

A man with a beard, wearing a green t-shirt and a bucket hat with sunglasses on top, is kneeling outdoors and holding a large, dark-colored carp. The background is a lush green field.

Talking Carp Magazine

Issue 40
June 2019

Inside ...

Exclusive.. A chat with.... Oli Davies
All new Bailiff Tails

Scott Grant, Andrew Murray, Gary Lowe
Plus Much more inc. Huge catch reports



deeper



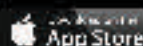
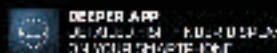
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Hello... and welcome.

Hello.... And welcome.

Issue 40!!! And rolling along beautifully....

Well, it is June at last. Hopefully the carp have finished getting their sexy on as you read this and normal service resumes. Well, we say normal but for some it can be the hardest time of the year coming up when carp seem to shut up shop and somehow evade capture until the winter feed approaches!! A strange time indeed.

However, for those out there fishing it is also that time of year when zigs and surface fishing is at its best... watching the carp slurp down those dog biscuits, nudging your hookbait away then slurping down a load more... frustrating times, but when it goes... IT GOES!! All hell breaks loose, and it is GAME ON!! Good times huh?

So, if you get a spare day, half day, even just a lunch hour, leave all your kit behind and just grab a rod, reel, net, mat and a pouch of biscuits and go get them off the top... if you haven't tried it you are in for a treat. Keep those catch reports coming in!! And enjoy another bumper issue of Talking Carp... Contact us at :-

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Team Talking Carp

Inside This Month -

Cover shot - Oli Davies

ARTICLES - from page 5

A chat with... Oli Davies - **Talking Carp**

Bayeswater Syndicate - **scott grant**

My BCC Ladies Pairs Final - **Paula Marriott**

Carp fishing.... Is it The Pits pt 2 - **Andrew Murray**

Oh to be a carp angler - **Dan Winter**

When It All Went Right - **Gary Milky Lowe**

Where It All Began - **Kevin Beaumont**

British Carp Cups - **Mick & Belinda Coxon**

Always Watching - **Dale Hatt**

Consistency and a return to the Syndicate - Steve Gilbey

MIA 2 by Mike McMahon

Carping Mad Chapter 12 pt 1 - **Mike 'SPUG' Redfern**

NEW.... Bailiff Tails Page 162 - Bluebell lakes

Review - Ridgemonkey Bucket system

HUGE CATCH REPORTS - from page 194

A Chat With Mr Oli Davies



A Chat With.... Oli Davies...

By Talking Carp's Mark Galli

Back in May, whilst visiting the Bluebell Lakes complex to see my mate, Adam Croser, who had just landed his new PB Mirror from 'Kinky', I had the pleasure of meeting and chatting to Alan Blair. During our conversation, he mentioned that Oli Davies was also on the complex along with several of the other 'Nash Tackle' guys as they were on their annual 'Social'.

As I walked around the lakes, I spotted Mr. Davies, riding a push bike in the rain, whilst wearing a set of chest waders, so nothing odd there then....!!

I managed to flag him down and we had a brief chat about all things 'fishy' and 'photogenic' and he kindly agreed to an interview for the Magazine and, well, here it is.....



MG: Mr. Oli Davies, welcome to the Electronic Pages of Talking Carp Magazine for the first time but hopefully not the last.....

As is normal in this type of interview, of which I am certain you have done plenty, they normally start off with something like; “Why not start by telling us a little something about yourself and what you do outside of your fishing....?”...However, this is Talking Carp Magazine and we don’t do ‘normal’, well not all the time anyway, so my first question is;

“Tell us the story about the rod incident, you know the one, EuroBanx 5, 1:45:55 on the Video, (as if you need reminding), where you ended up head first in the water, phone and all...!”. The reason I ask, is because Alan and myself, had a bit of a laugh about it but I know you also took a lot of criticism over it on the dreaded Social Media, where people feel it is perfectly acceptable and attempt to be as rude and as negative as possible....

OD: What can I say? We made a last-minute pit stop at the end of a 14-day 3700-mile trip, had half an hour to catch a carp so setting up rod pods wasn’t on the agenda – I saw an opportunity, which resulted in a quicker bite than even I anticipated! Mostly, the response was one of amusement at my predicament.

Of course, the holier than thou ‘carp police’ also came out in force criticising my bad angling, poor example and showing that the British sense of humour isn’t what it once was. Apparently, I shouldn’t have left the rod unattended even though if you time how long it takes for me to (nearly) reach it, it’s less than 2 seconds!

Some people must be seriously quick on their rods hey! Social Media has given everyone a platform to voice their opinions, but the sad thing that strikes me is how we now live in a society which is more interested in apportioning blame, finger pointing, and engaging in witch hunts

than laughing at someone else's misfortune.

MG: My second question, in keeping with the first has to be about this....this is from a video you posted on your Instagram (the_olicle)....and a comment left about the way you were fishing. It has been edited to keep anonymity of the person making the comment...

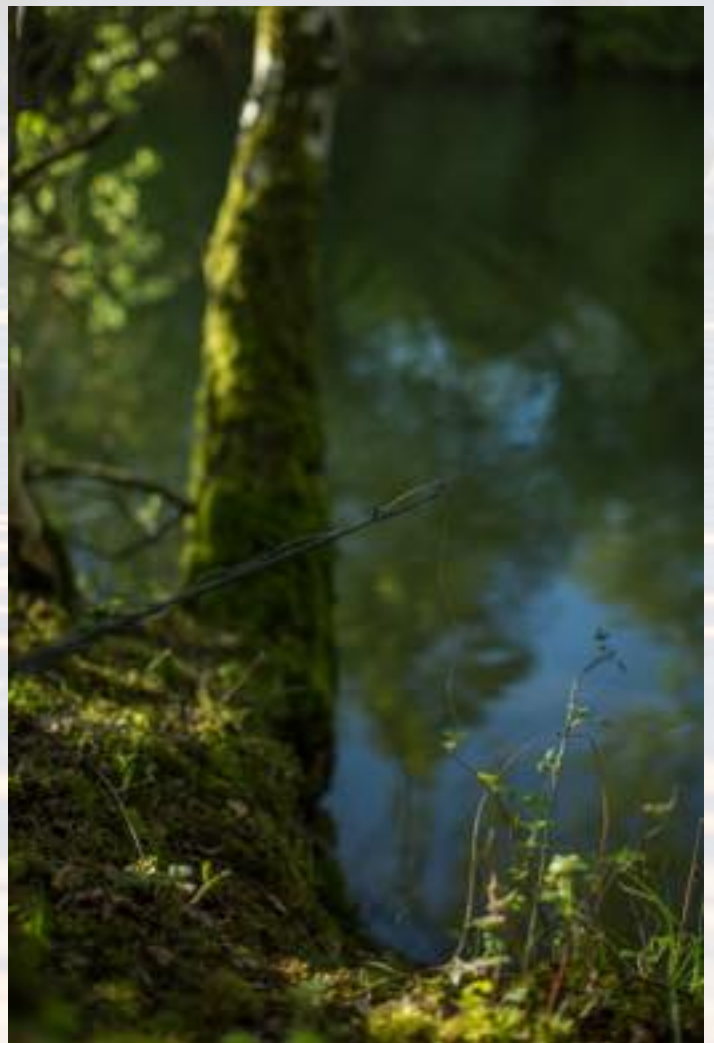
After two days, the video had received nearly 84k views (at the time of this interview that had gone to over 92k) and 132 comments...

You caption the video with 'What do you think, is there a more exhilarating way to catch a carp?'

There were plenty of positive and complimentary comments and there was also this one, that you responded to....and I quote...

"Fishing for them in unknown conditions as such is dangerous..... With tactics like that it won't be long before a carp is tethers to a tree"

Your response was to the point and called in to question the reason for the comments and my question is, do you feel the need to justify and defend your fishing at times, or is it just a frustration of the fact that Social Media allows people to have a platform from which they can be extremely critical with no knowledge of what the situation actually was or any real redress..?



OD: That particular comment is a prime example of the point I make above. I mean, you have to be pretty one dimensional and have a low opinion of everyone to make a comment like that. Why would you?

It might have been unknown to the person who only sees what appears in the square Instagram video, but quite how they can make any judgement on the rest of the venue based on what they see in the square is most bizarre, and more so to leave a negative comment. Surely it just makes that person look stupid, doesn't it? Or am I missing something?

These days I try and let it wash over me, having become a veteran of many pointless arguments with faceless internet trolls. Although I sometimes bite when I'm up for letting off some steam I keep in mind that it's a waste of my life to engage with these people!

MG: Well that's my curiosity quenched as to how you deal with the negative issues of Social Media and thanks for a great interview, it's been enlightening.....

....Only kidding, how about some of the mundane stuff and what better way to start than with the good old, 'Why not start by telling us a little something about yourself and what you do outside of your fishing....?'

OD: Fishing really is my life these days. I go whenever I can. When I'm not working or fishing, I'm at home with my long-suffering partner Cat and our two cats Elsie and Mae. If you follow me on Facebook, I'm sure you are sick of seeing them, but they are ideal targets to turn my camera on when I'm not bankside, so they get 'papped' a fair bit.

I love music and am a bit of a washed-up old raver. Well, not that washed up – Alan and I still go out pretty regularly to be fair and I

still spin a bit of vinyl occasionally. I also have a bit of a thing for Air Max and have a few pairs lying around the house, we won't discuss quite how many!



MG: What is your 'official' title and role within the Kevin Nash Group PLC...?

OD: I'm not actually sure. On my profile I've listed it as 'photographer, videographer, junglist'. Life isn't black and white at Nash however, and as well as the filming and photography and feature writing I could find myself doing just about anything, from setting up show stands to netting a lake. That is the beauty of working for Nash, it's unpredictable and every day is different!



MG: So what came first, the Fishing or Photography and when and how did you combine the two..?

OD: I never really picked up a camera until I was 30 believe it or not. The fishing most definitely came first, and I learned to use a camera through necessity after getting a job as an editorial assistant at Advanced Carp Fishing magazine. I had to learn quickly on the job and fuelled by disappointment I gradually taught myself how to get the best from my equipment. Sadly, that means that most of my fishing life isn't really documented photographically, certainly not the way it is now. We just used to go fishing. Photos weren't really that important. Nowadays it's my living, but I still go fishing without the camera sometimes and occasionally even put them back without a picture!

MG: I have to say, the junior Haircut was something a bit special..!!!! How did you link up with Alan and the Urban and Eurobanx videos...?

OD: Urban Banx was the brainchild of Winston, who used to edit the Nash TV videos. It just kind of worked with Alan being young and fresh and relevant to the younger angling community. His energy and enthusiasm make it really, as well as showing that you don't have to have expensive syndicate tickets to catch amazing carp and enjoy going angling. Eurobanx was just a natural progression of this, and wasn't



really planned, let alone the success and following it has gathered. Alan and I went on a little road trip and I filmed it. Winston put it together beautifully and EB was born...



MG: The shots you publish on Social Media are awesome and extremely high quality, can you give us an insight in to the type of gear you use to capture such incredible images and video...?

OD: Thanks! I get asked a lot about kit. Probably the most asked question is 'what's the best camera for taking shots like yours for 300 quid'. It makes me chuckle a little. People think that I have used every camera out there, but I have no knowledge of cheap cameras I'm afraid.

I use a couple of different bodies from Sony and Canon and they are not cheap! You very much get what you pay for with photographic equipment and there isn't any substitute for a quality sensor and good

glass. When my equipment has limited my creativity, I have always invested in better kit. I'm afraid there isn't really any cheap fix, you have to bite the bullet and splash the cash!

Having said that I do try and help people that ask. I always recommend buying second hand, as you will get far more bang for your buck. Don't be distracted by the latest specs and gadgets. Sensor is king, and Full frame sensors will produce the best images. The novelty of things like built in Wi-Fi soon wears off – and it doesn't make your pictures any better.

The best way to improve your pictures for the least amount of money is to start shooting in RAW and process your images yourself. That will unlock the potential of your camera and give you much more control over the final image.

MG: On a typical 'trip' which I know from Alan can vary hugely in duration, how much photographic and video kit do you take with you...?

OD: I take everything usually. That will be three



camera bodies (one for filming, one for stills, one for time-lapse), a bag full of lenses, camcorders, go pros, drone, slider and a LOT of spare batteries and cards. I need to be prepared and ready to capture the action day or night, without having to rely on having a power source, so I will be as self-sufficient as possible for at least a few days.

MG: How many hours of footage do you take on average and how many SD cards do you fill...?

OD: Well that depends, but let's take the last Eurobanx as an example. The total quantity of data captured was in excess of 2.2 terabytes. I'm not sure what that is timewise, but it's a lot and data management is one of the big challenges on a road trip. It's vital to back up footage, as anything that is lost can seriously impact the film. Last year we did lose 2 cards – one go pro and one camcorder. Thankfully it didn't have massive impact, but it's my worst nightmare to lose potentially important footage. The nature of these trips mean you don't get any second chances!

MG: If it makes you feel better, I think Alan has recently admitted to losing all the footage from his recent trip to a Cornish canal...!!! On a typical trip, how much time do you spend behind the rods compared to behind the cameras...?

OD: Fishing is very much secondary for me, and yet still important. That's why there is so much pressure. I do most of the driving, and when I arrive at each new location, I need to capture the setup, any action, and shoot enough dialogue and B-roll to link the piece together. Then I also need to try and fish effectively in order that between us we have the best chance of having a result. This relieves a little bit of the pressure on Alan, as just occasionally I get lucky...

MG: Do you get a say in the locations and venues that are fished, and do you have to consider the video/photographic aspect, or do you just deal with it as it happens...?

OD: I tend to leave the planning to Alan. Not because I'm lazy but he is a bit of a control freak when it comes to this and the planning is meticulous. I could do it but he would do it again anyway so there isn't much point. I very much deal with what I come across. You can't make plans, you just have to document what you find as best you can in the limited time available.

MG: Last year I organised of a Carp Match between the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) Carp Team and the Welsh Ladies Carp Team, and we were asked if a BBC Documentary crew could film it for a Fishing Documentary. They filmed with us for the full 48 hours and the footage will be edited to give about 6 minutes of video to fit in to the forth coming documentary...How do you plan for the recording and photography that you do, to ensure you do not miss that one opportunity that can make or break what you are trying to produce..??



OD: The simple answer is you can't. You can have a script but ultimately you can't make it happen. Of course, you can have a list of shots and work through and tick them off but if the fish aren't playing ball it's all useless anyway! Often, it's the unplanned and unscripted action that makes the most interesting viewing in any case. Like jumping in after a rod for example!

MG: Do you do all the editing of the footage yourself and how long, for example, did Euro Banx 5 take to edit to produce the one hour and fifty minutes that we see and how much total footage was there...?

OD: I like to call my role 'image acquisitions'. I don't edit the video footage, that goes to one of the other lads in the team to make sense of. The last two Eurobanx films were expertly put together by Alex Smith of Carl and Alex. It takes a long time, first of all to lay out the dialogue and then fill in all the gaps. It's a mammoth task, and I don't envy the editor. As I mentioned previously there is a LOT of footage to try and digest and order and ultimately make watchable.

MG: Who has the biggest influence on the Music overlays for the videos, you or Alan...?

OD: The music is extremely important to both of us. We both submit a track list to whoever is editing, and the first and last tracks are usually chosen by us. But in the edit, it's down to the editor when and how each track in the pool is used to best suit the location, and vibe.

