

Talking Carp

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Part 1 of Keith Moor's LIVING THE DREAM

Scott "Geezer" Grant

Mark Wozencroft

Emma Smith

Daniel Winter

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Tackle
Competition
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Interactive adverts

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Hello and welcome...

To another great issue of Talking Carp even if I say so myself. This month we bring you some more fantastic tales from the world of carp angling and all that we love about it. We have hints and tips galore if you read carefully...there's plenty to pick up!!

Keith Moors starts with chapter 1 of "Living The Dream" which is a must read... trust me!

We also have our own expert Paul Hobbs answering a question on surface

fishing for carp which may help right now as this is the perfect time to go get them off the top!

Also inside I give an honest review on the new Defender 3 carp rods from MADcarp (the carp part of DAM fishing!)

This month we have another giveaway for you too! Two, YES TWO, lucky

winners will win vouchers from our friends at Bank

Tackle to spend as they please on some nice new end tackle of their choice from their website so keep an eye out for the competition.

Brand New feature: We are running out a trial and YOU can help!! On some of our adverts you will see an

"ENTER HERE" button...if you click on this button you will AUTOMATICALLY be taken to their website, have a browse around and when you are done return to the magazine! We are making it as simple and convenient as is possible for you, the reader, to fully enjoy our magazine and keep in contact with our advertisers' websites. Try out the new feature and tell us what you think. We need your feedback.

Have a great month and see you again soon.

Team Talking Carp.

Email us at

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THE BEST ALARMS?



THE ANSWER'S
CRYSTAL CLEAR

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Winter at Churchwood
by Scott "Geezer" Grant

After a great session at the Dell in December my next session didn't come around until Early February simply because I was so busy at work. I had spoken to Steve who owns Churchwood fisheries a complex which includes 3-day ticket waters that are very exclusive. I had arranged to fish 3 nights to see if I could catch some of the elusive residents. The three lakes are Jenkins which is around 1 acres and holds carp to 32lb plus a couple of big cats. The cat lake which is relatively new and is 1 acre and holds yes you guessed it cats to over 55lb and Churchwood which is the biggest lake of 2 ½ acres and holds carp to 34lb, and is the one I was going to fish. There was no one else booked on so I had the whole lake to myself. The weather was still cold with day time temperatures of 9-10 degrees and -1 at night. Pressure was 1003 with east/north east winds. Because the lakes are surrounded by forest the wind doesn't play a particular part in influencing the fish as it does on other waters. I arrived at around 10:00 and was met by Steves right hand man Mark, who looks after the grounds and bailiffs all 3 waters. I was told to drive down to the newly created car park which is situated in between the cat lake and Jenkins. Mark then transferred my gear into a waiting trailer and dropped this off at my swim on Churchwood. I had opted to fish the big double swim as this gave me access to most of the lake.

By 11:30 my house was up and all the gear sorted, I sat having a coffee with Mark with him giving advice on where to fish etc. I fancied a rod to the right of the swim fishing into the corner, it looked so carpy and I was sure that's where fish would be. I spread around 2 kilos of boiling (mixed sizes) and left it alone for a couple of hours to see if there was any activity.



Back at my swim I fished my left hand rod to the far margin an area the fish have come from in the past and my middle rod in front of the outlet under some overhanging trees. It was now around 13:15 and with 2 rods sorted I went and had a look to the carpy corner I had baited earlier. I sat and watched the water and after only a few minutes a fin flicked on the surface!! I knew the fish were there, I wasted no time and made my way back to base camp to grab my other rod. I fished a chod rig using a new chod filament I was testing, the reason I chose this rig is that there was bound to be a lot of debris on the bottom, due to the number of trees. Bait wise I was using the new bait on test the Nut Job for free offerings and a

banoffee pop up fished over the top. As always my lead and hook bait were dipped before under arming it into position. The line was fished really slack as not to spook any fish in the swim or that swam into it. With the rig settled and the indicator on the floor I went back to my swim and waited. It seemed only minutes when my receiver gave a single bleep, then another I quickly made my way to the rod and the fish was away, I lifted into the fish and it fought like Mary hell!! After a few minutes the fish came over the cord of the net and a lovely plump dark mirror was landed. On the scales she went 22lb and looked amazing. Mark took a few pictures for me and she was then treated and slipped back. The rod was rebaited and cast to the same area, I topped the area up with a few handfuls of bait. I was so happy that not only had I caught a fish from here in Winter but a goodun to. Churchwood isn't easy at the best of times but in Winter that's tenfold. A couple of hours had passed and I hadn't had a single bleep on either of my 2 other rods. As I was sit watching the water for any signs of activity the receiver let out a full blown take again on my right hand rod in the bay. I ran down the bank and lifted into a very angry fish,

this time a double figured common was netted, she went 16lb 8oz on the scales and after a



couple of self takes she was treated then slipped back home. I just couldn't believe what was happening. Steve the owner rang me and said its unheard of in the winter months, maybe I was just lucky, maybe they loved the bait, who knows but one things for sure the rods going out again and the area topped up with more bait. After the rod was put back out I sat in my swim thinking I've only brought 10 kilos of boilies at this rate I will have to go home and get some more. Later that evening Steve came down after work and we sat drinking coffee and having a natter. He was pleased that the fish were feeding and was hoping one of the A Team would make an appearance. I was also hoping that and one fish in particular "Bubbles" a mirror that goes around the 35lb mark. I also mentioned that I would dearly love to catch the "Long Common" a fish I had seen laying in the pads last summer a real unit. Steve said the common

should be around the 30lb mark going by previous captures. As the night started to draw in the

temperature really dropped and with temperatures expected to be -1 I was in the bag snuggled up by 19:00. I drifted off to sleep and woke up in the morning just before light feeling refreshed and ready for



another day. After a much needed coffee I walked around the lake looking for any signs but the fish were not giving themselves up easy. Mark came down to see if I had

banked anymore fish and for a nice coffee. He left after a short while as he had to do some work, unlike me I was on holiday from work so I was chilling. The lake was really quiet until 16:30 later that afternoon as I was sat talking to Steve when the right hand rod was away again. As I lifted the rod I knew it was a much better fish and it gave me the right run around, all the while I was hoping the hook hold was good, after about 10 minutes Steve slid the net under a very dark mirror. Was it bubbles unfortunately it wasn't but a lovely dark 27lb 14oz mirror. Steve obliged with the camera and was impressed with my tally which was now 3 fish with still 2 nights to go. Steve took some pukka photos and with the fish treated she was slid back home to fight another day.

Again the rod was lowered into the area and a few handfuls of mixed sized boilies were dispatched. I was now totally buzzing and wanted more. I had come to the conclusion

I only needed one rod as the other 2 hadn't had a single bleep in all the time they had been in the water!

I retired to my big warm bag around 20:00 and drifted off to sleep whilst I was listening to the radio. All of a sudden my receiver went mental and I was out of the bag in a flash, it was the right hand rod again. This time a mirror of 19lb 8oz was banked, with my eyes still a blur.

I tried my hardest to take a decent self-take, they weren't brilliant but okay.

I couldn't grumble at all I was having the session of my life at a place I know is a very tricky water.

With the photos done she was treated and put back and the rod was again baited and lowered back into the hot area. Again this was topped up with a good few handfuls of bait and hopefully I would be back out again to land another.

I got back into the bag but couldn't get back to sleep I was simply buzzing my tits off, and I had no one to share it with.

The next morning came and no further action was had, the weather had now gone really cold with the day time temperature of only 7 degrees. Nothing happened for the whole day I didn't see any bubbles or any signs in the bay and was now starting to think the fish may have moved out to a safe haven. I kept the area topped up throughout the day just in case if they were there it may entice them to feed again. With night fall the alarms stayed silent and I really thought I had caught my quota.

