of angling.

TC: I met you on the Saturday evening when you had gone for a meal with your family and I have to say, you looked totally



drained...how many hours sleep did you manage over the three days of the show and how long did it take you to recover...?

NM: Funnily enough I heard I wasn't looking my finest quite a bit over the course of the weekend! It's a ridiculously busy few weeks building up to it then you actually arrive and the madness begins! The four days usually consist of a 6.30am start in the venue, finally leave for the hotel around 8.30pm, work on the laptop until gone midnight, sleep, then back in the venue for 6.30am. Besides the mental strain it's physically demanding too. That said this year I actually managed to cut down the distance I usually cover during the four days with an all time low score of 92.7km according to my iPhone pedometer. Safe to say I was shattered by the Monday so following the 3.5hr journey home I didn't do a great deal for the next 48hrs other than sleep, eat and answer a few emails!

TC: Is it always a 'family event' in terms of them supporting you with the show...?



NM: I'm lucky that my Mum and Dad and girlfriend Katie want to be involved and help us out as you literally can't have enough hands-on deck. Dad's an angler too so when I've not got him running around on errands, he gets to enjoy the show which is a bonus. I'm also very lucky that my sister Amy is A.) the most organised person I know (imagine Monica from the program 'Friends') and B.) Has recently become obsessed with carp fishing. These two things combined mean she's keen to attend because she loves the sport, but she also thrives when she's given a headset, clipboard and left to manage pretty much anything I throw at her. I think our exhibitors will all agree that Amy makes the sign in, arrival & set up process a doddle which makes life easier for everyone during a busy few days.

TC: I spoke with a few of the people that were either exhibitors or stage guests and they were very complementary about the show, so was the overall feedback positive from the public too...?



NM: The vast majority of the feedback was positive, and we received some really nice messages / images from visitors who had the time of their lives meeting the stars / checking out all the new gear etc. That said, with any event of this size you can't please everyone, but the negative comments are few and far between – usually the same subject which is they want to see more match brands in the show. The frustrating thing is we invite the match brands every year and feel they should be involved given the demographic of the event. We had some interesting conversations this year so fingers crossed we can work with the match brands to give more visitors what they want and continue to grow the show.

TC: I suppose it's an obvious question given the fact we are doing this interview during a 'Lockdown' due to a Pandemic (which is quite frankly and unbelievable situation) but given the current circumstances around the world, what would have been the situation if the show could not have gone ahead...?



NM: If I'm completely honest I don't know what we would have done if the show hadn't gone ahead. Having followed the progress / decisions of events & festivals around the world since the start of the pandemic it seems the most common solution has been to ask for support from visitors / exhibitors and to postpone events rather than cancel. Understandably this works for some attendee's and doesn't for others but I feel the current circumstances have added an element of unity among everyone involved in the events industry. At the end of the day none of us want to be in this situation and the bottom line is the venue's need the shows, the show organisers need the exhibitors & visitors, the exhibitors need the customers and the visitors want to go to events and enjoy themselves. With this in mind my thoughts are that the only way through it is if everyone works together and finds solutions that allow everyone to make it through these difficult times.

TC: Another obvious question has to be "have you started planning for NAS 9 in 2021 yet"...?

NM: Whilst the initial 'plans' start straight after the last show finishes this is generally a quiet time for me where I would usually focus on my other job with Kaluki or go fishing. With both of those being stopped in their tracks due to the current lockdown situation I've been catching up on more 'behind the scenes' stuff like admin / paperwork etc – exciting!!!