MG: We've touched on the subject and sometimes negative aspects of Social Media but do you feel it has had an impact and helped advance your career within the Industry and within the Kevin Nash Group PLC or is it just a small part of what you do...?

OD: Oh, without doubt Social Media has given me the platform with which to get my images out there to the masses. As much as magazines were once the way to get noticed now its social media that is the vehicle and I don't take that for granted.

I work hard to populate my accounts with high quality aspirational imagery as does Nash itself. You need to move with the times and evolve, and where once a large part of my job was creating content for printed media now that has been replaced by digital content creation.

MG: Thanks for that Oli, I will remind myself as I sit and type this up, that I should have just made a video....!! ;).....

.... In terms of your own personal fishing (if you actually do any), are you always looking for that killer angle and photo or do you leave the camera kit at home...?

OD: I don't get to fish as much as I would like and certainly not as much as perhaps it seems from the outside. I get a couple of sessions a week when I'm at home, usually short sessions or overnights. I take less pictures of my own fishing than I used to – perhaps because many of the cliched shots I have already taken, and I don't get any satisfaction from doing the same thing over and over. Also, as my own fishing is very much stalking based there simply isn't much to photograph apart from a rod lying on the deck!



MG: On the subject of your own fishing, and you are clearly a very competent and experienced angler, where did the “half-a-wrap” style evolve from. Is it something you have always done or was it a necessity of the venues you fish and has developed more for the filming...?

OD: It's something that has evolved over the last 15 years or so, partly from a growing impatience with sitting behind static rods, and also from being a bailiff on a busy venue. The last thing I want to be doing is racing the members to get to swims, and then be sat in a swim that someone else wants to fish. That doesn't sit right for me. However, I still like catching carp occasionally so I have to tip the odds in my favour, and by searching in quiet corners and baiting and fishing spots that others overlook I can do that. It's also hard to compete with anglers that have more time than you, so it's important to put in that extra effort.

I'm always happy if I have made an opportunity, even if it didn't result in a fish on the bank. Additionally, I have been blessed to fish venues that

afford the opportunity to watch fish feed and sometimes hook themselves, and this becomes addictive. There is no better way to learn about fish and their behaviour and the effectiveness (or not) of our rigs. So much of the so-called angling 'wisdom' that is perpetuated is simply guesswork. How do you know what is going on if you can't see it?

MG: I know that Alan fishes less than people may think and is that the same for you, how much fishing do you do on average a month...?

OD: Alan's fishing is very much based around working, and he engineers opportunities to fish wherever he goes in this country or in Europe. In that sense his fishing is very limited indeed and he certainly doesn't get to go when and where he wants. Similarly, I try and make opportunities and will go fishing for just an hour sometimes. Most people wouldn't even bother but when you discard the trappings of the modern carp angler – bivvy, wrap sticks and the dreaded Spod to name a few it's actually quite simple to catch fish sometimes, even from 'harder' venues.

Both of us rely heavily on finding the fish. We very rarely just set up just because we like the look of the swim... How much fishing I get of my own really depends on work commitments. This spring I have got to do more of my own fishing than usual, as I haven't been away for the whole of May filming for a change.



MG: Can you share with us any future projects for the filming or is that a closely guarded secret...?

OD: Well you will be pleased to hear that we have a couple of Urban Banx shoots planned in the next couple of months, as we have been slacking on this. September will also see Alan and I heading off on what will probably be our last Eurobanx adventure. We are both keen not to drag the series out for too long, and having visited most of the countries in Europe now it's time to find a different vehicle and keep things fresh...



MG: I am sure many people will over the moon about the new shoots but will be equally as sorry to hear that they may well soon come to an end, although I am sure you will come up with something just as captivating as you are doing now....

...For our junior and probably for some of our not so junior readers, what advice would you give as they start out in today's modern Carp Angling Scene...?

OD: Enjoy going fishing! Don't get sucked into keeping up with the Joneses, whether that be the latest tackle or bait, and don't become obsessed with the approval of others on social media. You need just a rod, line and hook.

Fishing is a personal journey for each of us, an escape from the real world. Don't spoil your experience by putting unnecessary pressure on yourselves. Nobody gets paid just to go fishing so work hard at school and get qualifications or a trade behind you. If you really want to work within the industry, then there are always opportunities for those that are dedicated enough, and with the right qualifications whether that be media, marketing, sales or design.

MG: Some excellent advice Oli and something that should be heeded in today's social media and online driven carp angling scene....

....The same as me, you must have seen some pretty awful pictures from anglers trying to capture that once in a lifetime fish or a stunning scale pattern, so in terms of capturing those all-important 'Carp Shots' what single piece of advice would you give to the anglers out there to help improve their pictures...?

OD: Firstly, invest in a DSLR or mirrorless camera. Anything from the likes of Canon, Nikon or Sony, and spend more than you can afford! Mobile phones have improved but still don't cut the mustard if you really want the best pictures. Find someone you trust to take your pictures, and practice and improve your own camera skills by taking catch pictures for others so you learn what it is you actually want for yourself. Remember, it doesn't cost anything to take digital images, so take loads, but only show people the best ones.



MG: Oli, it has been an absolute pleasure to have the opportunity to interview you and I just have a couple of final questions for you, the first is, are you sponsored by 'Nike' and how did the clear 'obsession' for their footwear start...?

OD: Fishing is regarded as a blood sport so unfortunately a company like Nike would never associate itself with someone like me, in spite of any influence I might have. So no, no sponsorship or future collaboration will ever happen I'm afraid. And my



my obsession with trainers, particularly Air Max 1's started 30 years ago when I saw my first visible air bubble. I just haven't grown out of it...

MG:and finally, is Mr. Blair really that enthusiastic and 'buzzing' all the time and if so, how do you cope with that first thing in the morning...?

OD: Alan is a morning person and I'm a night owl, so we cover the whole 24-hour period between us. I try not to keep him up too late and he knows to be careful first thing in the morning to avoid getting his head bitten off! Luckily for him I get better as the day wears on!

MG:

'Quick Fire' questions.....which do you prefer...

- **Commons or Mirrors..?** Mirrors
- **Short Hit 'n' Run trips, Day Sessions, Overnighters or Longer Sessions..?** Hit n run
- **Small or Big Waters..?** Small
- **Remote Locations or Full Facilities..?** Remote Locations
- **UK or Outside...(If outside, name the country)** Slovenia
- **Spring / Summer / Autumn / Winter fishing..?** Summer
- **Bottom or Surface..?** Bottom
- **Close In or Long Range...(although I can probably guess this one with great accuracy)?**
Half a Wrap (MG: I knew it..!!)
- **If you could only fish one more session, where would it be..?**

Horton complex

- **What was your most memorable Fish you caught and why?**

Horton's woodcarving. One of the oldest and most iconic carp in the country, caught under the rod tip.

- **Out of the tens of thousands, if not more, pictures you have taken, what is your most memorable photograph and why?**

That's a really hard one. I could choose 100 different ones for different reasons but if it had to be just one it would be my old mate and Horton Legend Del Smith RIP in action. It's a moment and feeling that I will always remember, and an image that makes me smile.



MG: Oli, I am sure there are a million and one more questions I could ask but perhaps we can catch up at the end of year for an update as to all things Urban, Euro and Nash. For now, let me say what an absolute pleasure it has been and thanks for committing to a very frank and open interview. I look forward to the next instalments of both the Urban Banx and Eurobanx and I am now off to my nearest camera supplier as I am going to retire my Polaroid Instamatic 600 as I thinks that's where I've been going wrong with my 'trophy shots'....because they look nothing like yours....!!!

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and Hearts Are Broken.*

By Scott Geezer Grant

After fishing my session over at Churchwood Fisheries it was back to work and back to normality. I looked at my shift rota and could possibly get over and fish a couple of nights on my syndicate water the Magical Bayeswater. I haven't fished it at all this year, and I was looking forward to fishing my first session. There had been a couple of fish out at the start of the year, but it hasn't done a fish for a couple of months now so it's going to be hard going, but that's the challenge of fishing there.

I started to plan my session and could fish from Thursday afternoon until Saturday morning. This time of the year (from previous experience) everyone uses zigs and although I have now succumbed to them, I always like to

put a couple of rods on the deck over a bit of bait.

I sorted my gear and come Thursday morning it was off to work for my last early shift. I managed to get away a bit early and headed straight to the lake. I called "Buggy" to find out if it was busy and he said there were only 2 anglers on. This was music to my ears, and like every trip I stuck my foot down and drove to the lake was like a formula one driver!!

Not sure why but the adrenalin just kicks in when I'm on my way to the lake, but I suppose every angler feels the same. I arrived at the lake just after 13:00 and there wasn't an angler in sight, I could go in any swim I wanted a rare treat, but it does happen every now and then.

The wind was hacking

down towards the far end of the lake and after a good walk round I decided to go into swim 1 which is on the back of the wind. My strategy was to fish 2 rods on zigs and 2 rods fished traditional style over bait.

Due to the mental and unpredictable weather I set the house up first and got all my gear sorted. It was now time to get the rods out.

The water level had risen considerably from when I was last here last year, so the first thing was to find out how deep it actually was in front of the swim. After a couple of casts with the marker rod it was a general 13 ft which is 4ft deeper than it was last year.

I tied a couple of zigs up and went with a 5ft and 6ft, I cast the rods out, the first one just in front of the island to

the right and the other again towards the island but on the left. I then put new "Ronnie rigs" on my other 2 rods and fished the first in open water and catapulted a couple of kilos of Nutjob boilies

over the top. The other rod was fished in front of the snags to my left on a lovely gravelly area again over a couple of kilos of boilies which were catapulted over the top. Both rigs were finished off with a fluoro pink Nutjob pop up as this particular colour has served me well over winter, so for me it's a good colour to start with. I could now finally have a rest and put the kettle on. It was lovely just sitting there watching the waves cascading across the lake.

I made a well-deserved

coffee and as I went to take my first mouthful the snag rod let out a couple of bleeps, first of all I thought it was the black chickens, but then another couple of bleeps I walked down to the rod and the line had tightened, I lifted the rod and the fish was on.

This was mental the rod couldn't have been out there more than 20 minutes what a result, the fish gave a good account of itself and after a few hairy moments I slid the net under a chunky mirror.

I knew it wasn't one of the A Team members, and on closer inspection it was one of the stockies Gary put in a few weeks back. Not to be sniffed at though only 19lb but any fish out of here is an achievement in itself. Twinny was in swim 4 (he turned up a few hours after me) so I gave him a call and





he came straight round and took a couple of photos.

The fish was returned and the rod re-baited and cast out to the same area. A couple of pouches of freebies were dropped over the top then it was time to settle down and take it all in. a couple of anglers had turned as well as Twinny, Jim and Porky who went into swim 7 and 8.

Jim's a top angler and a great bloke he came around with Porky before they set up to congratulate me and

to see the photos. Jim was going into swim 8 a known area for the Coconut to come out from at this time of the year and a fish he so desperately wants to catch. I told

him I had caught it off the bottom as I knew all the anglers were fishing zigs, I always like to try and do something different just to give myself an edge and fishing a place like Bayeswater you need every edge you can get. Porky was in swim 8 and after a few minutes they both left to get their rods out and gear sorted. Porky only had his rods out no more than 15 minutes when one was away he went on to land a fish known as "Snub nose linear" 35lb



plus and never guess what? He had it off the bottom. What a way to open your account and he was chuffed to bits the fish looked awesome and Jim took some cracking photos for him. There was a buzz in the air, and we were all hoping that one of the big girls would make an appearance. It wasn't to be, and there was the only 2 fish that got banked over the couple of nights I was there. Come Saturday morning and I was packing up and heading home after a very successful session.

I wouldn't be able to get back until the day after my birthday as I have booked 3 days leave from work. Hopefully I can land one of the big girls. A few weeks later and I was celebrating my 50th birthday, I had a lovely day firstly spent

with 2 of my sisters who took me out for a bit of shopping mainly in the Superdry shop (I do love a bit of Superdry) then a spot of lunch, the Mrs had spoiled me first with a card that simply blew me away then a cake which to be honest pee'd me off a bit, as it was a fishing theme with the head of a fish rod and line but on the end of the line was a boomerang!!!

So, I thought whoever made the cake has no idea about fishing, this went on all day until both my daughters turned up when they finished work. My Mrs then gave me 2 envelopes one was for a 2 night stay in Honk Kong from my eldest daughter then the other was a trip to Australia from the Mrs, that's when I tumbled why there was a



boomerang on the end of the line, I couldn't stop laughing and apologising as I had made a right fool of myself (nothing new there). I had a lovely evening spent with the family and the ones I love dearly.

Come the next morning and the car was loaded, and I was off to the lake. When I arrived, there were 5 anglers fishing and after some thought I decided to go into swim 8, a great swim for this time of year and a swim the Coconut loves. Would

she grace my net on my birthday week? Well the answer to that is no, for me it was a blank session, Sam in swim 1 had 2 fish (1 fouled hooked) and Rich in swim 5 had 2 fish both cracking fish 1 off the bottom and 1 on the mighty zig.

Over the next couple of nights anglers came and went and on Saturday morning Jason who moved from swim 9 to swim 5 banked a stockie, and the Sheriff (Twinny) banked a cracking 22 lber from swim 4. I left with my tail

between my legs but like always vowed to be back as soon as work and homelife would let me.

Two weeks later saw me back on the bank and being the first weekend of April I knew it would be busy as April 1st is the start of the ticket and like every year the new members want to fish. That's just how it is, and I know when I first joined, I was exactly the same.

I arrived at the lake early afternoon on a Thursday, and the lake was already pretty busy, Swims 1, 2, 9 and 4 were taken after a walk round I stood in swim 7 but the wind was hacking straight into my face so after some deliberation I opted to fish swim 6, a good swim with lots of options and it's on the back of the wind.



The lake had done a fish at the start of the week, Rich bagged the Hawaiian at 39lb 8oz, this fish is an absolute stunner and one that is on the hit list. It took me a while to get the gear to the swim and 2 barrow loads later and it was all there. I assembled the rods first as the rain wasn't due until later this evening. I opted to fish 2 rods on zigs and 2 on bait.

With the 2 baited rods I fished them from either side of the reeds in 8ft of water, 1 was fished with the Nutjob and the other was fished with another proven bait The G. I catapulted a few pouchfuls of boilies around each rod and a few pouchfuls of chilli hemp.

The zig rods were fished at different depths in 17 ft of water. They do work there's no doubt about it, but



the hardest thing is getting what depth they are at right, if!! They are up in the layers.

With the rods sorted the house went up and when I was finally done the kettle went on for my first coffee. It was now time to relax and enjoy the session ahead. A good mate Nick who has just got on the syndicate popped over to have a coffee and a look around after he finished work. You could see the excitement in him, and he was itching to get a rod out. He planned to

get over the next day after work, but as it's a Friday it could be very busy, so the plan was for me to update him mid-afternoon.

As we sat drinking and chatting Jon Mac turned up and he was going into swim 5 next door. It's been a good few years since I've fished with him and I am looking forward to this season as it means we can have plenty of socials. John is an exceptionally gifted angler and I am sure it won't be long before he starts to get amongst them.

Nick departed around 7pm and after a bit of dinner I just laid on the bed chair watching the water. Come just after dark and I was getting in the bag for some much-needed sleep, I had been up at 0500 o'clock every day for the last 7 days, but for some reason I couldn't go to sleep then all of a sudden a unit of a fish crashed out to my left in front of swim 5, I jumped out the bag and with the moon glimmering on the water I could only see the after waves!!!