Saturday morning came and the weather was much brighter and the temperature was a little warmer. I started the arduous journey of packing up and by 12:00 only the rods were out. I was having a cuppa with Mark and was saying how much I really wanted one of the A Team when all of a sudden the right hand rod was away, as I lifted the rod the fish went mental and put



up a great fight that lasted over 10 minutes with some real hairy moments I can tell you. Once the fish was ready Mark done the honours with the net and a very long common made its way over the draw cord. Straight away Mark shouted you've banked the Long Common mate, I was blown away to the point where I had to take a breather for a few minutes before I could do anything. Once the camera and weigh equipment was sorted I got the fish out the

water she looked immense on the mat and was in her beautiful Winter colours.

Steves cousin Nick turned up and took some greats shots and the best shot of all was with me and Mark. It was great to share the moment with great friends who understand exactly what it means to me.

As you can imagine the journey home was a floating one. Churchwood is an exceptional place that is always immaculate with first class swims and facilities. Mark the bailiff is always on hand to help and advise you. If you want to fish Churchwood give them a call on 01277-375499 or visit their website www.churchwoodfisheries.co.uk If you're out on the bank stay safe and remember to enjoy yourself, it's only fishing.



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RIG TYING MADE EASY BY STUART MELLORS



Step 1 Thread the chod stiff filament through the eye of the out turned hook



Step 2 Start to whip the knotless knot six times up the shank of the hook



Step 3 You now have a knotless knot and is now ready for joining the two materials together



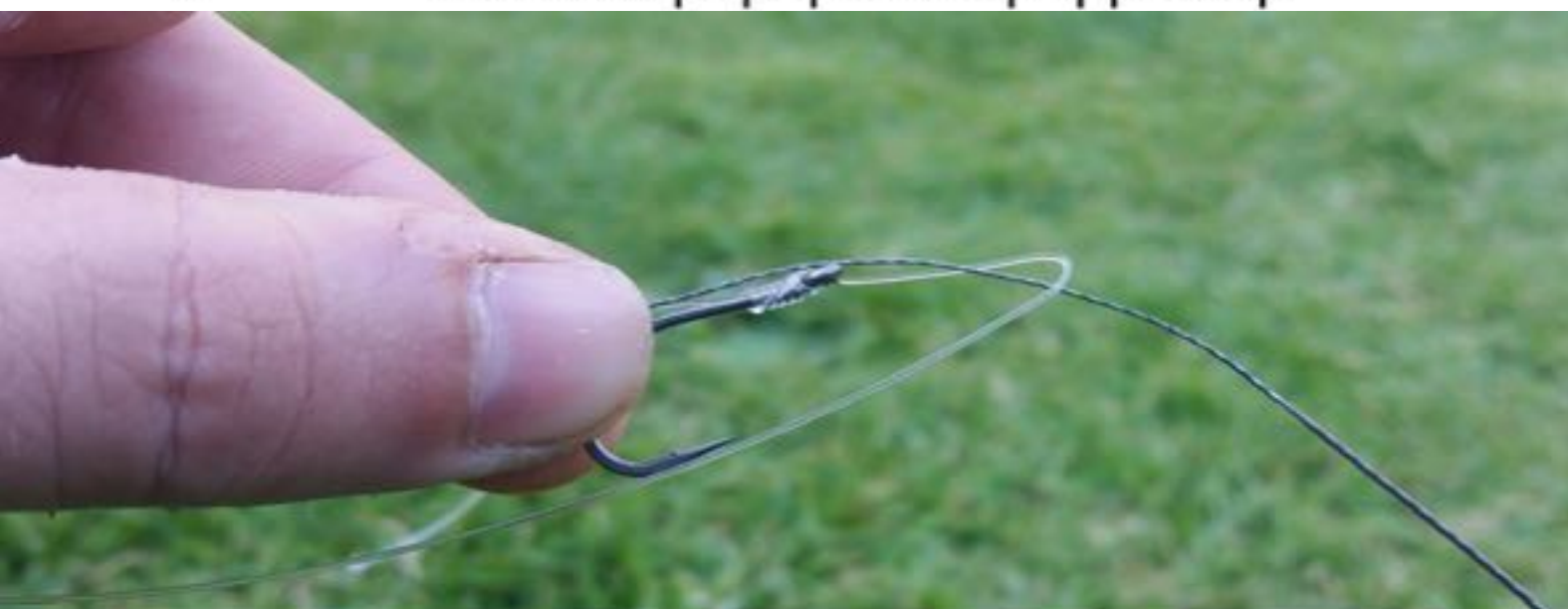
Step 4

Now fold the chod filament to how far you want the popup to be popped up



Step 7

Now whip back down 4 times over the 7 turns you already have done



Step 5

Now pass the coated braid through the loop you have made in step 4



Step 8

Next thread the coated braid through the loop then moistening the knot before pulling it tight



Step 6

Now whip the soft uncoated section of the coated braid around the loop up to the hook 7 times



Step 9

Now gently tighten the albright knot making you moisten it well and trim ends



Step 10 Add a micro ring swivel and create a D on shank of hook and thread through eye of hook



Step 12 add putty to the albright knot making sure you have a small uncoated section allowing flexibility



Step 11 Blob the end with a lighter making sure you don't damage any materials and your fingers



Step 13 The finished rig with a anti tangle sleeve on and with a figure of 8 loop knot to be able to use on a quick change swivel

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Pastures New by Mark Wozencroft



Pastures New by Mark Wozencroft

Having just come back from my latest session on a local water called Lamby Lake I was met with high pressure and clear skies not the ideal situation to be fishing in but we can't always choose the times to fish, so like 99% of us out there we have to make the most of what is on offer and hope that the carp gods play nice, well this particular session turned into a hard one but by ringing the changes I was able to pinch one on the second morning and I have never been so happy to catch a small carp in tough conditions, I know some of us get lazy and lay back and hope for the best but I have always been proactive in my own fishing which saw me move swims to try and get on the fish and it worked as there was a few showing along the reed margins to my left but not reachable by casting from the bank so I donned my chesties and wadded out with a bit with caution and was able to get access to these carp, as I thought that maybe they weren't really feeding I decided on a light baiting approach and my loose feed were glugged in hemp oil and tiger nut extract so hopefully with the combined pulling power of the oil to drag the carp down and the haze of the tiger nut extract on the bottom to get them rooting around, I

also decided against any type of particle as there are a few nuisance fish in the water, I have a lot of faith fishing a brighter bait over food bait and my favourite is the Peanut Pro with a Crafty Candie pop up over the top, it has an uncanny knack of getting me a bite with others are struggling, One thing I see on the bank is anglers worrying about getting the latest rods or reels, when let's be honest it's what is in the water that really matters. I take great pride in sourcing the sharpest hooks and the best bait I can get my hands on, I personally have been with various companies like many of you out there looking for the latest wonder bait, I have settled for a company called Crafty Catcher because 1) they have been around for 30 years plus so know what they are doing 2) success breeds confidence and I have the ultimate confidence in the bait from this stable as I know they use the highest quality ingredients and have a high turn around so you know the bait is always at its freshest Since my last article I have joined a new water with some right lumps in it so you can imagine how excited it was driving there for my first session, so when I eventually pulled into the car park I was ready to burst, grabbing a bucket I took a circuit of the lake and I noticed it was really weedy which doesn't bother me but I could see a