TC: Moving away from the NAS, I see you have been occupied with



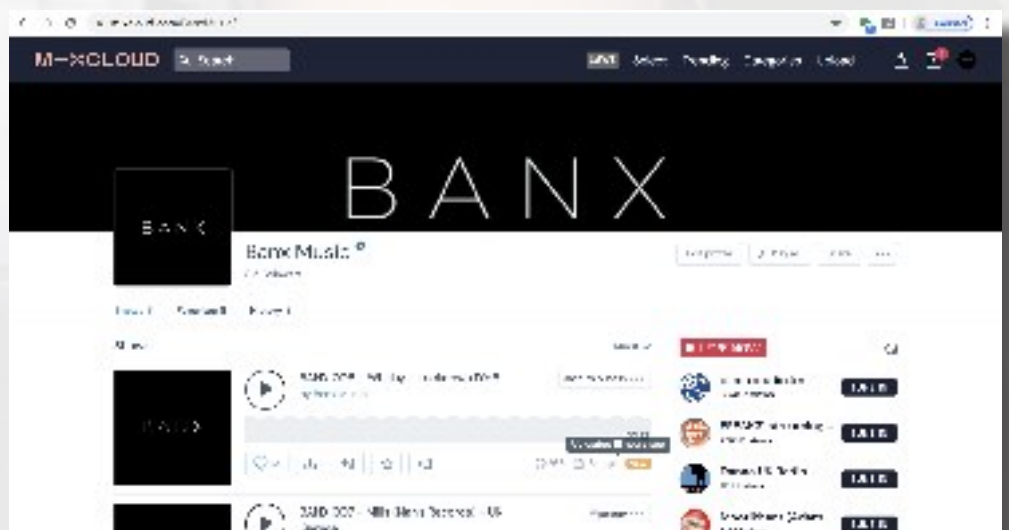
your other passion, which is music. Who and what is 'BANX MUSIC' and where can people find it...?

NM: Banx Music came about because the fans of the Nash Eurobanx / Urban Banx films were asking where they could listen to the music used in the films – those that have watched them will know it's a little different to the usual soundtrack of a fishing program. Long before we worked in the angling industry Alan Blair and I became friends through a mutual love of fishing & music. I think it's fair to say nowadays Alan is obsessed with angling and loves music, I'm obsessed by music but also love fishing so it's a good combination.

Our combined passions and the demand from Nash fans encouraged us to set up a Mixcloud page to host music / mixes from us, our friends and any other musicians out there that we enjoy listening to. The page is still in it's infancy but already has some great sets to listen to with plenty more in the pipeline.

We had some mega exciting plans for 'Banx Music' this year but they're now on hold due to the COVID 19 situation. For anyone that's interested simply visit <https://www.mixcloud.com/BanxMusic/> - you can listen online or via the free app on your phone. If you create a free account and subscribe to the page, you'll be notified when we upload a new mix too.

TC: What else have you doing within the music sector, are you still involved with



'Kaluki'...?

NM: Primarily Kaluki hosts events so a lot of that has been forced onto the back burner at the moment. Instead we've been focussing on Kaluki Musik's label releases and hosting our resident DJ's live streams on social media which has kept me busy and entertained – at least I can come out of lockdown having learnt how to use live streaming software. Every cloud and all that....

TC: Back to your angling and I have to ask you about your recent fishing trip, which I think you have only managed one between the NAS ending and the Lockdown starting(?) and that just happened to be with a certain Mr. Blair, so how did that go...?

NM: Thankfully I managed a handful of sessions between the NAS and lockdown, a few on a local water and as you mentioned an impromptu trip with Mr Blair and some of the other Nash lads. Alan was actually due to go away on a filming trip which got cancelled and left him with a space in the diary to go fishing, as it's been years since we fished together we made the most of the opportunity. The fishing wasn't that successful (for me) but we still had a lovely time! As usual Alan caught a couple whereas I essentially camped for 48 hours! Nevertheless, I thoroughly enjoyed catching up with him and having a couple of BBQ's / Beers with the boys of an evening – in times like those the catching often comes



as a secondary bonus for me.

TC: Finally, in your last interview, you said about your passion to organise a festival or similar large-scale music event, so is there any progress in that direction...?

NM: Without saying too much there were some plans in place to start the wheels moving in 2020 but it's all had to be put on hold for obvious reasons. I'm fully aware that I'll need to start small and build up to something bigger over a period of time but it's safe to say I'm still super keen to pursue this as soon as government guidance / restrictions allow. Watch this space ;)

TC...and finally, finally, has lockdown given you any positive opportunities, you know, like DIY...?