I was even more excited now; I went down to Jon and he was well aware of what just happened, and he said he had a rod close in. I was hoping something would materialise and sure enough a couple of hours later Jon got a take, only to find he had fouled hooked a lovely mirror named

Broken Back that looked around mid-thirty. He wasn't fazed at all and with the hook coming out in the net he simply treated the fish and returned her without stressing her out "Good angling mate" he recast the rod and it was back to bed. The alarm was set for just before 0600 o'clock and when my head hit the pillow I was out like a light.

Come morning I woke up busting for a pee and when I looked at the phone the alarm was due to go off in the next 10 minutes!! So, it

was up kettle on then relieve the bladder. Its magical just watching the water at first light with a coffee in hand, for me it's the best time of the day.

After a round robin of texts no one had banked a fish which was disappointing, but I was hoping the fish would be active and slip up. Rich who was in swim 4 had to go home and I asked John if he wanted to move into there, if not I would be. John said he wanted to go into 4 so I opted to move up to swim 5, which for me is



very rare and was the talk of the lake.

Come midday and I got a call from Nick asking if there was many on and was there any swims free. I said there was a couple free and that I would be moving so there would be another free.

Nick came down the track like a bat out of hell dust flying all over the place, I think he thought he was in a race car and not a transit. Just before he got there a couple of anglers turned up and went into swim 7 and 3, so that only left swim 8 and 6 which I just vacated.

Nick decided to go into 6 and spent the next few hours setting his gear up whilst I was still doing the same. Again, I fished the same, 2 on the bottom and 2 on zigs. The wind had now

turned to a very cold easterly, with a touch of Northernly thrown in for good measure. The seagulls were going mad and you could clearly see there was a hatch occurring on the surface of the water.

Surely the zigs will get a look in, but after another blank day and night without a single fish making an appearance, I knew it was going to be tough.

The following evening as the wind dropped off a fish crashed out to my left close in which got me all excited even though it was 1 o'clock in the morning!!!

Well come Sunday morning and it was another blank for me, it's not going to be long until the water warms up and the fish go on the feed, I just hope I'm on the bank when that happens.

Like Arnie said I'll be

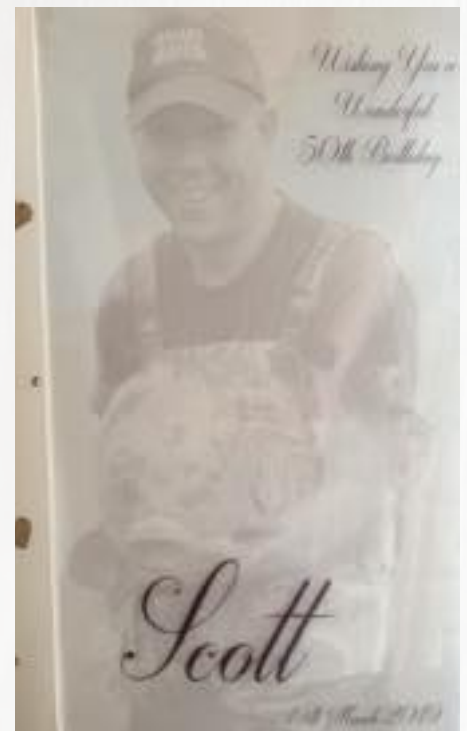
back" as soon as I can work permitting of course.

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

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*My B.C.C
Ladies
Pairs
final
by
Paula
Marriott*

Being nearly eight hours late to a match isn't the best of starts.

This year's BCC Ladies Pairs had been in the diary since it was announced, only the start of a new job meant that I needed to prioritise and face the fact that fishing isn't the 'be all and end all'. As much as I'd like it to pay the bills, it doesn't and so a few sacrifices had to be made. I also had to rule myself out of England duty in the first ever Female World Cup which was hugely disappointing. I truly felt that I was missing out on history being made there, but as it happens, it wasn't meant to be anyway and now I truly believe that there was an alternative plan for me anyway.

Friday had arrived and there was just the small matter of an eight hour shift and a four hour drive between me and Old Mill Lakes in the North of England. This lake couldn't be further from my house I don't think, me being so far South that I'm practically in France! (I'm sure my surname even sounds a little French and would

be pronounced "Mario" with silent 'T's' should it be!).

I'm not usually one for needing to look at my phone during work but I was constantly sneaking a peak and was super happy when Jane Henthorn reported first blood at 1451 with a lovely mid-double zip Linear (pictured). We were off the mark, and there's no better feeling in a match.

Jane is a proper Northerner and so she had already done ample homework on this lake last year, homework that lead to her being crowned Ladies Singles Champion and so I was super lucky to have her as my partner again this year. She truly is a great Angler, I mean there can't be a lot you don't know about fishing by the time you reach 70 odd, you know what I mean?

I wiped away the blood from my nosebleed, which started just at the Watford Gap as usual and carried on my long journey. On arrival I called Chris and Jo to be let in the main gate, and it was evident that Chris had been extremley busy

since our last visit, with new roads laid and the place was looking incredibly smart. It's not my favourite venue, but Oak itself is an extremely level playing field for a Carp match, which makes any match held there very exciting indeed.

I also phoned Jane when I arrived, just to ask her to put the kettle on, no sooner had I asked, when I heard a swift Foxtrot Oscar before the line cut off, "charming as ever" I thought!

As I barrowed my kit around to the peg I was greeted by one very happy Jane Henthorn, accompanied by Mick Coxon who was weighing in Jane's second fish, a cracking little 21.4 Common, with shoulders like one England prop Mako Vunipola and a typical characteristic of an Oak Lake carp. I was just in time for my first catch photo and it was a very nice first duty of the match to have to

carry out. Holding that scoreboard was exhausting and I needed a cuppa whilst I got setup.

Starting the match with two on the scoreboard was a nice luxury for me, I was over the moon (but not surprised) with Jane's storming start, and she demonstrated her glee by simultaneously coughing and farting at the same time. This was a joy I will behold forever



more!

Jane and I really do work as a team and she had already primed two spots for me to fish on and had been steadily trickling in bait throughout that afternoon and evening, all I had to do was put my rods (all ready prepared) exactly where she said. If there's one thing I'm good at, it's taking orders!

I sent the boss for a rest for a few hours as she had already had a pretty tiring day. I assured her that the rods would be safe in my hands whilst I kept watch overnight. I kept the bait trickling in, but the night turned into morning unremarkably.

Saturday seemed to pass quite slowly with very little action for Jane and I, I tied up more rigs with the trusted RM-Tec terminal tackle, keeping it simple with the multi that has never

let me down. We continued with our plan and waited patiently for our next bite. Whilst pondering I asked Jane "How is it that you and I have exactly the same RAD 3 Rod Adjustable Pod, and yet mine looks amazing whilst yours seems to have suffered some kind of Transient Ischaemic Attack (mini-stroke)?" She didn't seem to mind when I laid the rods down to the side and in order to straighten it out. Those things can really get inside your head, especially when it's a bit slow.

During this time, others had started to catch, the forever steady Joanne Barlow with partner and





Ladies Carp Academy protege Chloe Dodson-Shanks caught a few small ones and eased into the lead before nightfall. Jane and I had a battle on our hands.

We continued as planned, but things weren't easy. As is often the way in fishing, things were not going well for me, silly occurrences were making me a little frustrated. Whilst re-setting a rod, from out of nowhere the line caught around the tip of the rod on casting and I slammed the lead into the margin, followed quickly by the tip of Jane's rod. The lead had cracked off, it all happened so quickly that

I barely had time to noticed the damage until I started passing the line back through the eyes for a rapid re-set. The last eye on the tip was missing its ceramic and was completed mis-shaped. I looked at Jane, with my best Puppy dog eyes and simply said

“you are going to kill me mate”.

As it happens, she didn't kill me, and we carried on with Jane's spare rod now in permanent play, on its spot and fishing within just a couple of minutes.

I turned into my bed chair relatively early for some much needed rest but was rudely awoken by what sounded like a screaming banshee! One of our rods was tearing off and Jane was adamant that I was playing this one, so she stood over the rods screaming “Paaaaula, Paaaaula hit it, hit it,

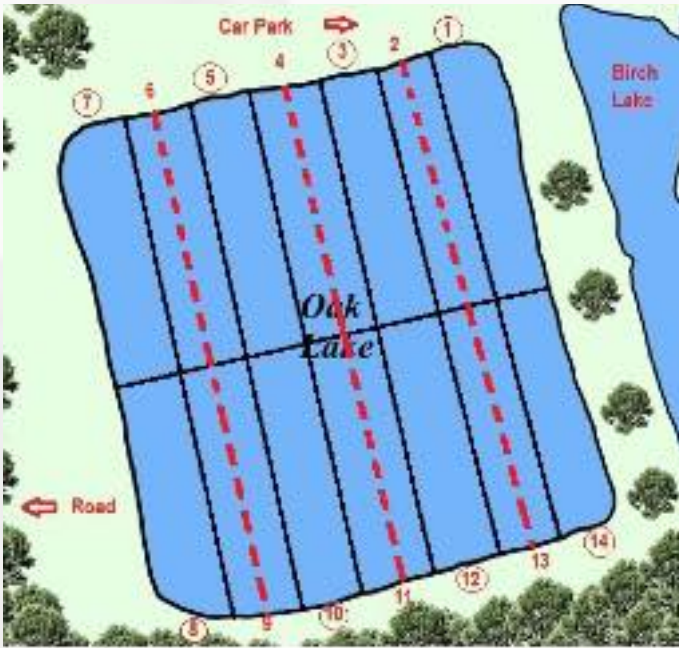
hit it!!". As I stumbled towards my rods, only half conscious, I got flash-backs from basic training at BRNC Dartmouth, and one very notorious Sergeant Buckley screaming at me.

After what felt like full minutes, I lifted into the rod and was happy to be playing in our third Carp. It sure gave me the run-around too. With a 'no back-lead' rule, it soon got us into trouble and weaved its way around the other lines numerous times. My knees were shaking as I managed to turn its head enough for Jane to scoop it into the net, with three different lines going in there with it. It was a huge relief to see it go in, but it could never be described as pretty or graceful, I'd liken it to that Diego Maradona goal in the World Cup of 1986, where he blatantly handled the ball into the net! It counted then and this counted now.

Jane looked after the Carp whilst I got the rod straight back in the spot, and it was a good job that turnaround was so quick, because just a few minutes later, the same

rod was tearing away again as is often the way with match fishing. We turned our attention to landing this one, and was dancing with joy when it rolled in. Another good size, and a brace of twenties we were sure!

With adrenaline pumping through our veins, another quick re-set was required, the hook was baited, and, in the darkness, I cast the rod the 23 wraps towards my horizon marker. It was slightly off the mark, so it came back in for a second attempt. On the second attempt, I whipped my left hand in towards my chest and was startled by a cracking noise, followed by what sounded like a loud 'plop' in the water in front of me. I couldn't quite work out what had happened, but it soon became apparent as I reeled in the last two foot of the rod, separate from the main body of the blank. The rod had snapped during the cast, and upon examination, for no reason at all (except there's always a reason as you know). It wasn't just any rod though; ; it was Jane's rod. Jane Henthorn, whose other rod I had



- 1 Ellen Beedham-Sam Hoskins
- 3 Miranda Brown-Tania Williams
- 5 Joanne Lofts-Becky Sharnan
- 7 Linda Breeze-Ami Parker
- 8 Sue Seton-Smith-Petula Little
- 10 Jane Henthorn-Paula Marriott
- 12 Rachel Bladen-Sarah Davey
- 14 Joanne Barlow-Chloe Dodson-Shanks

broken only a few hours prior.

I thought for sure that this was the moment that I would see a side of Jane that nobody would ever want to see, a side reserved only for ones worst nightmare...but she put her arm around me as I held my head in my hands and said “come on mate, s#*t happens, we’ve gotta get a rod back on that spot”. We worked quickly together to get it wrapped and back fishing again.

The woman must be heaven sent or something because she managed to keep her cool better than anyone I’ve ever seen. She probably wouldn’t be so calm to know I did the whole thing (both rods) intentionally, just to ensure a Shimano TX4 dominance across our pods.

Mick Coxon joined us soon after and confirmed our predictions, a brace of twenties it was, and we were back in the lead!

The rest of the night was uneventful, and the morning was spent nervously awaiting the result of a weigh-in for Jo and Chloe, who had a few more that morning. They weighed in three or four to take them ahead by just 13lb odd, it was roughly 10am and there was still plenty to fish for.

Funnily enough, time seemed to fly by at this stage, minutes felt like seconds, and before we knew it, there was only 20 minutes left of the match.

As I stared out onto the water in front of me, I noticed a few Carp near the surface and thought I'd catty a few floaters at them. To my amazement, a few came up to feed and so Jane and I ran around like headless chickens to get a floater set-up out. We fished the last ten minutes on the surface, desperately scrambling for that one fish to give us back the lead, but it didn't happen, the horn sounded, and Jo and Chloe were crowned Champions.

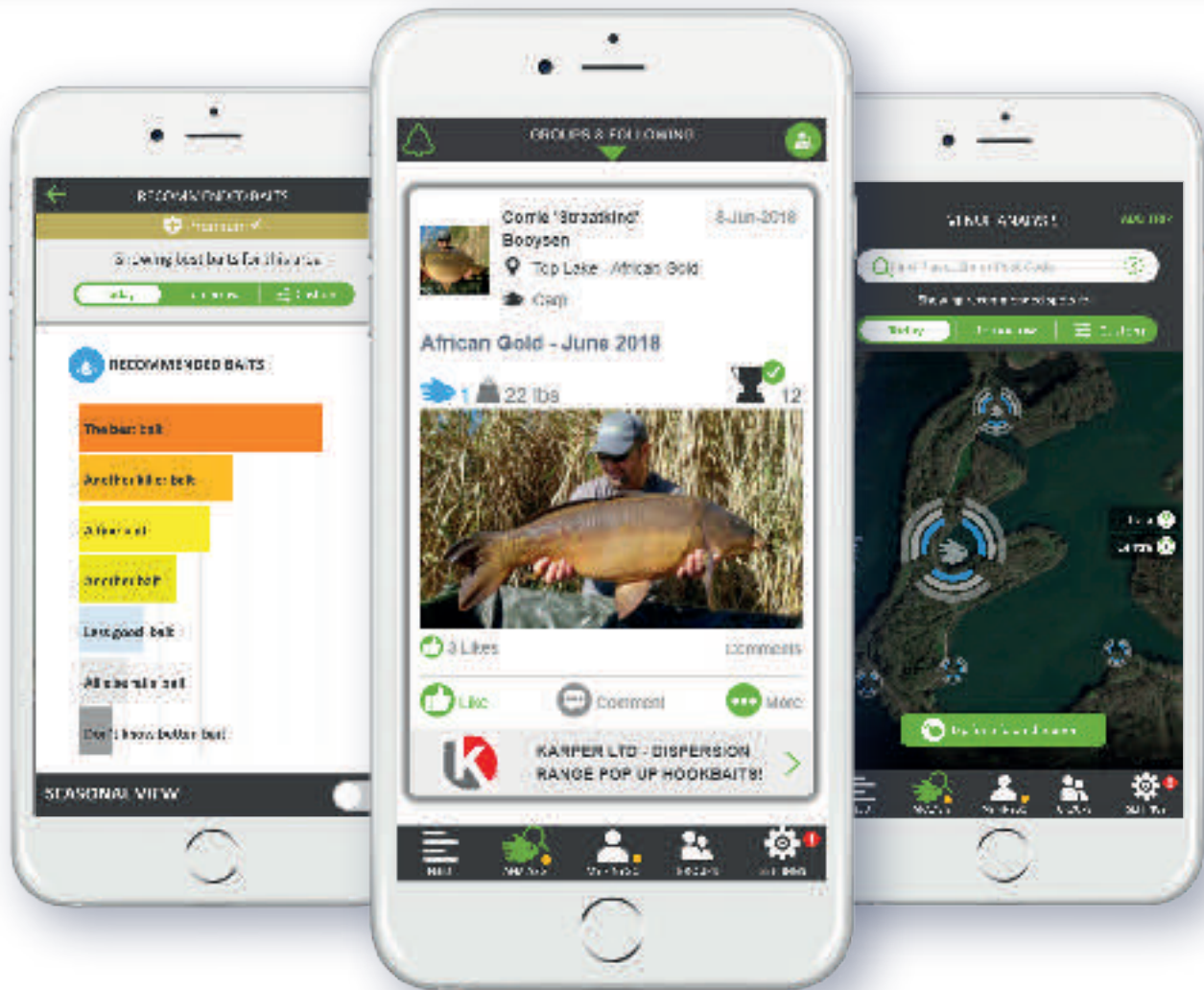
We were really happy for them, seeing friends do well is almost as enjoyable as doing well ourselves and Jane and I will definitely be trying again next year!