lot of people would be put off by this but don't be as it shouldn't be seen as an obstacle and a bit of patience will see you fishing effectively, in situations like this I won't use a marker float as it can be quite hard to get it to pop up to the surface so I would rather lead around, I do this by taking off the spod and slipping on a 3 to 4 ounce distance lead as I have found they don't get so clogged up with weed when you are looking for your spots, most of the time I don't look for blatant clear areas as these are probably the spots everyone is fishing but I'd rather find sparsely covered weed that I can get a drop on? As long as the lead hits the lake bed I'm happy with that and judging by how thick the weed is determines what type of set up I use? If there is just a light covering of weed I will use a stick or mesh bag of boilies if there are tench or bream present, but if it's quite thick but still dropping to the bottom then I will use a solid bag approach as when it melts it will cause its own clear patch, I love using hemp oil in my bags as you get a flat spot on the surface when something disturbs the contents and it gives you an early warning sign that there are fish in the swim, another thing I do is watch what the locals are doing and monitor how successful they are, by this I mean if they are using bits and pieces but are only catching the odd carp then I will go the opposite



like they do on this water, so traps can be set which goes against what I have said earlier but you have to adapt and change to your angling, so it's no good smashing in kilos of bait in the margins and spooking them before they even get their heads down each situation calls for different approaches just be prepared to think outside the box and it won't take long before one of them are gracing your unhooking mat. Anyway like I said I was on my circuit of the lake and I was stood in a swim called the lawns and within seconds a carp

way and pile it in and I don't mean the odd kilo of bait now and again, sometimes this tactic is deadly and has account for plenty of carp for me but saying that your biggest tactic are your eyes, use them to scan the water for any give away signs that they are feeding and it's not always the obvious bubbles but movement in the weed etc, carp can be creatures of habit so look for patrol routes that they are using, even better if they are coming in close



popped its head out and after the fifth or sixth show I was soon back to the car loading my barrow and pushing it as fast as I could to my chosen swim, now what do I do put a couple of choddies on and hope for the best or have a lead around? I'm not one for the vastly over rated choddies and would prefer to find my spots so I had a little lead around and found a lovely

spot not far out either and well within catapult range so no beating the water to a foam with the spod, anyway the first 24 hours came and went without any action even though they were still showing but my confidence was still high and that evening I put in five kilo of bait as I was only fishing bits up to then as I didn't want to lose what carp I had in the swim, well the next morning I had a one toner which I was soon on to and playing my first carp



which after a spirited fight swung the scales round to 19lb not one of the beasts that lurked in here but it was a start and even better it showed the spot I had chosen was good, I introduced another load of bait and soon darkness was soon falling and after a cuppa I was soon falling asleep, I think it was about 1am when I had a few bleeps on my right hand rod and was slipping on my waders just in case when my alarm burst into life and my spool was emptying at a rate of knots, so I ran but didn't realise that one of the straps to my waders was caught round my foot and the ground was soon greeting

me as I fell with a thud, so commando style I was soon on my rods playing it from the floor whilst trying to sort out the tangle of legs and straps, anyway eventually I was on my feet and playing the carp through the darkness with only my head torch to guild my way, it wasn't long before it was plodding up and down the margins and to be honest it really wasn't giving me any sign of being anything other than being a small one again but it didn't matter I was truly

buzzing as the thought of two carp on my first session, so with net in hand and wading out a little as the margins were very shallow it was soon rolling on the surface which was when I realised that I had something half decent on the end but it was there to be netted so hauled it over the cord of the net and she was mine!! For the record it was an upper thirty common and to say I was over the moon would be an understatement, so with the pictures done and she gave me a right good soaking for good measure,

its times like this as I sat on my bedchair when life is so good and I was soon making a brew and cracking open the hobnob biscuits.

The lake had certainly been kind to me on my first visit and I was trying a new rig out that Lewis Read had shown me a few weeks earlier that I thought would be just the thing to use on the clearer spot on the lake of which I was fishing now, it's called the "Ronnie" rig and it's a lovely rig for low lying pop

ups and I bet you could use it for wafers and bottom baits as well, the rig did me proud and both carp were nailed in the bottom lip like they should be, plus

over my favourite baiting pattern of pop up Candies over food bait which was a bonus. This year will see me digging out my floater gear as I have heard they like to be caught off the surface and I'll be honest with you it's not the strongest point of my fishing but it certainly looks like I'll be having plenty of practise and to catch one of those bigger ones off the surface would be great and Crafty do floaters as it's all done for me and just makes my life a bit easier.

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GETTING IN TOUCH:



Slack lines or tight lines?

by Daniel Winter

Slack lines or tight lines? by Daniel Winter

Well a big thank you to everyone I think is on order first! After my last article reviewing the brilliant new Big Kipper 2 from Rod Hutchinson, I have had an amazing response. It's also that amazing response that has unfortunately landed you with me here every month bringing you more reviews and articles. So run while you can!

Forgetting all the niceties though, let's get down to business...

There are very few certainties in life. I will certainly never be skinny, you cannot eat your own head, and arsenal will never win the league under Wenger.

Unfortunately, fishing isn't one of those certainties, if it was it would be called catching. With that in mind, most likeminded fishermen are always looking for an extra edge.

Slack lines have become a must for a lot of anglers, disguising everything by laying it down on the bottom. 'Pinned' being the big word on most peoples lips these days. Fluorocarbon the line of choice, leadcore or leader materials all designed to hug the contours of the bottom to hide any sign of pressure to a wary carp. They even taper leaders now so the distance boys can really test out their brand new finger holsters whilst keeping 150 yards of

line on the deck.

Whatever happened to the good old days of tight lines and bent tips. When your bobbin was built to tell you when you had a bite, stows weren't thought about, and everyone owned a fox pod. Well, anglers found out that fish could actually see our supposedly invisible lines and by dropping them, the fish barely noticed a thing and we started to catch even the wiliest of carp.

But... yes of course there's a but! There wouldn't be an article to write if there wasn't. As fish get used to slack lines, are they working in favour or against you? And could tight lines be making a comeback?

Let's look at the pros and cons of each;

Tight lines are much better at bite indication. Carp brushing against your lines, picking up your rig, weed on your line, even undertow can all be registered back at your bite alarms to help you determine what is actually going on. It comes at a cost though. Your lines are more visible, the fish can feel them, algae sticks to your line and makes it look like tow rope, and generally doesn't make for nice viewing.

Slack lines on the other hand hide your lines. Keeping them low or on the bottom can trick carp into thinking they have a free meal or away from pressure. If it's a carp drifting under your tips or out

by your bait, you can really hide yourself from them and keep them feeding confidently and lure them into a safe sense of security. But you lose all the bite indication you gain from tight lines. Any sized fish can come along, pick up your rig, shake it around until the hook slips out, leaving your rig tangled and you without a clue what happened. Probably blaming the tangle from the cast and scratching your head looking for a new rig to use.

So what do you do? Do you risk spooking the fish and go tight, or try and hide away and rely on your rig to do the business?

Let's look a little deeper...

Bobbins – probably one of my biggest pet hates in fishing. People with flash bobbins and not using them properly. Many forget that the idea of a bobbin is to help you determine what on earth is going on out there. So why are people resting their lovely expensive stows or slug or whatever creatively named bobbin they have, on the floor? I

t's beyond me! What you're effectively doing is turning your bobbin into a line guide. Its only use in life is guiding the line through the roller of your bite alarm when you get a take.