NM : Funny you should mention it, as I like to be organised I used the couple of weeks after NAS to get on top of ALL the DIY jobs around the house. Leaky taps – fixed, shower tray water trap – fixed, dodgy light fitting in the garage – fixed, broken gate to the garden – fixed!!! Little did I know those jobs would have helped pass the time during lockdown but I've found myself with not a great deal to do as everything's been fixed!! I guess the only plus side to that is I now have a garden that Alan Titchmarsh would be proud of!

MG: Thanks reedy for the update and roll-on 2021 and another rainy Manchester Weekend for the NAS 9...!!!



I took the liberty of asking a few people at the show what their thoughts were and this is what they said....

Pele Johnson – Spotted Fin

“Best NAS show in the last 5 years. Turnout was significantly up on previous years, especially on the Sunday. Lots of new exhibitors as well turned up to this one.

Was an extremely positive weekend and we are looking forward to the next one.”

Julian Cundiff – Nash Tackle

“Without doubt the best NAS yet and up there with the Carp Society Dunstable days which is as good as you will ever hear from me.

I honestly have never signed so many pictures, done so many demos (over 180 multi rigs tied) or chatted to so many people... Not one person moaned about prices, queues or even the weather so you know it must be good”

Rob Hughes

“I love the NAS. In go as far as to say that out of all the shows I visit, all around the world, it’s my favourite. Great atmosphere, brilliant entertainment and so much to see and do. It’s got a brilliant vibe, awesome entertainment, loads of people, and loads of top brands and great products too. One definitely not be missed in my eyes, whether you’re a trader or a visitor..!”

Lisa and Lee – Rig-It Tackle

“Our best show ever and another well organised and very well supported event. It’s great to be part of such a big event and being close to home is a bonus for us. It’s always nice to meet up with old and new customers alike and to showcase our range of products to such a big audience... bring on 2021..!”

Rod Bird – Sonik Sports

“I believe that the NAS is one of if not the most important and wide-reaching shows in the UK, bringing like minded anglers from the North of Scotland to the South of England. I believe it is so well attended due to the lack of shows in the Northern half of Britain, I feel that too much emphasis is placed on the Southern Carp scene, there are a huge amount of talented carp anglers outside of Kent and Essex etc.

The main reason we at Sonik love the NAS is that our customers can come and touch, feel and try our latest products, we always ensure we treat every Angler the same. I believe that asking questions about the anglers and their wants and needs I can steer them in the right direction for the gear they should look at closer, its not all about selling them the dearest gear I can, there is nothing better than getting great feedback from a happy customer. I love spending time with our customers and passing tips and tricks to help them up their catch rate.

The NAS is also a brilliant social event when all us lucky enough to be in the trade can shoot some banter and pull some legs. I love catching up with my friends from down south and spending time talking tactics and planning trips.

You do realise also why the Sonik Team love the NAS..... it’s only a couple of hours from our HQ...”

Alan Blair – Nash Tackle

“It would be easy for me to say this due to my personal relationship with Reedy, Clossick and Jamie but it’s the truth - The Northern Angling Show is THE best fishing show in Europe. Yes, it might not have the most visitors, it might not take up the biggest amount of floor space, be in the most elaborate of buildings but it’s still the best. Putting aside the fact that’s it’s so well managed, marketed, attended, offers value for money for both the visitor and the exhibitor it’s THE best because of the VIBE!

Everyone (whether you’re a visitor or exhibitor) wants those two days out at any exhibition to be as enjoyable as possible and I think the team at the NAS deliver that impeccably well - Top Level ENJOYMENT

Of course from Nash Tackles point of view, the other manufactures and all the retailers YES we want to make a return on investment but that’s a given at that show what we also want is to have a good time doing it and that’s why I love the NAS so much (and know full well everyone in the trade and also all the visitors would agree)



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