Until next time, Tight-lines!

Paula.



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Carp Fishing..... is it The Pits?
By Andrew Murray
Part 2.

Why it's called fishing not catching by Andrew Murray

What a busy month May has been, work, fishing, holidays, and then I had a Triathlon to fit in as well! Which I managed to complete although not in any record times... The only reason I mentioned it, is that my fitness has improved dramatically this year with the training for this event, which in turn has improved my fishing.

Continuing my piece on fishing the Pits at Newark, I thought it warranted a two-parter because this is about some of the learning curves we sometimes have to go through as part of our journey in carp fishing, which is learning to catching more carp. That has always been the challenge of carp fishing for me, putting the different parts of the jigsaw together, each lake has its own challenges, when one of them is met, that's the time I get the kick out of it. As I had previously said, during my first two years on there I had caught a number of carp from different spots around the big pit, with some quite good hits of carp, also catching a few

from Pit 5 as well last year. I didn't do so well on the big pit though last year, I wasn't it touch with what was happening, that much is true. There were times though when I felt I was in the right area but not capitalising on it. Something more was needed, and I often felt I should be doing better on here. When that feeling occurs it's time to get the old thinking cap on, which is what I did when looking at my results over the previous year.

After going back through my notes, I felt there were a couple of contributors to not getting the results I expected. Having had an operation on my shoulder for a damaged rotator cuff two years ago, casting was severely limited both before and after the operation for a while, in fact all things to with fishing were painful. Following the





operation and extreme physio, over time, the flexibility and strength was slowly returning, and my casting was improving steadily, getting back to what I could do many years ago (in my younger days). On a trip to France last September, doing some work with a few friends on casting, I was able to hit the 150 yard mark, with a four ounce lead and 15lb line straight through with relative ease, my confidence in being able to hit the rod hard was back. Which is one of the main things needed with any distance casting, confidence to really bend into the rod! This was one of the parts of the puzzle I felt was missing. I'll explain. While I did catch closer in on the big pit many times, there were definitely times when the carp seemed to hang back a bit. This seemed to be the

around the 120 – 140 yard mark or so, as if they were just staying out of the way a bit. So I spent more time practising casting and spodding as far as I could but still falling a bit short occasionally, depending on wind conditions. Last Autumn I decided to purchase a new set of rods and opted for the Free Spirit Hi S I've's, in 13.5 13

ft. Once I got used to these, the difference in ease of casting the distance I needed was amazing. I also went for the upgraded spod rod as well. I would say to anyone who is struggling to cast a good distance, get the best rods you can afford and then a couple of lessons as well as the new rods, sometimes all it needs is someone else to watch from different angles and make a few small adjustments.

The other area I felt I was missing out on was fishing at different depths, so while I might have been in the right area, I wasn't fishing the whole water column, meaning the use of Zig Rigs. Given that I used to fish up in the water as long as 30 years ago, it was something I had

not really done since it became fashionable. You can see the very old picture of a large carp I caught thirty years ago, this was caught fishing a piece of crust mid-water in 14 foot of water. That was when I first started carp fishing and was unafraid to try anything new. Sometimes we tend to settle in our way, which is not something I would have done once upon a time.

This year I decided I was going to persevere with Zig fishing a lot

more, just to see if my gut feelings were true about not catching at times. At the start I was making some schoolboy errors, but eventually as I ironed these out, things started to work. The thing is with anything new you have to use it all the time, not just when you fancy it, I mean really persevere and work at it. You get one bite at a time and slowly your confidence builds until it becomes second nature and you treat it as part of your overall fishing armoury. So that

when you are on the fish, it all seems straight forward, that's when multiple catches occur. So here are some of my hard-learned lessons for Zig fishing, some are known, some are my own thoughts that have applied to my own fishing this year so far with the work that has gone into it. I'm also sure not everyone will agree with them all either!

- When trying anything new, don't just use it one rod, use it on all rods, otherwise you won't get a true reflection on its effectiveness. Especially when you are on a lake where you don't get many



runs. If you just use it as an afterthought on one rod that's not even on a known spot, how is that trying something new? Its setting yourself up to fail.

- Learn to cast smoothly, one of the biggest causes of Zigs tangling is jerky casting and not using a long sweep of the rod. Hold the rod high, lower the tip right behind you and make it one long smooth sweep.
- Get into the water if possible to cast. When fishing 8-12 foot zigs, it's much better if you can lay the hooklink out on the water, it flies much better, as the water drags on the whole hooklink. That means taking waders if it's cold, I forgot mine on a couple of early trips.
- If you cannot get into the water lay the hook bait on a plastic lid or in a cup, so it doesn't snag on the cast on grass or twigs. But make sure the hook can't catch, I have seen a few lids and cups go flying out into the lake that is why getting into the water would be my first choice.

- Change the rig regularly, especially if fishing weedy waters, most certainly after landing a carp, you can't always see small marks or cuts on the line which then becomes a weakness and could cost you your next carp. On the big pit here, there is lots of weed which is also heavy with Mussels, a slight nick from one of these can cause a weakness on the line, which will only become noticeable after hooking a carp.
- The smaller the bait the better, the Mainline Zigs are perfect and very buoyant, at first I couldn't believe I was getting bites at 120-130 yards on 8 foot zigs with such a small hook bait. Especially in such a large expanse of water.



- It does show though the importance of getting in the right spots.
- The two weakest spots are obviously both the tied ends. Especially on weedy waters where a lot of pressure may be required when the carp get their heads into the weed, any kinks created by knotting may give way.
- I prefer a Palomar knot for the hook end rather than the knotless knot, it's much stronger and less likely to break. It's a bit fiddly tying the loop for the bait to thread

onto with the remaining tag, but it's worth the effort.

- Rather than using a loop onto the lead clip end, I use a small swivel, here I can double the line through the swivel, making it much stronger than the standard loop. Which then attaches just like the loop would to the quicklink.
- I prefer to use a 12-15lb hook link, once it has been straightened out, it will fly much better and less chance of tangling than a lighter line. Again, also much stronger.
- I'm not convinced you need to worry about line being seen on Zigs anyway.
 - Make sure you feather the lead as it's approaching the water so the hook link is thrown forward, otherwise it will twist around the mainline on descent through the water. This is also one of the reasons you need to be hitting the clip, whatever distance you are fishing. If you hit the clip, the forward effect happens anyway.
 - Fish the lines really tight, so the lead lifts clear of the bottom quickly (I'm not an advocate of dropping leads at all). Never have been and most likely never will be.



- Think about the depth the carp might be moving through at, are they in the upper layers enjoying the sun, or above weed beds that are releasing naturals upwards. Or are they moving through a couple of feet above the lake bed.
- One thing is for sure, once you have identified an area, in future sessions it may just be a different depth you need.
- This is where you have to be pro-active on trying different depths until you find the correct depth the carp are moving through.

So there are a few tips on Zig fishing. So far this year, nearly all my carp have come to Zigs, I have already caught more carp than this time last year by a fair margin, so it has been worth the effort. On my last trip it all came together landing 5 carp in a three hour spell, when no-one else was catching. It wasn't just a matter of casting out though, the day before I had worked really hard at getting the range, depth, area and spare rigs set up, so when the carp did move through it was

quiet easy to catch them. That's the thing when you try something new though isn't it. It's like a switch has been flicked.

I hope this is of some help for you with your own fishing, especially if you are not getting bites with your regular tactics. I have one more trip on the Pits next week, then we are off on our first jaunt to France for the year, might even have to give the zigs a go there as well, I'll let you know how we get on.

Catch you next time.

Andy





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*Oh, to be a
Carp Angler
by
Dan Winter*



Oh, to be a carp angler indeed! It feels like decades since I last got on the laptop and done some writing.

Like most anglers out there I too had to go through the transition of single life fishing, not worrying about when, where or for how long I went, to having a child, settling down and going through the motions of day to day chores and responsibility. But I did have one trump card to top them all. I am one of 2 directors at BankBUG and Baitcraft Ltd, which means I can fish whenever I like.... Or maybe not?

Okay so I have to confess, I haven't been writing because I just don't get time and over the past two years, I've really not had a lot to write about. Which felt odd really as I never

stop talking, so how could I stop writing! It's like talking for as long as you like and giving someone the opportunity to stop listening whenever they feel like. Whilst being able to pick up right where they left off when they can stomach some more!

And that's what lead me to thinking about writing again. I would ponder on what to write about and often draw a blank, worrying that what I may type up could just be another generic article which could have been written by absolutely anyone.

What is it anglers spend most of their time doing? Easy answer! They read and watch others catching fishing! Why? Because they don't get time to fish because of, well, life! It's a killer! I mean it really sucks doesn't

it! Well that's an over exaggeration because in all honesty I really love my life like most of you do I hope, but it does get in the way of our fishing.

Right now, I want to debunk the myth that people working in this industry get to fish all the time, in fact a lot of them probably get the same bank time or less than you. Obviously, that's not true for some professional anglers but even then, there's only a handful that actually maintain a quality of life and fish every week. Most full timers actually earn very little and if it wasn't for the free bait and tackle, probably wouldn't be able to afford very much at all. And in that case, I think we're all better off just having less hours on the bank but a nice home and the wife and kids taken care of!

But what a lot of the

top anglers you do see in the press and on videos do have, is the drive and the energy to get out and make the most of what time they have. And I really cannot stress that any of you could have the same rewards if you put the effort in and your better half is fairly understanding!

Right now, I'm suffering like many of you with the small amount of actual bank time I can utilise between work and family, so I've decided to pick up the laptop and walk you through my journey as a carp angler right now. Every blank, every hurdle, and hopefully through every problem I solve. As I try to prove that it's not about bank time but what you do in between and during those hours you're by the water.

Where to start?

Well let's start with how my season has gone so far. I feel like I should have one of those emojis with a laughing and crying face at the end of that sentence, as it's not really got off to the start I've wanted. You see, one of the big killers for a lot of business owners in this game is the show season. 5 months of traveling and setting up, packing down, wading through products, and booking hotels. All to show off the newest products and give you guys the first chance to see and touch and have them explained by your favourite anglers. It's also a killer for your fishing and I don't often get started until mid-April, normally around spawning time as my luck generally has it. This season has been no different...

I find myself on an exclusive water so I'm

going to be very limited on what I can give away in the form of photos, names, scenic shots etc. But this isn't about the venue or the fish, this is about finding routes through problems to help bank you more fish, or the opportunity to point and laugh at me.

This water is a stunning gravel pit, pressured on weekends but fairly quiet in the week, like most good syndicates. It used to be jammed with weed but for reasons unbeknown to long standing members, the weed miraculously died and has left a kind of tea staining effect, limiting your sight to about 6 inches under the surface. There are tonnes of islands, nooks, crannies, there's crayfish, oh and did I mention I have to pack up between 4:45am and 5:00am!

So my work is really cut out!

Like many of you I have to spend weekends doing family stuff, chores, wash the car etc you know the score. So I'm limited to overnights and early pack ups. At this point if you're thinking F#%k that! Then you really need to think about how motivated you are to catch. Fishing for a lot of us is not simply

laying in the sun and waiting for the rods to go off. For many it's about catching and the challenge. But if you are the weekend, fair weather angler looking for a few hours away from home, there's nothing wrong with that. You can continue reading and hope I fail miserably as the months go on, or perhaps I may persuade you into motivating the inner

Terry Hearn that's dying to get out.

So how am I doing?

SHOCKING! So bad, it's not even funny. I've managed 5 nights over the past 7 weeks with spawning inevitably standing in my way for a few weeks, while the lake shuts to give them space and time to get jiggy with it. And I've caught nothing. Yep, zilch, zero, in fact I put



myself at -1 for striking into a run with absolutely nothing on the end whatsoever.

Why am I not catching ??

Well it's quite simple, I pack up and the fish wake up, my hours are just too limited. If I can't nab them in the

evening it's hopeless. At least with how I've been fishing. I say that because I'm not convinced that fish simply go to sleep on these morning bite waters.

2 seasons ago I turned up to a new conquest, a lake that normally did around 20 odd fish to the average angler

that put the time in each week. This was very much a morning bite water. I had 4 months before my son was born and I had to make it count. I ended up with 34 runs and 26 banked in just 4 months. Now I'm not mentioning that to gloat, there is a moral to this story.



The following season my son was barely 6 months old, I was still allowed to fish, but my time was going to be more limited. I finished after 6 months on around 18 fish I think it was. However, two other anglers who had been on a few years and had never hit the number I had, both hit over 40 fish each! And the majority were at night! HOW! Seriously how?! I had barely 5 fish in two seasons at night and I had been pretty successful! And then these two absolutely teach me a lesson. Not in the physical sense, there was no rivalry and I'm really glad they had such a great season. What

I mean is, they literally taught me something.

First of all, never assume you know a water like the back of your hand. Number two, fish will always surprise you. Number 3, effort is everything!

And on that note, I'm going to turn it in there. In the next issue I'm going to go through some of the tricks I've tried, methods I've applied, and hopefully report back with a real life fish! All be it I won't be able to show you photos, hopefully through these articles I can bring something of a journey in a situation that many of us face. And I will be doing

it without utilising Baitcraft, and fishing with similar amounts of bait and using a similar budget to what I expect an average angler to have. And if I can persuade just one of you to put a bit more effort in and bank a few more fish, then this whole idea might just be worth the risk of embarrassing myself.