The bobbins that I think are perfect, and have been for years, are the old mk2 fox swingers. I know I know, they are a bit ‘euro trashy’ these days, but they seem to be a long forgotten but still quality bit of kit. In a day and age where we go looking for the lightest bobbins on the market, these still get overlooked! For those that remember them, they are a typical swing arm bobbin but these have a sliding weight and the key to its lightness is how far you can slide that weight. When you slide it as far back as possible, it sits the weight under the bite alarm nearly and that makes the swinger neutrally buoyant. So at the business where your line is held it literally weighs nothing. So it weighs less than anything you can buy on the market. And that sliding weight has more than that as its use. If there’s a chop on the water I will slide the weight down a touch to reduce the wave action from moving my line too much,

or in high winds I will slide it down to avoid my bite alarms going off constantly. My main reason for using them is their sensitivity. No matter what you do with your lines you can use this bobbin to work in your favour all the time. I use semi slack most of the time and I can adjust my weight to lean on my line and keep me in contact to my lead. A small thing with big results! I was only speaking about this the other day at how many fish I’ve picked up from hitting small movements or single beeps. Being in contact with your end tackle is such a key to learning what’s going on



and how to adjust and get it right. Getting away from bobbins, something I’ve learned, more so in the last few seasons, is how to recognise the right swims, spots and times to use tight or slack lines. There is a little bit of a science to it. Every lake or pit is different, no swim is the same and we have to adapt to the circumstances, lines included. At first I always look to set up to fish tight every time, and slacken my lines down according to situation. One of the big factors I look at is line weight and colour. I use a semi see through grey line, ‘synchro xt’ to be exact. I use it in 18lb, and the reason behind it is simple. Grey blends into everything very well. Better than greens in my opinion. Green stands out on light silt or sand and over gravel. Grey breaks up a lot better, and in 18lb I can sink it fairly well but still looks decent fished tight, so I get the best of both. The next thing I look at when approaching a swim is water clarity

The clearer the water, the more likely I am to trying to hide my lines. But that doesn’t mean I drop them on the deck as soon as I see a gin clear lake. A lot of the time I’m simply looking to get the line down purely at the business end. I don’t like to drop them down too far as I like to try and pick up a few liners and see if I can get an idea of what happening out



there. Fishing for liners some might call it. I also love snag fishing, and the rule is to fish tight lines, but don’t be scared to drop a little slack at the right times. If you’re close to your rod and you know the snag fairly well or can see what’s hidden beneath the surface, give yourself an edge by hiding your line and get them confident. The next thing to think about is weed. Are you on it? Next to it? Or in a hole? Generally

speaking I think it’s best to slacken off a little whilst on weed just to remove any risk of pulling your rig into the thick of it. But also bear in mind when the weed is up, your mainline for the most part will be kissing the top of the weed so if you feel confident too, tighten up, it won’t notice that much. If your fishing in a hole, or lows in the weed, it can come

down to personal preference, but in my opinion I think semi slack is the way forward. I don’t want a run and to bring a ball of weed in so I want the best chance of indication. Equally I don’t want a tight line as the line lay will be shocking dropping into a hole in the weed. Also think about depth, if your fishing in 18feet of water, it’s going to be quite some time and a lot of line off the spool to get it pinned to the deck.

Right, now hopefully you can walk away from this article a little more insight into why you’re doing what you’re doing. Next month I’ve got some new gear from Rod Hutchinson to show you! Yep they loved my review so much they asked for me to do a few more. Not bad for a guy writing about getting a new bed chair without any real permission. Now trust

me it won’t be me getting all excited and saying how great everything is, the new rods have some tough competition next to my Freespirits. How will they fair?

Catch up with me next month and see!

‘Gone fishing’

Daniel Winter



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*Living The Dream
by Keith Moors.*



Popeye

Chapter 1.

Living The Dream by Keith Moors.

Chapter 1.

This is not an account of a fishing trip to France, nor is it just the story of a successful capture of a big fish.

This is my attempt to diarize the dramas involved in a series of major changes to my, and my families', lives which lead to a whole new set of challenges.



My First Carp

My wife and I were both born in south east Kent in November 1948, and had spent our entire lives, since getting married in 1967, bringing up our three wonderful daughters. Now they all had their own families and we felt that we could take some time to follow our own path before we became too old to even consider it.

As at the 1st October 2001, I had just finished talking on the phone to Ian (Chilly) Chilcott and the conversation revolved around my dream to sell up in England and buy a house in France with its own lake.

Chilly's comment was simply "Live your dreams mate" to which he then added that his philosophy on life was to only have regrets for what he had done but to try never to regret not being brave enough to actually do something.

To paint a complete picture let me take you back to the winter of 2000.

I had had a fairly successful decade during the nineties, catching several thirties and culminating in November 1996, in catching "Popeye" from the Oxford Manor at 40lb 2oz which was the first ever recorded Oxfordshire "Forty". This led to the complex becoming very busy and me needing to find quieter venues



Popeye

Anyway in late 2000 I had just completed my most successful season's fishing in England, catching 33 "Twenties", 14 "Thirties" up to 39lb 6oz and my second "Forty" at a PB of 40lb 8oz. The two largest (39 & 40) were both caught in the same afternoon so easily made my best brace. I would add that I did not submit the Forty to any of the "big fish lists" as I had at long last realised that I now fished purely for myself and not to prove anything to anyone else.

Anyway, I ended the year with wonderful memories but as a landscaper, winter is not necessarily the best time of year for quantity nor quality of work, nor does the weather make for perfect working conditions. The fact that you are proud to have designed and are now constructing a major garden feature, possibly a pond, is difficult to focus on while the rain runs down your back and your hands are completely numb.

Funny to think that those kinds of conditions don't seem to matter when you're fishing. However, after many, many years of dreaming of owning my own lake in England and gradually getting more and more fed up with the mud and cold as well as beginning to realise that I would need around a million pounds sitting in a bank somewhere, I decided that France might offer an option.

I waited for a suitable opportunity during a conversation with my wonderful wife Jan to slip in the simple suggestion that "you can get a lot of house in France for your money."

Her immediate reaction of "yes it would be nice wouldn't it but can we afford a second property?" left me completely gob smacked.

Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that she would even consider the idea but, by thinking quickly on my feet, I suggested that we should go to a "French property exhibition" which, coincidentally, was about to be held at Olympia.

By the time that we had attended the exhibition I had prepared a complete business plan to show the possibilities of running a carp fishery and to give us some idea of the budget we would need to work to, how much we would need to pay a bailiff and the approximate mortgage that we would be likely to need.

My plans were completely turned on their heads when this wonderful woman suggested that we should run the place ourselves and reduce

our costs by selling up in England and moving to France lock stock and barrel.

More detail was needed to ensure that what we were thinking wasn't just a pipedream that would prove to be unobtainable. We telephoned every estate agent that we could find in "French property news" and "Living France" and we began to receive literally hundreds of property details through our letter box.

We sifted through these to remove any with a small pond or just river frontage. It amazed me how estate agents send you everything they've got even though it bears absolutely no resemblance to the type of property that you have requested.



The Seventies

Anyway, the reams of paper were thinned down until we were convinced that our dream could be achieved. But then came the time to break the news to our daughters and our parents.

Our kids were brilliant. All our three daughters were married and settled into their own homes and all of them agreed that we should go for it, painting images of long Summer family holidays together. My youngest daughter Sharon, even suggested that we may need some help with renovations etc. and that she and her husband would be prepared to move to France to help once we had settled in.

Next came the visits to our parents. Jan's Mum and Dad lived near Dover in Kent, where both Jan and I were born and, indeed, where we met on 17th October 1966 on a blind date arranged by my cousin. A trip before Christmas, to break the news, was met with muted encouragement tinged with us feeling that they didn't really believe that we were daft enough to carry out our plans.

Jan's brother and sister were fully behind us so that just left me to face

my mum. Being an only child I knew that this may be tricky.

Dad had died in November 1997 after suffering for five years following a smoking related stroke which had left him severely handicapped and wheelchair bound.

Shortly before he died we had moved them to Bicester to be able to see more of them and to help where possible. Now we were suggesting that we would be moving to another country and we may as well be going to the moon.

Mum actually accepted the idea reasonably well and we asked her to consider whether she would be prepared to move to France with us. This she promised to do and our life briefly returned to as close to normal as our life has ever been.