Until next time

Daniel Winter

(BankBUG/Baitcraft)

When It All Went Right by Gary Milky Lowe



It was a Saturday evening when I went for a walk down the local club lake to see how things were going as I was set to do an over nighter the following day, it was only a short walk to the lake. When I walked through the park lake at the road end of the lake there was a small deep bay and the wind was pushing into this, I climbed a tree that overlooked a small corner of the bay and most of the time there are fish sitting under the branches. This time I watched for about half an hour and there was no signs of any carp, so I carried on my rounds. I finally reached the far end of the lake to swim 18... this swim controls a large amount of water and at the far end of this swim is the out of bounds area where for the last few weeks there has been a large amount of fish sitting

around that area. It's a good cast of around 180 yards but you are not allowed to fish that far... you can fish to a large heron on a spit that's about 120 yards. There was some one already fishing there but he was leaving around mid-day on Sunday and had caught two fish so I might have a look there tomorrow.

I carried on with my walk round the lake, I looked in all the main places that normally hold fish but there was nothing, they all seemed to be held up on 18. That night I got everything ready, bait was done and glugged up ready, rigs were done, and all the gear was ready and downstairs ready to load the car at first light. I was up early on the Sunday, but first thing was to make myself a brew before I done anything then

I loaded the car and made the short journey to the college car park. That is where we park the cars if we are fishing the far end of the lake. It was around 5.30 when I walked through the gate to the first swim. I sat there watching the water for signs of fish whilst most of the lads on the lake were still in their bags asleep. I sat there for about an hour and I didn't see too much and not much to go on, so I walked of down to the out of bounds area just to see if they were still there and yep, they were still there. As soon as I went down the slope to the bird feeding area and I see the first one, it came clear out the water to my left near a big willow, so I sat on the bench just to see what was going on. From here I can see the whole of this end so if a fish shows I will see it, plus I can see when

the lads on 18 wake up.

Well I sat there and watched for about two hours and I must have seen around 20 fish but they were all in the safe area, but it was the only place I had seen this amount of fish so I decided to go round to 18 as the lads were up now. I went back to the car and loaded the barrow and pushed it round to the swim, when there I said I would wait till they had gone as I wanted the swim. I sat there chatting about what they had seen and caught while drinking tea and before long, it was time for them to pack up. Once they had left the swim, I started to set my gear up, the bivvy was set up first then I

sat down and sorted the rods out. The rigs I was going to use on all three rods were Ronnie rigs and the pop up I was going to use as bait was the white sweet stim which I have full confidence in. Once all three rods were baited, I then decided to bait up and the maximum distance we were allowed... about 120 yards... the spod rod was clipped up at that range and I filled the Spider Spod up with a mixture of chopped boilies.... cream seed,

bio marine and sweet stim all mixed up and plugged with hemp oil. Then I started to bait up I was going to do a line from the heron on one bank to one of the willows on the other bank. After around 20 cast I thought that would be enough to start with. I'll put some more in later if I need to.

After I had baited up, I picked up the first rod that was going to be cast next to the heron, and because of the distance I was casting I



was using a helicopter rig to stop tangles and first cast it went in spot on target. The second rod was going to go straight down the middle, and that took a few casts till I got the drop I was happy with. The third rod was cast towards the willow on the right hand bank, the tree that I was casting to was about 120 yards so to get it as close as I could it took a few casts. Eventually I hit the spot and got a nice drop too. Once all three rods were out on the spots, I started to put some bait out. The bait I was using was a combination of Munch Baits, the Cream Seed, Bio Marine and the Sweet Stim. I never use round baits to bait up. I like to confuse them by chopping them up in half and then I cover them in Munch Baits hemp oil. As I do this, I can't use a stick to get the free bait out there, so I use a

Spider Spod to get my chops out there. About half an hour later I had finished baiting up and it was now time to set the house up. The swims were big and had a layer of gravel on top so nothing would get muddy or dirty as they said it would rain later.

Well house was up and everything thing was in its place it was now time to put the kettle on and do myself something to eat as I was feeling a bit hungry. The brew was done and the Ridgemonkey was on, I was just doing myself a cheese and ham toastie just to break the hunger, as this was a park lake it was getting busy with dog walkers and kids running around and feeding the

ducks, so you really have to put up with it until it starts to get dark and everyone goes home. I sat at the front of the swim eating my toastie and drinking my tea while watching the water for any signs of fish. I see a few while I was sitting there but they were in the no fishing area about 160 yards at the far end of this swim. It's good really that the fish have somewhere that they are safe and can't get fished for and gives them a break, but what normally happens is that at night they move out of that area and work their way down the swim to where you can fish so most bites



Gary Lowe

at the moment come during the night and early morning so I had made sure all my rods were in the right spots for that time, I saw nothing in my area of the swim during the time I sat there but I am sure there might be the odd one around. They can't all be down the end? During the next few hours I had a few members come down for a walk and to see what's going on, so we had a good chat about everything, and they left. By now it was early afternoon and the sun was setting and there wasn't many people walking around the country park.

Now things had started quieting down I could relax and enjoy the evening watching for fish. I had no one feeding the ducks, kids throwing balls in or

just making a noise. The sun was setting behind me, so I made a brew and sat at the front of the swim enjoying the evening when I see the first fish anywhere near my baited rods which made my confidence sky high as I knew they had started to move down. This time of year, they move down to about the heron but not any further down. They do move right down that area to the swim but not till the weather is a lot warmer. I see about 5 fish before it got too dark to see and I retired to my house. While I was sitting there in the dark, I heard a few more but was not sure where or how far down they were. I was getting hungry again, so I decided to get myself a Chinese, so a quick phone call to the local and half an

hour later food was delivered, and I got stuck into it like a red rag to a bull. It didn't take long to finish that, and the kettle was back on... it was about 9.30 by now and I sat there drinking it on the edge of my bed. I had decided to have an early night as I wanted to be up at first light just in case, I see something and then I would cast at it. I tucked myself into my bag and got my head down for some well-earned kip. I woke up about 1 o'clock to the sound of it chucking it down with rain and I wanted a pee, so I got out, did what I needed to do and jumped back in the bed. It took me ages to get back to sleep but I eventually did. I woke a few hours later and the rain had stopped but it was still dark and I didn't

When it all went right

want to get up yet, I would have another hour then it should start to get light and the sun will start to come over the trees on the far side.

I woke up just as it was starting to get light, I slipped my legs out the bag and fired up the stove for a nice warm brew. I stood at the front of the swim drinking my brew and watching it getting lighter and lighter, the lake was flat calm so if anything shows it would be easy to see. The only thing that going to make it harder is that all the bird life had woken up and were making their way down to the out of bounds area ready for the daily feed from every one that walks round the lake, the noise was a bloody joke, in-between all the ducks and geese I saw two

carp, they looked decent ones as well but they were still in the out of bounds area which I wasn't too happy about. I was still thinking if they come out of the area and had stayed there, but then out of the corner of my eye I saw a fish jump near my rod that is on the tree to the right of the swim and as I watched that area I saw another... it only just broke the surface... then another. I was wrong, they had moved, and they were showing heavily down the right-hand side. It will only be a matter of time till that rod went. I sat there waiting. I knew I had till around 11 that morning then I had to be off and home as I had things to do. As soon as they had started, they stopped on the right and started showing down the left. I was

still thinking that the rod on the right would go when the left-hand rod absolutely melted off and I was on it in a shot as I didn't want the fish to go around the spit and heron then into the main lake. A bit of side strain and the fish was into open water and away from the heron, this fish was few powerful and fighting slowly so I thought this was going to be a good fish. I gradually managed to get it close in, but the margins are deep and on the right had side there is a big bush in the water so needed to keep it away from there, and on the left there is a gap in the spit and it might go through there. It stayed in front of the swim in the deep water just plodding up and down and staying deep. After a

few minutes it finally came up to the surface and took a gulp of air and I saw it was a big bronze common, but with that it saw me and tore of taking line and I was back to square one. I started to gain line back and we went through the same old rigmarole as before but this time it came in close and took a gulp of air and then I slipped the the net under the common and there she was sulking in the bottom of the net. I looked down and saw that it was one of the 30lb commons that this lake has.

With the net secure I sorted out all the weighing equipment and camera. I was on my own so it would be self takes. I wetted the sling and zeroed the scales, then rolled up the net and lifted her up and yes, I was right.... it was a good one, on the Shurecare

mat she went, then transferred her the sling and on the scales, she went 30lb 8oz. I was chuffed with that, I scanned the fish as they are all chipped so we can keep an eye on the weights, then I did a few self takes and slipped her back into the gin clear water and watched her swim away. I then rebaited the rod with a Sweet Stim pop up and cast it back to the same spot. Just as I was sorting out the indicator the right-hand rod melted off. I was well surprised... I picked the rod up and this fish was taking line and moving quick unlike the fish before so I knew this wasn't going to be a big fish. I finally stopped the fish and started to pump it back and before I knew it the fish was swimming up and down and deep but it came up and I managed to keep it on the surface and then

in the net she went. This time it was a very chunky mirror around the low 20 mark. I wasn't far wrong on the scales it went 24lb, so a few pictures and I slipped her back. I was happy with two fish for an overnigher and one a 30 as well.

Again, I rebaited that rod and cast it back to the spot and sat down to chill and have a brew. Time flew past and it was soon time to go home so I packed up and loaded the car and drove the short journey home. The following week I was off back down the syndicate then I was off to do some filming down at Berners Hall with Munch Baits.

But that's a tale for another issue.

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WHERE IT ALL BEGAN
BY
KEVIN BEAUMONT



Like so many other anglers I started my angling journey on the match scene as young whipper snapper sitting for hours upon end on local club waters, commercials, and various stretches of the River Tees. I would sit all week at school and think of nothing else but getting on the bank of a weekend.

My uncle would pick me up at 05:00hrs on the dot, I remember my teeth chattering but not from the cold, but from pure excitement like I used to get on a Christmas morning. I remember the smell of the wild garlic beside the rivers and the pungent smell of pig muck, which even today strangely enough makes me feel kind of happy and brings back so many good memories on stretches of rivers alongside pig farms

At the age of 9 I would happily sit there catching small rudd, roach, perch and the odd skimmer checking the keepnet every 20 minutes to see if my catch had escaped and admiring my catch while also looking back now probably been a pain in the arse to my uncle asking so many questions and getting him to unhook deeply hooked perch. As the years went on I became more confident in the whole process from tying my own knots, using the disgorging and rig presentation in different situations and my fishing stepped up another level targeting specimen chub on the rivers, at first the wait and longevity between bites would drive me nuts but when your 11 years old and hooked up to a 6lb chub in some slack water over the back of rapids... wow does that get the blood pumping. One session we had 14 chub on homemade cheese paste and 8 were over 5lb in weight certainly making the new style of angling with long waits worthwhile.

In June 1999 we moved outside of the town I had grew up in, to a little village called Middleton St George. The village contained 3 reservoirs of which were then ran by the local parish council, the lakes where once stocked by an angling club ran by a local Engineering Business in the late 70s mainly consisting of tench, bream and carp around 2lb in size. in 1999 these carp where now good mid doubles with the odd fish touching the 20lb barrier. This style of angling was totally alien to me seeing lads

sat with 3 rods on pods with alarms (optonics I think they were then) and putting in more bait than I would probably use all season on match lakes. What really caught my interest was the clarity of the water and watching the big dark shapes move around the margin amongst the reeds and lily pads hearing them slurping in dog biscuits that had floated into the margins.

Not being geared up for this new style of angling I armed myself with my strongest feeder rod 8lb ultima line on an old Mitchell reel, landing net and a baby changing mat wrapped in a bin liner as an unhooking mat (white with yellow ducklings wasn't very carpy!) a few bags of scalded mixers and half a loaf of bread which I would pinch out of the cupboard and along with the odd tin of corn that was pretty much how the next 3-4 years of my life went outside of school. I would have a routine putting in a few handfuls of mashed bread and corn in a few spots around the margins of both reservoir 2 and 3 and while I was waiting for fish to show up try and get them going on the top with the mixers. These fish were no mugs and had seen a lot of angling pressure over the years and I'm sure a lot slicker than my approach.



Never the less I began to bank a few fish while also making mental notes of key areas of the reservoirs that fish would visit at certain times when the dog walkers and general public would quieten down which eventually led to me targeting certain fish I witnessed having routes and feeding behaviours, I would sit for hours laid on my front behind reeds or up trees watching how the fish would approach a bed of bait and how they formed a hierarchy in feeding behaviour in certain groups of fish often just feeding them to build confidence for the following day. As the years grew on, I started to build my carp fishing arsenal from Birthdays, Christmas, and items I was given by some of the great anglers I would look up to around the reservoir's (surprisingly how long you can keep and re use pop ups !!)

During my childhood I must have spent literally thousands of hours and hundreds of days and nights over there constantly learning from my own mistakes with my only real guidance from a Julian Cundiff and Kev Maddock book (Beekay guide) I had picked up from car boot sale. My whole angling approach had changed full circle from match style fishing to now sitting behind several rods targeting carp only and the anticipation or the sound of that bite alarm when it springs to life has had me hooked ever since.



In 2002 I had left school and like so many others of that age had a lot of distractions and fishing became secondary as my focus switched to tracking down another species (women) so angling took a little bit of a back step for me and later that year my parents split up so thought I'm getting away from all of this and joined the MOD. I was lucky if I hit the bank 4 or 5 times a year for the next 5 years and it wasn't until I met my now wife in 2006, I moved back to the village and settled down with my own family. The fire for carp fishing burned bright again but wow this style of angling has really taken off from what I had last remembered and there seems to be so many instant carp anglers with so many heavily stocked commercials which require very little water craft, technique or knowledge to crack the code and put fish on the bank.

Upon moving back to the village as you would expect my first thoughts (obviously after my family !) were the reservoir's and to say I was heart broken was an understatement they had been hit very hard from Otters, the Canadian pond weed had taken over big style and the smell of large decaying carp in the bushes left by the otters was soul destroying. They had been several angling clubs with the lease however I'm not sure they realised the scale of the task in hand so never had much longevity. There is still fish in there and I'm sure the thick weed has been a bit of a



blessing, giving them refuge however the week was so thick it would not be fair on the carp trying to pull them through it as it was now 8ft long and on the surface.

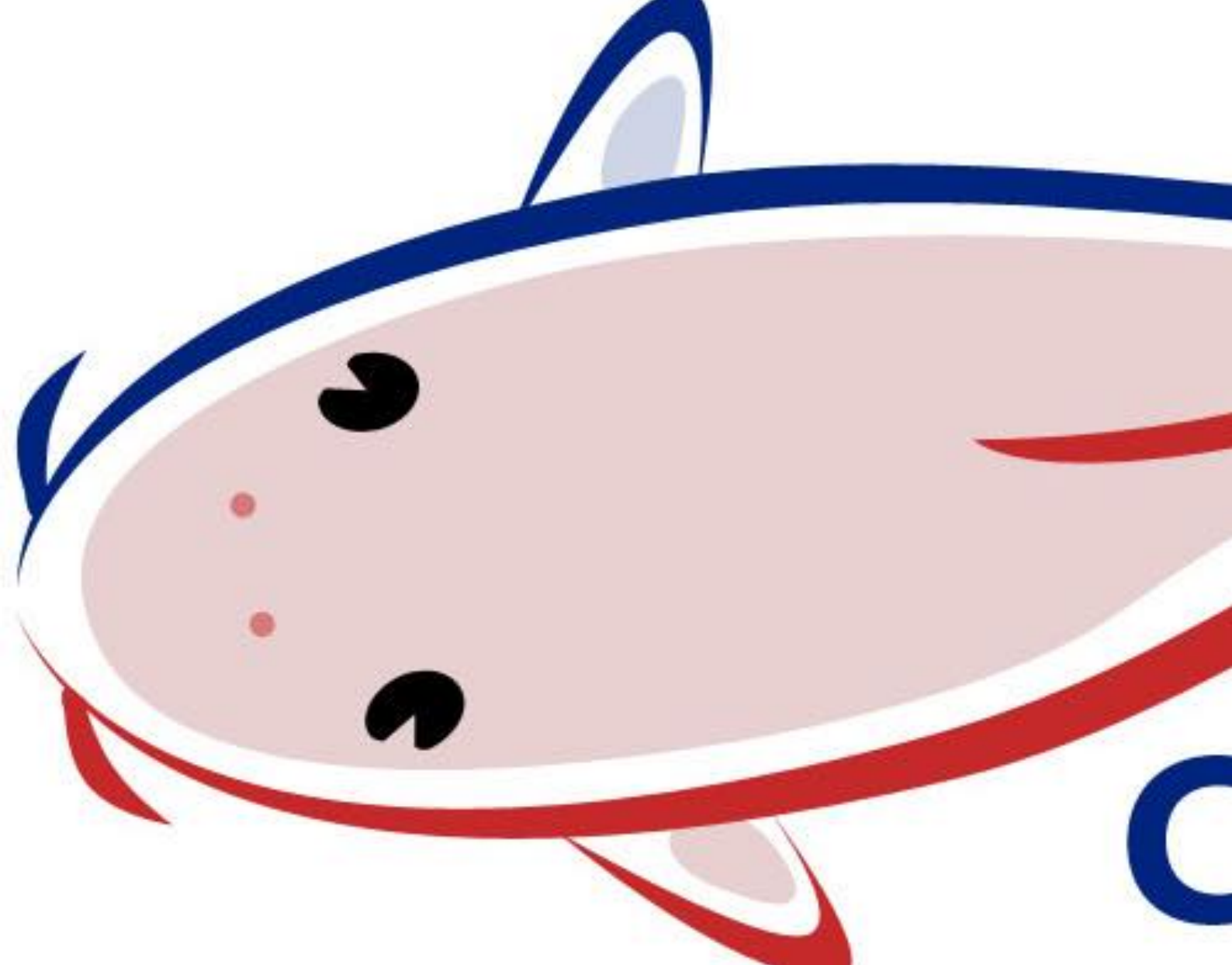
In the Summer of 2019 Wally Appleton, who also runs a local tackle shop in Darlington, undertook the lease for 7 years with the option to extend, and since the takeover the transformation has been incredible from peg construction, weed boat contractors removing literally hundreds of tons and new laid plans to erect otter fencing around the reservoir's to protect what existing stock is still present but also protect the new stock going in this year. Surprisingly there is a lot more stock present than I first thought now that the weed has been thinned out drastically.

As these fish have not seen lot of bait over the recent years I began pre-baiting in areas I used to catch from many years ago giving them a mixture of the ever-faithful Rod Hutchinson Ballistic B and KMG chopped and whole scattering up and down the margins not focusing on a single area but more to get them picking up baits and familiarising themselves with bait again. After a few weeks of pre-baiting 3 times a week I set aside a few hours one evening and was quickly rewarded with a stunning little common as dark as mahogany but fin perfect like a wood carving followed by its big sister at 19lb a real old warrior I'm sure came from the stocking in the late 70s. Both falling to halved baits on the hair back to back to match the chops on my simple stripped back coated braid rig tipped off with Carp Tackle online Scorpion curve in size 6.

I'm lucky enough to fish up and down the country and around the globe targeting the biggest of carp backed by a great brand in Rod Hutchinson however these are just that little bit special for me and I'm determined throughout 2019 to bank a 20lb fish from this venue which id take over a 30lb fish in any other venue in the UK.

Since starting to write this article I have also banked a lovely mid double mirror again a true old original, you just don't see carp like this anymore. Thankyou for taking the time to read my article and I hope I have struck a chord with many other like minded anglers of where it all began, and I will be back with that 20 pounder very soon.

Kev Beaumont



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Pairs Qualifier Six



Willow Park Fishery

Jon Fern and Dean Winsbury went in to an early lead on Friday with a seven fish catch from peg 9.

Tim Hickinbottom and Rich Beardmore in peg 5 were following in second with three fish. The only other pair to catch on Friday were Jamie Standbridge and Neil Richards with one. As is normally the case, Saturday saw a rapid improvement with the catch rates. Jon and Dean bagged another eleven fish to extend their lead at the top. While Tim and Rich added nine more. Jamie and Neil also bought another 9 to the scales as the match started to heat up. Two new pairs now came onto the scoreboard as Karl Palmer and Darren Pearse came from nowhere with seven fish. Thomas Duncan-Dunlop and James Bake also had a good day with five. We now had the prospects of an exciting finale.

Tim and Rich had nine fish on Sunday morning to snatch the victory out of Jon and Deans hands, they could only add one more which was enough for them to secure second place.

Third were Jamie and Neil who had three on the last morning.

Karl and Darren banked four more while Thomas and James had five but both pairs suffered for their Friday blanks. Liam Morgan and Wayne Fearon caught a 16lber to save the blank.

There were some tremendous weights in this one with the top three putting almost 840lb on the scales. While the fourth and fifth placed pairs had in excess of 330lb between them. There were 75 fish caught in this match for a total weight of 1192lb 11oz, giving an average of almost 15lb per fish. What a quality carp match venue Willow Park is becoming.

		REUBEN HEATON			
		British Carp Cup Pairs		Q6	
Position	Competitors Willow Park	Peg No	Number of Fish	Total Weight	
1	Tim Hickinbottom / Rich Beardmore	5	21	344lb 7oz	
2	Jon Fern / Dean Winsbury	9	19	296lb 8oz	
3	Neil Richards / Jamie Standbridge	7	13	196lb 3oz	
4	Karl Palmer / Darren Pearse	13	11	172lb 5oz	
5	Thomas Duncan-Dunlop / James Bake	4	10	164lb 3oz	
6	Liam Morgan / Wayne Fearon	11	1	16lb 3oz	
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

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Pairs Qualifier Seven



Poolbridge Farm, Q Lake
by
Kieran McDonnell

'Poolbridge Q Lake was run for us by Kieran McDonnell. He has very kindly done the write up as well. Many thanks Kieran.

Although it wasn't quite as prolific as past years, Pool Bridge Farm still proved to be a very entertaining and exciting match venue. Based in North Yorkshire, it offers a very unique experience for competitors as the anglers actually fish out from the lake's island towards the far margin. The bridge that connects the island and mainland is what gives it its quirky name Q lake. The lake boasts 13 pegs, making it ideal for our 12 pair qualifier. It holds a good stock of carp with averages being around the mid to upper double mark, with plenty of twenties and even a few thirties to go at.

As always at Q the draw ended up being an interesting affair, with many people having different ideas of where was best to go, but after the draw the mood changed and it was down to business for our pairs. The baiting and marking hooter soon came around at 11am and many pairs opted to mark around trying their best to find little spots in the weedy venue. Some decided to play the quiet approach by sitting on their hands and leaving their water untouched, the tactical games had well and truly begun. The 12pm hooter soon sounded and it was all in for our competitors.

Whether it was down the indecisive weather conditions, or the fact that some of the lakes residents were starting to think about things other than eating. It was nearly six hours before we had our first fish! It was the Queen brothers in peg 7 that caught the first fish and just like London buses fifteen minutes later they'd had another one in the wet. Those carp weighing 9.07lbs and 19.08lbs respectively, putting them into the lead. It was another good few hours before another pair caught and it was just on the hour of dusk when Colin Scott and our reigning champion Jaye Carpmail in peg 10 chipped in with a lovely dark mid double mirror.

As the night drew in there was a genuine feel of disbelief around the lake, as it was very unlike Q to fish so slowly, let alone have only two pairs on the scoreboard in the first 12 hours! It wouldn't be until 7am before the next fish would come out and it was Wayne Reed and Leon Woodcock in peg 8 who ensured no cast off would take place in the shape of a 16.01lb clean mirror. As pairs stirred around the lake the general consensus was although there had been a few lost fish in the weed and a couple of catfish, the fish were very much playing hard ball.

However, over the next few hours there was a flurry of fish coming out from across the lake. The Queen brothers in peg 7 and Jaye and Colin in peg 10 were battling for first position, whilst under the radar, Cliff Kemp and Dan Price in peg 12 were quietly putting a few fish on the bank putting them into the mix for podium places. By late afternoon six pairs had caught and the competition was really hotting up.

As darkness drew in and Tottenham and Liverpool played out a largely underwhelming champions league final. Alex Ridehalgh and Lee Smith in peg 4 had ideas of doing what Tottenham couldn't do...a great comeback. They put two decent fish on the bank including the matches first twenty, meaning they were very much in the ascendancy going into the second night. As the lake settled down, Cliff and Dan added another fish to their total putting them into first place and marking a very good end to the day for the pair.

In what turned out to be a night of upsets and shocks, as Anthony Joshua was usurped by the unlikely Andy Ruiz in the boxing. Steve Carrie and Nick Davies in peg 9, who had come out last in the draw, got in on the action in the early hours of the morning with a low double fish. Jaye and Colin added a couple of fish to consolidate their second position and shortly after dawn the lads in peg 4 had landed a third fish putting them a couple of pounds behind the Queen brothers who were holding onto third place.

As the morning sun came over the lake, Steve and Nick banked another fish and this time it was significantly bigger. Out of all the times to catch a mid-twenty carp this has got to be the time! It incredibly put the pair one mid double fish behind third place, with only a couple of hours of the competition left. There was a blanket of tension over the lake as there were still several pairs fighting it out for third place and it really was anyone's for the taking. That anyone turned out to be the comeback kings in Steve and Nick, who in the final hour landed an upper double fish to put them into third place by just over two pounds. It was elation for those two as the final hooter sounded and sheer heartbreak for the poor Queen

who had been in the top three since the start of the match.

That was the conclusion to our qualifier at Pool Bridge Farm and congratulations Cliff Kemp and Dan Price who won the qualifier, in what is largely regarded as an unfancied swim. Jaye Carpmail and Colin Scott for working extremely hard to finish second and to Steve Carrie and Nick Davies, who despite coming out last in the bag and not catching until the last quarter of the match, put on an amazing comeback to come from absolutely nowhere to take the final qualifying spot. They will all go into our final at Barston Lakes where they will compete for the 15k jackpot.



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British Carp Cup Pairs

Q7

Position	Competitors	Poolbridge	Peg No	Number of Fish	Total Weight
1	Cliff Kemp / Dan Price		12	5	77lb 12oz
2	Jaye Carpmail / Colin Scott		10	4	68lb 1oz
3	Steve Carrie / Nick Davies		9	3	56lb 10oz
4	Darren Queen / Dean Queen		7	4	54lb 1oz
5	Alex Ridehalgh / Lee Smith		4	3	52lb 6oz
6	Kevin Grout / Natalie Quint		5	3	44lb 14oz
7	Darren Wilcox / Jason Trought		13	2	35lb 5oz
8	Wayne Reed / Leon Woodcock		8	1	18lb 1oz
9					
10					
11					
12					



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A map of Kingsbury Pine Pool, which is an irregularly shaped body of water divided into several zones by dashed lines. The zones are labeled as follows: 'East' (top left), 'West' (top right), 'The Triangle' (center), 'The West' (bottom left), 'The East' (bottom right), and 'The South' (bottom center). There are two small green islands in the 'East' zone and one small green island in the 'The Triangle' zone. A brown path or road runs along the top and right edges of the pool. A blue square with a white 'P' is located at the top left corner of the map.

Kingsbury Pine Pool

'This event produced a new venue singles match record weight for Jack Lamb, who had a great start on Friday by catching eight fish for 151lb 14oz. On Saturday he added another six fish, giving him a combined total of 249lb 2oz. This weight could have been even bigger but he was getting low on bait and decided to wind in and get a good nights sleep. On Sunday morning he cast out again but didn't add to his tally. This didn't effect the outcome as he romped to victory some 50lb+ ahead of his nearest rival.

Tom Derome came out first in the draw and opted for the reeds, peg 5. He started the match slowly and didn't catch at all Friday. Saturday he had seven fish and Sunday he had another three to take runners up spot behind Jack.

Tom Cuthbertson, in peg 3, didn't catch Friday but had a good Saturday with five fish. On Sunday morning he banked another three and lost what looked to be a good one, despite that he had done enough to take third place.

It was a close run thing, with Brian Byford finishing in fourth and Glenn Alexander fifth. Both with 100lb+ catches over the 48 hour duration.

This venue just gets better year on year and I can't wait to get back here for Q8 of the pairs in a couple of weeks. There were 50 fish caught for a total weight of 956lb 3oz. This equates to an average of over 19lb+ per fish. There were three 30lb+ fish out and eighteen 20lb+ making it a truly exciting match.

		REUBEN HEATON		Total weighing solutions			
		British Carp Cup Singles		Q4			
Position	Competitors	Kingsbury Pine Pool	Peg No	Number of Fish	Total Weight		
1	Jack Lamb		8	14	249lb 2oz		
2	Tom Derome		5	10	157lb 14oz		
3	Tom Cuthbertson		3	8	171lb 12oz		
4	Brian Byford		0	6	127lb 3oz		
5	Glenn Alexander		7	7	117lb 10oz		
6	Kevin Locke		4	3	60lb 9oz		
7	Steve Blow		2	2	32lb 8oz		
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							

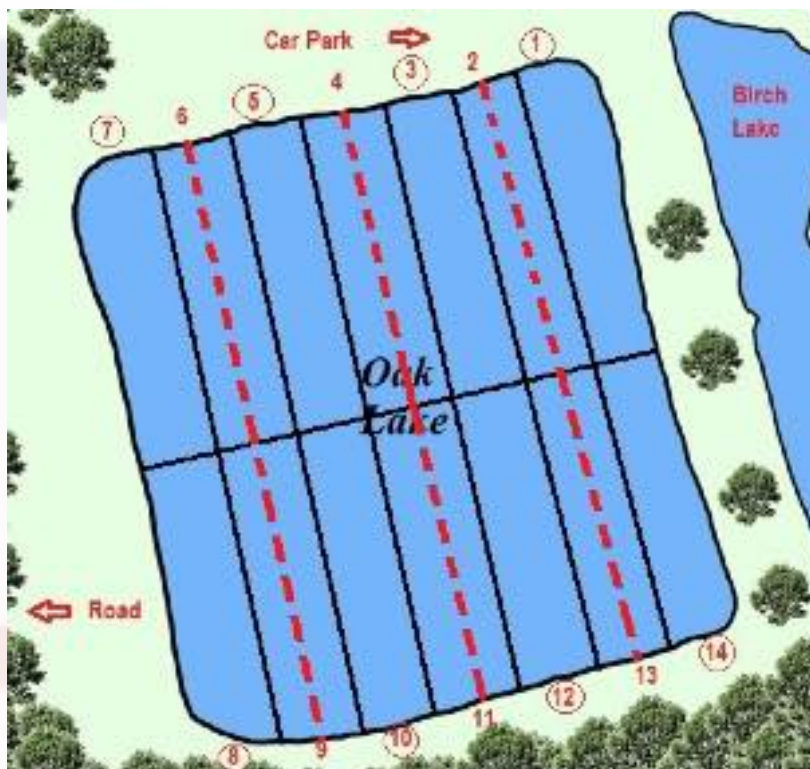
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Ladies Pairs



- 1 Ellen Beedham-Sam Hoskins
- 3 Miranda Brown-Tania Williams
- 5 Joanne Lofts-Becky Sharman
- 7 Linda Breeze-Ami Parker
- 8 Sue Seton-Smith-Petula Little
- 10 Jane Henthorn-Paula Marriott
- 12 Rachel Bladen-Sarah Davey
- 14 Joanne Barlow-Chloe Dodson-Shanks

Oak Lake, Old Mill

'This event produced a new venue singles match record weight for Jack Lamb, who had a great start on Friday by catching eight fish for 151lb 14oz. On Saturday he added another six fish, giving him a combined total of 249lb 2oz. This weight could have been even bigger but he was getting low on bait and decided to wind in and get a good nights sleep. On Sunday morning he cast out again but didn't add to his tally. This didn't effect the outcome as he romped to victory some 50lb+ ahead of his nearest rival.