I use the word briefly because two days before Christmas 2000 Mum was told that the cancer, for which she had received treatment in 1998, had returned with a vengeance and she now also had a secondary spread to her lungs for which there was no further treatment.

Happy Christmas? Obviously she came everywhere with us over Christmas and our plans, in fact our entire lives, were put on hold until we discovered what was to happen next.

In fact, what happened next was the most stressful couple of months of my entire fifty-two years.

Jan's Dad, Laury Sheene (cousin of Barry Sheene's father), had been a Japanese prisoner of war and was the bravest man that I had ever met. Because of his ill treatment in Changi prison he developed severe diabetes and was forced to have both legs amputated to reduce the toxins in the blood which was causing gangrene to set in. I will just add here that he chose to have the operation carried out while still conscious and simply by using an epidural, which is the system used by women during child birth.

When I questioned his reasons for this decision he told me that he was worried that if he was fully anaesthetized he might not wake up and, besides which, he had been forced to help cut off one of his fellow inmates legs while adding "and he only had a stick of bamboo to chew on".

Anyway, shortly after Christmas, he was suddenly rushed in to Margate hospital with complications. As soon as we heard this we thrashed down the motorway system from Bicester to Margate to see for ourselves how bad things were.

Luckily Jan was able to sit and talk to her Dad for one last time before he died in the early hours of the following morning.

From then on my mum's illness took hold very quickly and her health declined just as quick. We moved her into our house at Field Cottage but I am ashamed to admit that I found it a major struggle to become a nurse to my own Mum.

After everything that our parents do for us when we are children you would expect that it should be easy to return the favour but that is not how I experienced it and I just pray that she didn't think that I found it difficult because I didn't love her because I did then and I still do now. Luckily for me Jan had been an auxiliary nurse and she simply took over and relieved me of any of the less savory duties. In fairness, our doctor had noticed that I was struggling and he arranged for Mum to be moved into a private room at the local hospital. She remained there and seemed as happy as we could wish for, for the last two weeks of her life. Even this period was to see another twist for which we were unprepared. Obviously we were aware that Mum's life was coming to a rapid end. During all of this my eldest daughter, Teresa, was in the latter stages of her pregnancy with her third child.

Each of us kidded ourselves that we were ready and would cope. After all, nothing could be worse than having to sit and hold my Dad's hand as he died ... could it?



Our Daughters

We promised each of our daughters that we would phone them the minute that their Nan died. Now Jan is a late night person whereas I prefer the early mornings, but once Jan is asleep she loves to be left undisturbed until at least mid-morning, unless of course she has work or an appointment.

With this in mind it was extremely strange for her to wake me up at 3.00 am on the morning of 1st May 2001 with the words: "I'm just going to phone the hospital".

To this day I do not and will never understand what on earth made her wake up at that ungodly hour to make that phone call but she did.

She had a brief conversation with Mum's nurse who was apparently just about to phone us to suggest that we should get to the hospital because "things didn't look too good". By the time we had dressed hurriedly and driven the short distance to the hospital, we were five minutes too late and Mum had died in her sleep.

A lot of coughing and swallowing hard as well as pretending that I had something in my eye followed and then came the task of telling our daughters. Our middle daughter Michelle took it quite calmly and said all the right things to reassure us but I suspect that her husband Scott spent a lot of time with her to get her through the next few hours. Our youngest, Sharon, was totally distraught and it was all that we could do to persuade her not to drive over to meet us there and then.

The next phone call led to even more surprises. We phoned our eldest, Teresa, only to have the call answered by her mother-in law who informed us that at 4.00 am Teresa had been collected by ambulance and taken to the John Radcliffe maternity hospital. We left my mum's room, drove to Oxford, and our next visit was to welcome our latest granddaughter to the world.

Within nine hours I had lost my Mum and gained a beautiful granddaughter. Very appropriately her name is Paige and I prayed that this would herald the opening of a new page in the story of our lives.

My emotions were in turmoil and I didn't know whether I was on my backside or my elbow but now we needed a new focus and I couldn't think of anything better to focus on than our move to France.



Once we had laid my Mum and Jan's Dad to rest we focused properly on our planned move. Our house went on the market in June and the valuation suggested that we would have more money at our disposal than we had originally expected.

I tried to control my excitement by telling everyone that it was only worth what someone would pay for it but nevertheless we couldn't resist a few trips to different areas of France,

to try to narrow down the search to specific regions so that we knew which we would be prepared to live in.

Southern Champagne looked good, but Burgundy with its river Saone was our favourite.

In fact, we were so certain about our plans that we decided to put together a proper budget. We knew the theoretical value of our house and how much the estate agents would be taking so I phoned Pickfords to get a quote for moving us to "central France" and then contacted a solicitor who specialised in European purchases.

I explained what we were searching for and my outline was basically a house with at least a ten-acre lake. The lady that I was talking to immediately gave me the telephone number of an estate agent in Macon. Apparently her boss had been in Macon the previous week, to sign for her new holiday home, when they had received a phone call from a Swiss couple who had a property with several acres of land and a 6-hectare lake.

I phoned immediately and arranged to see the property that weekend. As soon as I saw "Etang du Roivre" I fell in love with everything about it - the solitude, tranquility, wildlife, everything that I could possibly want and, to cap it all, the house was built as part of the dam wall.

Imagine being able to wake up and look at your own lake from your bedroom window. The problem was that our house had not yet sold and there was no way that I could risk making an offer until I had the ten percent deposit. It was heart-breaking because Jan fell in love with the house (as long as I bought her a new fitted kitchen) with its pine vaulted ceilings and huge open fire.

We drove away after telling the owners that we loved it but knowing that it would sell long before we would be ready to make an offer. At least we now knew the "bench mark" to aim at for our dream property.

We looked at many other places some of which had good sized lakes but you didn't own the land all around it and others which were relatively newly dug and stream fed so night fishing was not allowed.

It was exceptionally frustrating to think that you owned the entire property but you weren't allowed to night fish in your own garden.

We decided that the best course of action was to wait for our house to sell before making any more ventures into France. Once we had the money fairly secure then we could start serious excursions.

Unfortunately, we soon received the letter to say that the Burgundy property was now under offer so that one could be deleted from our list. My English fishing trips had been drastically reduced because of the effort needed to search for our future and I only managed three night sessions, to Linear Fisheries' "Guy's lakes" complex and my total catches only included two thirties at 31lb 6oz and a 32lb from Gaunt's using Richworth Multiplex. However, my thoughts were firmly on owning and fishing my own lake as soon as possible.



During the summer our house came under offer and then the purchasers found that their own house wasn't worth what they needed so they were forced

to pull out. Back on the market and more stress and it began to feel that the dream was slipping away. Suddenly another offer was received and the buyers informed us that they wanted to target a November completion which would suit us.

With new hope we planned a trip to Combours in Brittany for 9th October to view a farm with three lakes consisting of 2.5 acres, 7.5 acres and 24 acres. The sales details stated that night fishing was granted and the lakes were already stocked with very large carp. It also had several buildings but all were in need of major renovation except for one cottage which could be made habitable very easily. As Jan put it: “at least we will end up with exactly the home that we want”. I couldn’t ask for more support from my wife. Wonderful!

My closest group of fishing friends were aware that we would eventually be moving to France whether it be to Combours or into rented accommodation while we completed our searches and a “farewell weekend” was arranged for the weekend of 19th and 20th October 2001. The venue was to be the “Island” area of Linear’s St John’s lake.

In short I sat and watched the carp fizzing in front of the house.



Jan fell in love with the place and, despite our solicitor’s warning not to “sign anything” we made an offer which was accepted and we signed the compromise de vente (sale agreement) there and then. We drove back up the A6 like a couple of excited kids. Kids who had just agreed to buy “Etang du Roivre” (the lake of the oak forest).