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REUBEN HEATON					
Ladies British Carp Cup					
Pairs					
Rank	Competitors	Old Mill, Oak Lake	Peg	Number of Fish	Total Weight
1	Jessie Bell / Chloe Jackson		14	11	40lb 10oz
2	Jane Hardham / Paula Munn		10	4	80lb 5oz
3	Rachel Elston / Sarah Darcy		12	1	17lb 10oz
4	Linda Dooze / Ann Parker		7	2	10lb 4oz
5	Janie Dooze / Sam Dooze		1	2	17lb 10oz
6	Margie Dooze / Sam Dooze		5	1	10lb 5oz
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

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TalkingCarp





*****URGENT*****

Q8 PAIRS Kingsbury Water Park Fishery Pine Pool

Early this morning we were advised by the Kingsbury Park Rangers that the water levels had risen so high and fast overnight that this weekends match has been cancelled. We have an new date and this qualifier will now become Q9 and fished from the 12th to the 14th July.

Sorry about the late notice but we cannot control the British weather.

Bookings now open for this years events !!!!

competitors and then 9am Friday 19th to everyone else.

Cost of entry £440.

contact@britishcarpcups.co.uk

Belinda 09791 285864 Office 01159 812791

The final at Barston will commence with a sit down meal in the restaurant followed by the 10pm draw live on stage.

- Q1 Branston Water Park 1st to 3rd March - Complete
- Q2 Orchard, Lake 7. March 15th to 17th - Complete
- Q3 Todber Manor, Big Hayes. March 22nd to 24th - Complete
- Q4 Albans Farm Lake. April 12th to 14th - Complete
- Q5 Berners Hall. April 26th to 28th - Complete
- Q6 Willow Park. May 17th to 19th - Complete
- Q7 Poolbridge Q Lake. May 31, 1st & 2nd June - Complete
- Q8 Kingsbury Pine Pool. June 14th to 16th
- Q9 Old Mill Oak Lake. July 5th to 7th
- Q10 Thorney Weir. July 26th to 28th
- Final Barston. August 23rd to 25th

Hurry !!! Book now as places are filling fast



Here it is folks. The one you have all been asking about. It's the British Carp Cup singles.

- Q1 Todber Manor, Little Hayes 8th to 10th March - Complete
- Q2 Branston Water Park 29th to 31st March - Complete
- Q3 Willow Park 26th to 28th April - Complete
- Q4 Kingsbury Pine Pool 31st May to 2nd June - Complete
- Q5 Wetlands 21st to 23rd June
- Q6 Newbridge Lakes 28th to 30th June
- Q7 Poolbridge Q Lake 28th to 30th June
- Q8 DDAP's Brooklands 26th to 28th July

Final Albans Willows Lake 4th to 6th October

Brooklands will be 16 places and max of 11 at Wetlands
All the rest have 12 and the top 3 qualify. Top 4 at Brooklands.
The final will be an out of the bag draw and it will be decided on a 3 best fish basis. The entry fee is £250.

Prize money

1st £5000

Runners up £2000

3rd £1000

4th £750

Booking now open

contact@britishcarpcups.co.uk 01159 812 791





Always Watching by Dale Hatt

At this time of the year a lot of you would have joined a new syndicate, and as summer is fast approaching you will be scratching your head with many questions; what rigs to use, what bait to use, what location to fish, and whether or not to listen to what the existing syndicate members are doing or stand out from the crowd and go against the grain.

I too have had these same thoughts recently as I've been lucky enough to join a little gem of a water; a 5 acre gravel pit with around 40 carp, each one scalier than the last, with a few big girls too.

So how have I approached it? Well let me tell you, it hasn't been easy. Luckily for me I haven't gone in cold. I've had some sound advice which

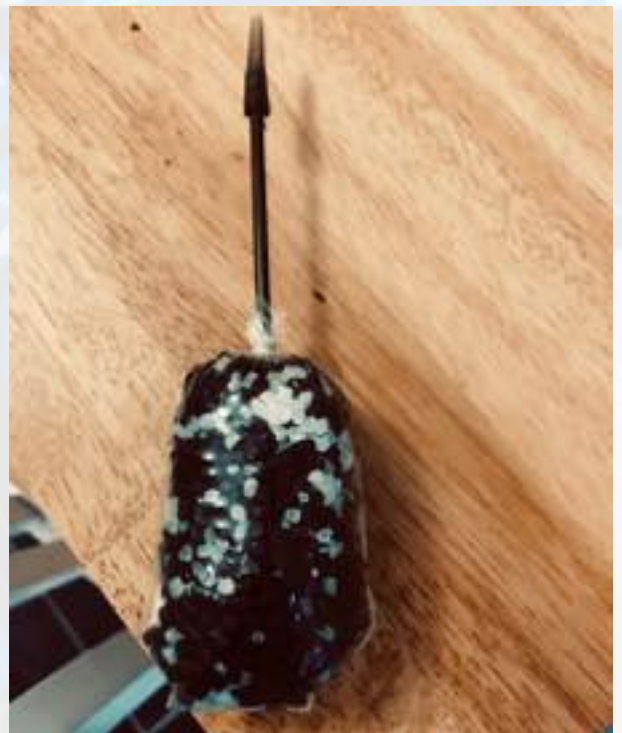
has given me a head start – a few little spots to fish, where is shallow and where is the deeper water etc.

But honestly, the best advice I can give is to get yourself down to your lake as much as you can, even if it's only for an hour or two a week and even if you are not fishing. Just being there will give you an advantage over other anglers.

Just watch, look, and listen. People wouldn't believe how valuable listening is, especially just after dark or just before sunrise. Your eyes and ears are your most valuable weapons!

My approach this season is solid bags. I know that my particular water can get very weedy,

so, I know that with a solid bag I can present a bait even at night with a duck chuck if I get wiped out from the birds, as being crystal clear water coots can sometimes be a pain! My chosen rig is a super supple braid hook link of around 5 inches – not as short as some would use, but I'm a firm believer that when fishing for big fish (30lb plus) they need a little more rope to hang themselves. My starting point is 5 inches,



then if I manage to land a fish I check to see where the hook hold is and lengthen or shorten the rig accordingly. I combine this with a 4oz inline lead, because I believe a big lead definitely sets the hook a lot better and creates that shock effect – I seem to get vicious takes!

Bait for me is a no brainer – I have so much confidence in Carp Company it's unreal. I have been

using their products for more than ten years and would take them anywhere in the world, and the 'Icelandic Red' seems to separate the better fish from the others.

My bag mix consists of 1mm and 2mm pellets, and the bulk of the mix comes from crushed down boilie crumb. One last thing I do before casting is to inject my solid bag with hemp oil before casting out. This is a

real edge on silty and weedy venues. It's like a homing beacon for any passing carp. I've been trickling in 'Icelandic Red' for last few months and it's really paying off. It really is a case of the more you apply, the better it gets.

I have done ten over-nighter and had 9 fish – 3x30-36lb and 6 mid-twenties. I don't like to throw this term around because I see it written too much but it really is



a “big fish bait”. I’m using the solid bags because the water is gin clear and the bottom is quite silty, so that will give me great presentation and less tackle for a wary carp to see. I use a 4oz lead that will be buried in the silt and way out of sight, although saying that you can have very effective rigs and bait, but as I mentioned earlier this will be nowhere near as effective as your eyes and ears. If you’re

not on the fish, you can’t catch them!

My latest trip ended with a top result – I had seen fish rolling off the reeds the day before, so, I made a mental note of their position. The following day I went back in the swim that commands the most water in front of the reeds, getting down late (just before dark).

By around 8:35pm I was completely set up but held off casting

out; I just sat there watching the water in the darkness, my PVA bags at the ready. Bosh! I’m sure that was a fish, or was it a coot?

The next was definitely a carp, and a pretty decent one by the sound of it? Three solid bags packed full of boilie crumb, a few 1mm pellets and a white waffer hook bait were all cast to where I’d heard the fish.

Having three bags on



their heads spooked them for a while, but at midnight I had a ferocious take! The bobbins were on the floor and the clutches were all locked up as I was snag fishing to the reeds. I heard a single bleep, sat up then the next thing I heard was the middle rod jumping off the rest! Luckily enough, the left rod stopped it going completely in, so, I grabbed the rod butt

and bent into it. From the off I couldn't stop it; I honestly thought the line was going to break. I always use strong tackle when snag fishing, but this fish was another level. I eventually turned it just shy of the reeds and she headed into open water – what a relief!

A 20 min battle ensued but finally she was in the net.

I flicked the head torch on; it wasn't the big girl but was one of the A-team – she tipped the scales around to exactly 36lb. Well chuffed – and thanks to my mate Steve for getting out of bed at 5am to do the pictures!

See you on the bank.

Dale





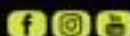


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| ■ BROWN 0.38MM 15LB/6.8KG 1200M | ■ CLEAR 0.38MM 15LB/6.8KG 1200M | ■ GREEN 0.38MM 15LB/6.8KG 1200M |
| ■ BROWN 0.42MM 18LB/8.2KG 1200M | ■ CLEAR 0.42MM 18LB/8.2KG 1200M | ■ GREEN 0.42MM 18LB/8.2KG 1200M |

**Consistency and a return
to the Syndicate in search
of the Fully Scaled by
Steve Gilbey**



Well it's been just over a month since my last day session on a Fenland Pit and learning from that day session where I banked six lovely English Carp to 34lb gave me a few ideas for my syndicate lake also nestled away in the Cambridgeshire Fens. It is home to some lovely carp most between high doubles and more and more in the twenty pound bracket, but it is also home to a lovely fully scaled mirror that is roughly about twenty three pounds but is just so pretty. This fish is yet to grace my net but it's one I would love to catch having seen the photographs.

I am not going to lie for someone who fishes every couple of months and only short sessions I have often struggled with consistency in my angling.

I watch the full time anglers and consultants and it is made to look incredibly easy! But for me I have to say it seldom is and if I want to produce results, I have to get everything right and it's the small details that count.

This could be from simply organising my time to look after my two year old and fit a few hours fishing in when I can to having my gear ready.

I have aimed this year to just try and be more consistent in everything with my angling and it has been harder than I thought but well worth it.

We must remember sometimes it does not go right and that's fine let's still enjoy ourselves along the way!!

I am not a master of watercraft and don't spend enough time out on the bank to study it but one thing I do learn from is past experience. A recent trip highlighted to me that we always learn something even if we have not caught and we can use it for next time as frustrating as this maybe it can be of benefit.

About two months ago I visited my local lake for a few hours and to set the scene briefly the lake is about five acres with two islands almost an oval shape with a steady depth all over.

The margins be it around the island or bankside are the obvious features with overhanging bushes and Lilly pads when grown. I had set up and was fishing towards the two points of each island and these areas normally do well for most but on this occasion not for me.

I realised too late in the day but after I went for a little wander down from my spot to a corner almost like a little bay it felt much warmer and within three minutes of standing there I felt more comfortable and I had seen at least three carp show so that's where our quarry felt comfortable.

Needless to say, I moved and dropped two singles on top of the shows I had a run instantly but lost it in some snags!! Anger disappointment and frustration followed, and this is what I have been trying to perfect Consistency getting halfway there but something going wrong!!

My own fault I had fished tight to a snag and it had just got into it enough to drop the hook.

I learnt two things from that session that I put to the back of my mind the first being the location I now had an area to continue for the rest of the season knowing that the carp loved gliding into this bay from the island

and back again in and out of the snag.

The second point was to position the rod slightly away from the snag but near enough for the carp to have to come over the spot in or out on their way around the lake.

I figured that this was a perfect ambush point for targeting Mr Carp on my next visit.

Moving forward I used my day session as a template getting the rigs right and putting together a mix of bait that on that day took the six fish to 34lb as mentioned. I will give a brief outline to the reader as to my bait of choice with four simple ingredients and I do not feel it needs to be any more complicated.



Firstly, Rod Hutchinson Ballistic B is my go-to bait we all have our favourites, but this has caught so many big carp all over it is an instant bait and the perfect all-rounder.



Next is sweetcorn which I just have to use in my mix I then add hemp oil and Ballistic B liquid food which just makes it outstanding and you are ready to go. When you look at bait, I believe there is a lot of hype but I know that Carp love sweetcorn and will readily accept it add in a quality boilie and these two ingredients will catch you fish.

I chop my boilie up or crumb it and it adds a clouding affect to the finished mix and when you apply it over the top of you hook bait you are drawing fish in with very little

food content and the first thing, they come across is your bait.

The aim when I next had a day was to try and put these elements that I had learnt together and to fish consistently at the syndicate lake. The chance came around a few days ago now and to be fair I don't take much notice of the weather you go when you can go!! But it was looking good very overcast slight breeze and comfortable.

I set out at a reasonable time in the morning arriving at the lake to find

one other angler on fishing out towards the island but nowhere near where I wanted to be I left him to it as he seemed to be setting up so I barrowed my gear around to the aforementioned bay.

It felt lovely nice and sheltered from the Northerly wind and out the way I like that feeling!!

Everything was ready and I wasted no time in getting the rods clipped up to the spot off the snag one rod at six and a half wraps the other at seven both about half a foot from an overhanging branch a nice comfortable cast. My plan was to bait steadily with the mix, so I cast out three spombs of my mix over each rod and then walked around to

the back of the snag and trickled a few half baits in around the spot. Both rods had a 15mm Ballistic B pop up on rigs consisted of the ever faithful and reliable multi rig.

No sooner had I walked back to my spot to make a brew one rod was away the fish making for the snag my Rod Hutchinson DMX rod took on a curve a I walked back to gently ease the carp away from the snag sure enough out into open water and a scrapper mirror of double figures sat in the net.

I quickly slipped that fish back and re-cast to the spot and baited again with three spombfulls of mix barely had I recast and the same rod was away this time trying to get to the side of the snag a short but

frantic battle saw a common in the net that was duly photographed treated and slipped back. I had been fishing for less than twenty minutes and two carp had graced me with their presence I felt confident that I had got it right! That being said



there is always a frustrating moment and that came with another run and this time the carp won reaching a branch in the snag and freeing the hook and after that the session went a little quiet.

I stuck with it and kept recasting every hour or so and feeding the peg with three spombs of my mix over the spots during this I had a take during my baiting up. Frantic was definitely the word playing the carp between one rod and the spod rod that had braid still stretching out into the lake.

Only I can remember how frantic that was, but the reader can imagine I am sure. I could not believe my luck as I played the fish and as it appeared out of the murky water, I could see a white golden colour and broad back I had hooked one of the few Ghost carp in this lake!!