Realisation slowly dawned that we had been very fortunate to buy a three-bedroom house on the banks of its own fifteen-acre lake. In all we were the new owners of 33 acres of Burgundy countryside. We were also lucky that it was over 300 years old and therefore also avoided the rules concerning night fishing.

It had originally been a carp pond to provide easy food for the “peasants” and would have been emptied every two years so had built-in sluice gates and fish traps. Although we were given tales of big carp we would have bought it if it had been empty, it was so beautiful. We knew that we were faced with the task of emptying the lake to take stock of the numbers of carp and other species and to work out bio-mass figures in order to give the carp room to develop and grow. We were given details of recent stockings: 250 carp with 50 of these being “large” carp of 15 kg (32 lb) plus. We were shown photographs of some of these fish and for the rest of the month I sat dreaming about large “unknown” monsters swimming around in my own lake. Our plan was always to provide holidays which included breakfast and evening meals and to this end we needed to construct a dining lodge as well as toilets and shower facilities. I sat and sketched the lake over and over trying to get ideas of where to cut the swims and how to try and improve the “wildness” of the place. When we bought it, it was regularly flailed flat to allow the owners to sit on the dam wall and see the entire area of lake bank. This was not my choice as I prefer each swim to have its own little piece of the world and be almost totally unaware of the next, or any other, swim.

The farewell weekend at Linear Fisheries took place without anyone dying and between 15 of us we managed to consume two sheep as well as most of Tesco food and drink supplies. We also used four boilies, each of which produced fish. A 16lb mirror to Ron Buss, 21lb and 28lb 9oz mirrors to Adam Penning, and I managed a 23lb 12oz mirror. It was a superb weekend and Ron kept everyone in stitches with his humorous stories about friends and family. It seemed strange that it may be the last time that I fished with and maybe the last time that I would see some of the people who had become part of my carp angling life.

Until next month....

Keith.

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More than “just fishing”
by Emma Smith

On the Whole, I don't tend to go in for long fishing sessions as such, especially during the summer months. Usually, it's just an overnighter here and there, between work days and days off or, charity/social events. This year, being no exception.

The beginning of the summer (7th-9th July) allowed me to join in with helping to Marshall a charity event at Suffolk waterpark – part of Steve Vigar exceptional organising of his “Fishathon series” to help raise money and awareness for Scotty’s Little Soldiers – a charity held dear to him since they were founded in 2010 by Nikki Scott. (Further details of the charity can be found on their website

www.scottyslittlesoldiers.co.uk) The event started with the obligatory drawing of pegs - anglers were allowed to get spots marked up in their chosen swims, ready for baiting and casting at midday. Being a part of the Marshalling team, Jack and I plotted up in one of the closed swims along the middle of the spit of the lake. This enabled us to easily get to over half of the competing anglers easily for weight confirmations. To say I was gutted not to even have a float rod with me, was an understatement – there were so many silverfish in front of our marshall swim it was crazy! A massive school-girl error which I will not make

next time! The event went well from a variety of different species being banked including roach, bream pike and carp from a variety of different swims. The winning catch fell to AMF1 bait company owner Adrian Fytche being in the form of a known fish called “Nelson” at 30lb 2oz. Although the weather was stifling hot at times; it was nice to see fish being banked from all around



the lake. As the vibe usually takes on a charity match, the atmosphere around the lake was friendly and upbeat. The rods were reeled in on the Friday evening for a social barbeque and an “evening’s musical entertainment” supplied by none other than DJ Derrek “The Don” Ritchie, which went on till the small hours of Saturday morning! To complement the fishing, Suffolk water park also held an events day where stalls were put up from supporting tackle companies and local traders as well as talks and Q&A sessions held with the

likes of Derek Ritchie, Joe Turnbull, Alan Blair and Lee Jackson. All in all, the event raised in excess of £8.5k for the charity - but more than that, it helped to raise the awareness for Scotty’s Little soldiers to even more people that might, in turn, be able to help in some other way too... My second big trip away for the summer was to the iconic Wraybury North Lake in August, as part of a “team

social” for Darren Bostocks Carp Bait Solutions bait company. As CBS is predominantly a northwest based company, so are many of their team and customers, so many had over 3 hours’ drive to the venue. Most pegs were already sorted out by the socials organizer Guy Powell so everyone knew within a little where they were heading before they got there The venue is set amongst a historic complex of waters to the west of London and the M25 – it is also part of the flightpath to Heathrow

which, in itself gives character to the set-up. All lakes on the complex are within the secure confines of large electronic gates and well landscaped, shingled driveways and carparks. Also on-site are well-maintained toilet and shower facilities.



The first 24hrs were slow going, with the weather hot and sunny, air pressure was high and the fish weren’t really showing themselves or giving away much. The social kicked off with an unexpected pike that evening. We spent most of the afternoon / evening looking around the swims - plumbing around, trying to find holes amongst the weed to fish to. As a result, Jack and I didn’t actually get our rods out until almost dark. Then, in the early hours, Saturday morning an early wake-up call for Barry Swift with a PB tench. The weather did change a little in our favour, a little more cloud cover and more activity from the fish throughout the day made everything feel a little more hopeful. CBS team member Adam Arathoon was next to bank with a lovely looking fully scaled mirror,

weighing 23lb. The fish were showing around most of the lake throughout the day, but no one else managing to bank any that day, getting caught out by the weed and snags. Jack and I were in a double swim, Jack on the left, chose casting at distance in a cross wind to a deep silty area by the island. I opted for the right of the swim where albeit still a reasonable distance, I had the side wind to my advantage to hit a couple of spots. My 3rd rod, I chose to keep relatively close as fish were showing in front of peoples’ pegs (right under the rod tips on some) so I spent half an hour just



helping to rake a small patch, nothing massive or blatant - just enough of a clearing to help with presentation and line lay. That following night felt really good for a fish, I was happy with baiting and the presentation of where our rigs had been placed. We had one awesome sunset which I think most anglers relished in getting some of “those” scenic shots, before settling

down for the night. A few more bites during the night and a call out to the bailiff just before light, to help go out in the boat allowed some more fish be banked and photographed before the socials end for Ethen, Jamie, Jack and CBS Team member Ryan Richardson Being such a long journey for many, some anglers chose to stay on for an extra night, which proved fruitful. With fewer lines in the water, the fish became more confident and as such some of the bigger fish graced the bank including 32lb old scaley mirror for Barry Swift and an awesome, thick set 36lb8oz

common for another CBS team member Jason Dodd. Jason really didn’t want to leave, and I’m sure had he got away with it, he would still be there now! He had an awesome last day, not just banking that common, but also having another stocky common and a mint “black as ya hat” linear before leaving. It was certainly a session to remember for him!

True to form, the socials never seem to last long enough and I really didn't want to pack up, but it was great to see so many people that I speak to on Facebook, finally meeting them face-to-face, and also meeting some new friends along the way. Unfortunately, no Wraysbury fish for me on this session, but it was great to see the fish that did grace the bank for others. And writing this just makes me more determined to get back over there and try again sometime, and maybe, just maybe....

Emma.



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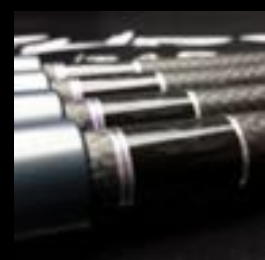
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WHAT WORKS FOR ME

BY CHRIS KIRK



The decision was made to do a 48hr session at Baden hall on Quarry lake after much discussion on the journey back from France with my travelling pal Jimmy Mather, so we booked on with only a fortnight to wait. Being my first visit I found out as much as possible about the place, Google Earth, compass baring etc and kept an eye on the forecast for our 48hrs. We arrived at the lake with a brisk south/east wind and two thirds of the pegs taken so we parked up and had a walk around. There was plenty of visible weed and you could see the odd fish swimming close in as the water was crystal clear. A couple of fish had been out the night before and even with a cool wind it looked positive. We decided to fish pegs 3 and 4 which were quite central to the lake. I dropped into 4 and set up just a lead on the marker rod. After a good cast about feeling the drop and then pulling back two to three yards each time it became apparent there was plenty of weed about with clear areas which thinned out as you went further. Time for a brew then. A couple of fish had shown at about 70yrd and further where it was clearer so I went for a solid bag on 1 rod at that distance and a single pop-up on the other which I could move about if fish showed within my area. Nothing happened till the following evening when the solid bag was away which resulted in a 23lb mirror after a battle through the weed, my first Quarry pool carp, very happy. After some pics and the hook hold treated back she went. Solid bag back on and wrapped up back in the area it went.



Just before dark a few fish were showing in the middle so I put the single pop-up on them about 100m and I was set for the night. At 1am the single popup rod sounded a few tones, crocs on quick I lifted into a dead weight which pulled back hard in and out of the weed then it went solid. I kept steady pressure on it and gradually the weed gave way and the fish came closer Jimmy slipped the net under it. Yes.! He said "it's a 30plus pal" so I was well pleased. We weighed her and she went 42lb11oz wow.! My new English pb. Roy the head bailiff was next peg and he got up and did the pics for me then back she went, wonderful.! Back out went the single and I tried to get some kip... lol.

It was 3 weeks before we were back down and the place was half covered with weed. I fished peg 9 with Jimmy in 8 after walking around and seeing fish towards middle. The wind was due to change and blow towards us, sounds like a plan . Finding a clear area on the edge of a visible weed bed I cast 15 medium spombs of hemp/corn/14mm Retro baits MG and fished two rods on it baited with 12mm Kustom8 popups on multi-rigs with inline leads drop off style baiting up after any activity with six medium spombs. Action was steady resulting in three takes, two landed and one lost which felt big (they always do) weighing in at 25lb and 27lb

27lb both commons.

The weeks had passed by and at last I found myself heading down to my syndicate lake full of excitement and confidence. R.H. Fisheries The Avenue holds an incredible stock of big fish which can be very hard to tempt. On arrival I got my bucket an off I went for a walk around. There were a few lads on, plenty of space though and after talking to them learned a few lumps to 40lb had come out the day before. Wind was westerly into peg 3 ‘the steps’ and that’s where I set up. Fish had also been seen in this area. After leading around depth was very even at around 7ft with a bar at 48m coming to 3ft in depth on the top. Five spombs on the top of it and the same to the left but at the base of the bar. Bait was Retro baits MG 14mm whole and broken plus some maize for the visual. Rigs were multi-rigs baited with 14mm popups to inline leads. I sat back and took in my surroundings, what a beautiful lake, immaculately kept and no sound except that of nature... a magical place to be. Nothing happened that afternoon apart from the odd liner then a fish crashed down my left hand margin. Straight away I moved the left rod onto it. Thirty minutes later as I was watching the rod tips the left one bent round and line was ticking off. Lifting into it, it powered off I was at full tension but couldn’t turn it or gain any line for that matter. It surfaced over the bar then dived an in a second I was cut off. Devastated...! Not one to dwell I set back up and was angling with 2 rods again ready for the night with both spots topped up with another five spombs each. Morning came and went then at 2pm the rod on the bar was away. What a scrap it fought hard all the way in and this time in the net she went. On the scales at 37lb11oz! My first Avenue carp. What a beauty, well happy and cannot wait to get back down.

Rigs.
For ninety percent of the time I’ll have my multi-rig on at least one rod. Always tied in the same mechanics i.e. loop size/height of popup, size of ‘D’, swivel loop size. The only thing I alter is the length to suit substrate harder/ clean=shorter and softer/weed=longer. The popup I balance critically, the absolute minimum amount of putty to just hold it down. So it just delicately comes to rest pushed out from the lead every time it’s cast in. I’ve never had one tangle yet. Leads are always inline as its instant resistance/indication they provide. You know what they say? If it isn’t broken, don’t try and fix it. Until next time, take care.
Chris.

“On the scales at 37lb11oz! My first Avenue carp. What a beauty”





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D-A-M

Well! What an August we have had! I hope everyone is enjoying the sun.

This month's question has come in bang on time as I hope every angler is carrying their floater fishing gear. The question is from Mark Roberts. "Hello guys, I am struggling with my surface fishing. I can see them on top but I can't seem to get them feeding properly and I am missing most of my takes. Am I going in too soon with a baited hook perhaps? And would it make a difference if I used a hook length longer than 3 foot? Any help would be greatly appreciated, thanks.'

Hi Mark, this is why most carp anglers lose their hair at this time of year! It is the most frustrating form of carp fishing. I start by feeding different size dog and cat biscuits, just enough small ones to gain confidence but not to preoccupy the fish with feeding on the small biscuits. I always slip my hook bait when the standard size biscuits are being taken readily.



As for hook link, 3-4 foot is a good start. I would always use the lightest breaking strain that I could get away with. Also I would use the smallest hook in a size 8 or 10. If this problem is still occurring my next port of call would be to lengthen the hook link to 5 foot, again in the lightest breaking strain and small hook. As a rule of thumb I would always go longer rather than shorter.



As for hook baits, I like to use a barrel shaped pop up. What I do is cut them in half and cut a small V into the bottom and attach the pop up to the hook with a pellet band. I would also add a small, 3 mm in length, silicone tube 0.75 over the eye. This helps to keep the hook link straight and helps with the hooking.

I hope this improves your floater fishing and thank you Mark for your question.

Until next time be lucky and keep the questions coming in

Paul

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Have you ever questioned their intelligence? By Paula Marriott



Last weekend I visited my local fishery, a place I've fished for many years. I've spend hundreds of hours on those beautiful lakes, thinking about life and all those other things Anglers think about.

You've just placed what you think is the perfect trap. You're fishing your most favourite tactic, and chosen a top quality bait that Dave told you last week caught him a corker on this exact same spot. Then of course ten minutes' pass and you haven't had a single bleep on those brand new bite-alarms and the doubt starts to creep in. Are my hooks tangled up around my lead? Surely it can't be because you've placed so many anti-tangle devices between you and that fish, rig tubing, anti-tangle sleeve, shrink tubing, 'o' rig rings, quick change swivel (deep breath as I take in more oxygen), not to mention that 3oz lead. So that's settled, the presentation is perfect. But is it?

Then another five minutes' pass and you wonder 'is my hook being sucked up and spat out?' You've just had a single bleep, not to worry though, it was only a 'line knock', give it five minutes and reel it in.

This is exactly what happened to me, only I don't put all that tackle between me and a fish, I use a Stone which effectively immediately disappears the second it settles on the bottom, and as an Engineer, science tell me that "less is more". That is, less tackle = more fish on the bank. I use a small 1oz Stone (sometimes less if I'm lucky!) when fishing a margin.

Underneath that is my three-and-a-half-inch stumpy rig that I coil into the method mix that I wrap my Stone with, no need for a method feeder here. As an extra measure I place a strip off a PVA nugget around my hook that is just visible below that ball of method. What could possibly go wrong?



I personally don't mind the odd bleep; in my mind it tells me that my bait is beautifully positioned. I've seen the YouTube videos and know that carp suck up and spit out hook-baits all the time. So called 'doing' discerning anglers on every lake in every country. Any second now though, one of those beauties will feel that hook and take off at a rate of knots, and the hook will take a stronghold in their bottom lip. At least, that's what is supposed to happen right?

So, five minutes has passed and it's time to reel in. As I lift my rod I feel a bit of resistance and a twig starts to break the surface of the water. 'Great! I've been snagged the whole time'. Know that feeling? Then I felt a pull and once the twig had cleared the surface, I saw it. A tench, five minutes earlier I'd hooked into a tench which caused a single bleep and somehow managed to tangle around a small twig before lying dormant and stealth for FIVE whole minutes!

I've never really questioned the intelligence of our quarry really, but this incident will remain firmly in my mind and never again will I ignore those single bleeps. Well, maybe in the middle of a freezing cold December night. This is a picture of that clever little green monster. Monster indeed I say.

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A photograph of a serene lake with a large, light-colored house and lush green trees in the background. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding landscape.

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Two side-by-side photographs of anglers. The left photo shows a man in a green jacket holding a large carp. The right photo shows a man holding a large carp with a yellow lure in its mouth.

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**Reviewed by Talking Carps
Brian Dixon**



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D-fender3 carp rods from MADcarp

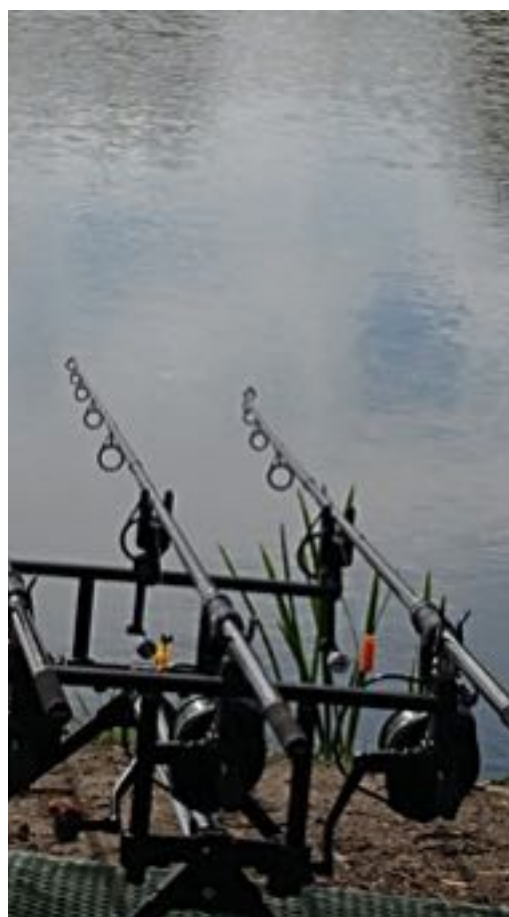
As we have mentioned previously, the company D.A.M are making waves and returning to the fishing scene they once ruled a few years ago.

So this month we will take a quick look at one of the carp rods they have to offer you. I picked up a set of the D-Fender 3 rods, and as I don't tend to fish huge waters much anymore I opted for the 12' 2.75lb test curve.

Now the first thing I noticed when unwrapping these was the 50mm butt ring they have put onto these third generation rods especially for the UK market. Surprising to see a 50 mm butt ring on an entry level rod but hey, I will take it. They are made from the classic 24T carbon that is found in all good manufacturers factories so we know there will be no issues there. This model offers a new, and very pleasing on the eye, matt black finish with just a hint of carbon weave pattern and graphics above the reel seat to finish it off. Even the whippings are entirely matt black so this rod should please all you guys out there with your entire matt black set ups!! They feature a slim grip handle and the MADcarp logo butt plug.

Bank test: First impressions... as expected, everything was spot on. Beautifully put together with no signs of poor

whipping or eye alignment. The MADcarp reels were fitted, rigs were tied on and away we go. Now after all these years of fishing I have learnt that some people can have a habit of showing their gear "too much respect" and that's fair enough when you've just forked out your hard earned wages on some new tackle, but when it comes to rods I find there only one way to test them... lead on, bail arm opened, arms extended.... and whack it out!! You expect these things to bend fully if you get a carp on so let's bend them the opposite way to make sure they are up to the job....and they are. First rod had a 3oz lead on a lead clip and flew towards far bank. Second rod had a medium method feeder



packed with the usual and again flew out easily to the far bank about 85 yards away. The third rod was loaded with a pva bag, packed very tightly and hit it out hard..... no worries whatsoever. Would I recommend these rods? For the money absolutely I would. They look very very nice in the matt black finish, and the 50 mm butt ring is a nice added bonus. They are more than capable of putting your lead and rig anywhere you want it to go, but most importantly they will bring in your fish too.

Offering a smooth through action, they are as comfortable battling an angry carp at distance as they are fishing the margins under your feet.

So, in all, a very good all round carp rod for those who cannot spend a fortune. So until I manage to break one, which I cannot see happening, they get 2 thumbs up from me. Well done D.A.M. and the MADcarp team.

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Competition time folks!

We all love a competition don't we? Of course we do...and this month we have a great giveaway from our friends at Bank Tackle company where we will have not one, but two.... YES, TWO winners this issue.

To be entered into the winners' pot simply go to our Talking Carp Facebook page and find the answers post and tell us which page the Bank Tackle advert can be found in this issue... it's that simple.

Winners will be picked at random as always... and this time the FIRST name pulled out will receive a voucher for £20 to spend at Bank Tackle and the SECOND name pulled out of the hat will receive a £10 voucher to spend with Bank Tackle.

Good luck everyone.

Please visit our website www.banktackle.co.uk

CATCH REPORTS



Just done a 36hr session on my local water ended up having 13 bites landing 10 of them 9 carp to 2 x 20lb +and 1 catfish. Everything caught on Natures Baits 18mm Alpha boilies. 11 bite came from 1 rod 18 inches from the tree line! best regards Andy

Andy
Hyden







Scott Horrocks
26lb 10oz



Wes
20lb 15oz



Shane Newton took a trip up to Hillside Fishery, Burnley and on his first visit to the newly opened Pad lake he was rewarded with a personal best grass carp weighing in at a healthy 15lb 2 oz. A single white pop up on a multirig proving this carps' downfall when Shane struck at just a single bleep on his alarm. Well done Shane.



Paula Marriot



When I arrived at Gold Lake I was super excited and full of hope. I had heard good things about the venue now run by Advanced Angling and had watched a few features filmed there. I told myself (and others) that this would be where I pick up my PB. It was a pretty slow start, but one of the many things I love about fishing is that renewed sense of hope you feel after every cast. You've picked your spot, chosen your bait and in my case, said a little prayer to the Carp Gods.

Days passed and nothing had really happened for me. My Pallatrax team mates had landed a few nice fish, but it seemed that this wasn't to be my time after all. It was 0930, my bivvy was down and my barrow was loaded. Reeling in my rods was all that was left to do. I was so engrossed in packing up that I almost didn't hear that sweet sound of the bite alarm, my oppo Rich Shaw had to alert me to the screaming reel. I picked up the rod and felt the lump on the end, I knew immediately that it was going to smash my PB, I could feel it!

After a couple of minutes I had it in the net, well actually, the boss landed it for me. Simon Pomeroy had calmly talked me through bringing it in. This beautiful kipper was caught on the Stonze System, with a stumpy 3.5 inch rig and a snowman made of Jungle flavoured, 10mm pop-up Squabs. The stone was wrapped in Bloodworm and Maggot crush method, with a handful of water flea for added natural nutrients.

It was the perfect end to a wonderful few days on the bank with my mates, the place where memories are made.

Shane Newton



Stuart Mellors is having a very healthy run of carp right now as he bags up doing just overnights with reports of 23.08, 25.08 and a 28.08. Also had 2 x doubles

The session before which was a few weeks ago Stuart had also 5 1 double 2x20s and a 33.12 both on overnights caught on a new prototype from Mainline bait .Keep up the good work Stuart !



Thankyou for reading

The Talking Carp Team

Remember to Click the button