We had some fun the carp twisting and turning putting up a right scrap I guessed it may be a twenty but was unsure it looked amazing in fairness.

Into the net after eventually tiring and as I unhooked this amazing carp I realised that it was my first ever ghost carp I weighed her bang on 18lb and looked ready to spawn, I doused the carp with water and treated her with carp care treatment and placed this wonderful carp into the flotation sling.

It's so important to look after these fish and having that time in the sling with plenty of water aids in the recovery and when ready off she swam.



I carried on baiting slowly after the recast and the next bite came after lunch to the same rod this time a dark old scaly mirror into double figures not huge but so pretty and with a black mouth clearly had been feeding in the silt.

The fish was Photographed and treated again before being slipped back I could not believe the session I was having again.

I received no more action for about two hours despite trickling in the bait, but I was sure that the carp were still here and it was just the afternoon lull.

I sat drinking tea and thinking again about changing the second rod as it had not done a bite but decided that I would recast both to the same spots and spomb some more over the top. I began to think with time running out before I had to go home if that was it but what happened next was a similar moment to the one I had when catching the big old mirror on the day ticket a month or so ago. A single bleep on the Mag runner followed by a screaming take and the fish was out into open water across the other line luckily it had not picked it up.



I gained control of the fish and it led me a merry dance up and down the margin giving a good account of itself it was at this point I heard the other Mag runner letting out a one toner and the rod tip bending round I remember thinking right we are in trouble now had I picked up the other line??

I managed to land the first carp I could see it was a good common in the net and I picked up the other rod and the fish felt good powering off when I applied some pressure. A good five minutes or more passed with me worrying about the fish in the net but eventually a big common almost swam into the net and I stood exhausted from the fight with two commons looking none the worse for wear side by side in the net.

Un-believable moment that I had not had in a while a double take with two commons landed, I was buzzing.

On the scales the bigger of the commons went eighteen and a half and the other just under at seventeen and a half pounds. Both photographed and treated before being gently eased back into the water after recovering I felt

happy and pleased that consistency had been achieved for me on a day ticket water and my syndicate resulting in multiple catches, I just have to keep it going now learning all the time.

Target achieved with the Ghost carp but the fully scaled still eluded me and would have to wait for another day.

I know it looks easy to some, but it very rarely is for the average angler and I find I must put that extra effort in to get the small details right to bring about the rewards whatever they may be to you as an individual.

I hope you enjoyed the article and most of all enjoy your fishing and being out there doing it!!

All the best

Steve G

Team Hutchinson

MLA 2
BY MIKE
MCMANION



It had been a lovely sunny weekend with lots of carp across the country making the most of the heat and awakening from their winter slumber making many anglers happy.

My syndicate lake had been no different with a number of very large carp gracing the bank being tripped up by those putting in the effort floater fishing and zigging.

Unfortunately, I am unable to get out at the weekend due to a small family (3 boys between 2 – 6) and normally only having a quick over nighter on a Monday to get my fix.

I decided to start prepping my bait as normal ready for my Monday night session. I took out 4 kg of my trusty Carp Company Icelandic red and left it in a bucket (I love using this bait when

it's got that sticky texture) A couple of days later and I added 50ml of Carp Company Minamino, 100ml of the matching Caviar and Cranberry glug and finally a healthy dose of the stick mix for extra attraction. I then shook this up for a minute or so..... perfect what carp could resist?

I had a dilemma; it was bank holiday Monday and I had a family BBQ to attend which meant an even later arrival at the lake. I also had to get to the office the following

day to conduct an investigation (No working from the bank for a couple of extra hours this time) Where to fish? I had been promising myself through February that I would get back to a very special lake soon – this would require a vast amount of motivation as there are lots of restrictions including no night fishing (not ideal when I only get one night a week) this means I have to break by trips into a quick 4 - 5 hour evening session and a very early morning session for 4-5 hours



any way that's a story for another day.

I decided that by the time I would get back from the BBQ, put the boys to bed and arrive at the "secret lake" coupled with the need to get to the office, it would be a no go as I would only have 3 hours fishing.

My syndicate lake presented the best option as I could get there at a reasonable time and make it to my meeting without having to pack up before 08:00 at a push, realistically it should be a 07:30 pack up but us carp anglers love to push things to the limit!

I arrived at the car park at 20:00 and was full of anticipation. As I mentioned earlier the lake had been fishing well with the lion share of the fish coming out in the middle of the lake with some of the

A teams making an appearance. I was expecting it to be very busy due to this.

I loaded my barrow and started my journey down the footpath. When I reached the end of the path, I was greeted by the lake waking up in its glorious spring colours with green leaves on the trees and bankside vegetation growing – quite a stark contrast from my last trip here back in January.

The plan was to complete a couple of circuits of the lake to ascertain the location of any other areas the fish may be residing in (all the swims in the middle were taken) the first swim I arrived in looked promising with the weather conditions and

there were also a couple of indications of fish being present. The next swim was taken, and the following was lifeless. I arrived at the fourth swim at the top of the lake which is the most hidden and aptly named "the secret" This was a swim that I had thought could be of interest on the journey down as it has the most snags in the lake in the way of dense tree lined margins and the big girls quite often sulk under them once they



have been caught. Whilst I was stood watching the water a fish turned under the water (just like when a duck spooks them as it flies over) I thought to myself that had to be a carp making the most of the warmth in the upper layers. I decided to stay and watch a little longer before setting off again. About 10 minutes later there was another sign, this time it was around 20 yards to the right but the same distance out.

That was good enough for me! The light was fading fast, so I quickly cast a lead out to get the rough distance and to check the bottom. Three casts later I had established there was a clear spot next to some new weed growth, Perfect. I soon had a rod positioned here which was confirmed by a nice firm "donk" I catapulted out a spread of around 100 pimped up bollies. I decided to place my other rods down the

around a little more and I feel the larger carp can sometimes feed on the edges of baited spots and this replicates the "safe" area.

Rods in position I decided to setup camp which on this occasion was just my bed chair and kettle as I was spending the night under the stars. I prefer fishing this way because if you see something to move on there is less to put away making the decision to move that much easier. I continued watching the water up until midnight when I decided to turn in for the night not having seen any other signs of fish to move on. I was sure the fish had moved out the bay for the night but would return in the morning and was confident for a bite from 05:00. I was awoken to an alarm at 04:30.... unfortunately,



left and right hand margins at the end of some overhanging trees. I baited these with a spread of around 30 baits each – I like to spread my baits out instead of tightly baiting as I believe it gets them moving

it was only my phone alarm alerting me to the fact I should be up watching the water. Kettle on and coffee in hand I was scanning the water again for signs of my quarry. As it started getting lighter, I noticed that two of the middle swims had become free and I was contemplating a move, but it was now around 05:30 and I thought by the time I had packed up and got over there I'd only have around 2 hours fishing. Luckily a carp rolled in the entrance to the bay I was fishing making my

decision to stay put easier as I thought they are coming back. 07:30 and no further signs had I got it wrong? Should I have moved? These were the thoughts going through my head (I'm sure you have all been there) when a lump decided to try and do its best to impersonate a dolphin at SeaWorld. That was it left hand rod was wound in, waders on and I was in the lake casting to where the beast had breached, the bait landed within 3 yards and I was super confident that it

could go at any time. Well it was technically time to pack up so got everything loaded bar the rods and alarms and thought I would give it 1 more hour (I was already thinking of what excuse to use for being late)

One of my best friends rang me at 08:06 and I went through the events of the morning and the night before. After 20 minutes I just said I got it wrong and had blanked. With that I said my goodbyes and put down the phone.



I looked at the rods and it was time to make that all important decision.... which rod to bring in first. I remember turning around and putting something on my barrow, then turning back to face my rods and seeing the middle bobbin firmly pressed

against my rodThat's a fish I said to myself (my alarm volumes are normally turned down preferring to use the receiver which had been turned off due to packing up) I ran to the rod and struck into thin air, thinking the fish was moving towards me and the snags I frantically wound in until the rod arched over. The line angle confirmed the carp was enroute to the safety of the tree to my right.

I leap straight into the water to improve my line angle and applied as much pressure as I dared. Thank god this worked, and I must have stopped her 10 yards from the tree. With this she decided to charge 30 yards or so back out. At this point I was thinking it felt like a reasonable fish, but I was late for my meeting. After another ten minutes I was thinking this is a better fish than I first thought it hadn't come

off the bottom and was slowly plodding around taking line back from me whenever I thought I was starting to win. At this point I had to calm myself down and I remember thinking don't worry about the meeting concentrate on the fish your late now anyway! The fish made several attempts to make it to the sanctuary of the snags to my left and again to the tree to my right. 20 minutes or so from the first run I was finally



guiding the fish over the drawcord of the waiting net. As I lifted the net the tail flopped over the cord and I thought Hello this is a kipper. I peered over the net and saw the width of the fish, straight away I was in no doubt I had one of the A team. I was buzzing and also panicking about my meeting, but what a reason to be late! I bit the line and rested the net so the fish could recover safely whilst I got the camera and scales ready. Once everything was ready, I lifted my prize out of the water and settled her onto my unhooking matt. Once I pulled back the net, I recognised the fish immediately however she was beaten up with a couple of cuts on either flank (she had been seen days before smashing through some of the snags possibly

cleaning herself off after laying up through the winter)

She felt heavy and the scales confirmed this as she spun the needle around to 45lb 12 and a new PB beating my previous by 4 ounces, I was made up. I took a couple of pictures and a quick video then applied Propolis (this is the Rolls Royce of carp care) to the damage on her flanks and the hook hold. I slipped her back into the lake ready for her to make someone else's dream come true.

Once I arrived at work and made my way upstairs to my office, I was greeted by my college who I was conducting the investigation with and they asked why I was late, I simply said

sorry I was swimming around a lake after a fish. She looked rather confused and I just chuckled to myself as she didn't know what to say after that.

Bait – Carp Company Icelandic Red Caviar & Cranberry

End tackle: Rig Marole Freefall clips, Braided Freefall tubing, Hydrolink and CamH20.

Mainline: Rig Marole FLX

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Mike





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Chapter
12
pt 1



Mike 'SPUG' Redfern



"Open a bottle or two, and smell the grapes"

~Somewhere Back In Time~

With two foreign headbanging trips planned, it was important that I kept my foot on the work pedal and built the old funds up. This had gone really well as I had been at the Co-op in Thetford all winter, and it looked as if the work would run until early March, which it did. It was around this time that Joe and Rob from Carpology phoned to ask if Mainline wanted to do an article called 'Cricket Fishing' in their ever-growing magazine. Milky and me were put forward to enter this light-hearted event at Waveney Valley lakes. It was a match between us two and those two and I really thought we had a chance of winning, especially when I pulled number one out in the draw. We then grabbed our barrows to set up but all I managed to do was crash mine and throw my gear all over the swim.

"Oh don't worry, I always do that," I remarked, and the boys laughed.

It set the scene nicely, really. The thing that was good about this trip was the fact that Milky was getting back on the road to full health. He had been very ill in hospital and everyone, and I mean everyone, had been really worried about him. He's a real legend, our Milky, and it was great for me to be paired-up with him. The whole thing was basically a match over a 48-hour period and with me blanking and Milky landing a 20lb mirror, we were doing okay at the start.

The second evening came along and so did something familiar when my mobile went off from a number I didn't recognise.

"Er, hello," I answered.

"Hi, it's Hogg's wife. You don't know where he is do you?" God I laughed.

"Oh no, here we go again!" I said to myself. "Never a dull moment."

The next morning came along and the fish were being as elusive as Hogg was. Well, to mine and Milky's rods anyway. Rob seemed to catch three very quickly and they won, but it didn't really matter as it was all just a bit of a laugh, or at least it was to me. Hogg was eventually found eating fish and chips in Cromer, so by the time I returned home all was well in the world again.

I had a couple of weeks trucking planned and on the way home one day I popped into Tesco to get a bottle of red wine. I was doing my usual daydreaming and as I got round, near the bread section, I bumped into a girl I used to work



It was great for me.

with at the abattoir years before.

"Did you get your money from the old employers then?" she asked.

"What money?" I asked back.

"Something to do with the old company pension scheme. You should give them a bell and find out. I got over a grand," came the answer.

"Over a grand! Bloody hell, I'll ring them tomorrow morning," I replied.

I did ring the next day, at one minute past nine. It turned out that I would also be entitled to some money, but it would take a while to sort out. Something else to look forward to then, great! It could be a good year after all.

April came along and so did a new waistline. The plan to eat the parents out of house and home was going far too well and not only I had I put back on the stone and a half I had lost when I got red-carded, I had also gained another half a stone! Anyway, I returned to the Catch syndicate in the hope of catching the big common or the big leather. I really wanted one of these fish, even though I knew that would invariably mean I would have to start doubling-up on some of my previous fish captures. It wasn't ideal really, but the syndicate lads were a good



20.12.

bunch, hand-picked by Dave, and that in itself made it a lot easier to start again on there.

It started really well, other than being constantly bombarded by hailstones, and I caught a 27.12 mirror and a 20.12 in the first three nights. A chap called Des was catching loads of them from a swim called The Lawn. Spring was just around the corner and this is always my favourite time of year, as you know the fish are starting to get their heads down in the pre-spawning build-up.

I received a letter from the previous employer and that said I had to fill a form out which would determine how I would deal with my old company pension. I thought that the pension couldn't be worth that much as I had only paid into it for seven years, but I still hoped for a reasonable amount of money from it as I had now been informed that I was entitled to something like 25% of its value. I didn't really understand the form, I just filled it out and ticked the 'yes I want some cash' box.

I had a couple of busy weeks trucking and then that went quiet so I headed back to the lake for a three-night session. I thought this would be a good time to

stock up on some adult literature so I popped into the shop at Lyng and scanned the top shelf while no-one was looking, grabbed a copy of Voluptuous and scanned through its pages. 'Cor! That'll do me the next time I get a bird,' I thought to myself. Yeah, big and beautiful, with massive norks. That has got to be better than the skinny minnies I have so failed with before. All of this would have to wait a while though, as I had promised myself at least a year off from the opposite sex. I had loads planned that year and the last thing I wanted to do was to scupper myself by getting a bird! Looking at pictures for a year, yeah, that would do; so I also bought a copy of Razzle (Readers' Wives) a couple of bottles of red wine and stood there red-faced at the counter, praying no one I knew walked in and saw what a real saddo I had become. Luck went my way and I managed to escape from the shop without being clocked.

When I arrived I was pleased to see my old mate Ady set up in a swim called Logs. He had a new Wendy house.

"Wow mate, that looks alright," I said to him as he proudly showed me his new twin-skin abode.

"It's a rapid-erection one," he said grinning, with that wonderful Norfolk accent and sense of humour. I was laughing, you could not have timed it better.

"I'll show you a rapid erection boy. Have a look at this porno mag I've just bought called Voluptuous. It's full of bigger birds with massive melons. I reckon that's the way forward now!" I threw the mag at him and he sat there with his eyes bulging out of his head.

"Bloody hell, look at them!" he blurted out.

"Oh mate, you wait and see, next year!" We laughed.

"Do you want a beer then?" he finished.

"Of course!" I replied and we sat there marvelling at my newfound interest.

I went into Split, as I knew this was an area where the Leather liked to come out and I set about sorting my rods. I placed one over the back of the bar, one under the



Rapid erection...



My left hand rod jumped into life.

tree to the right and found a small gravel patch for the left-hand rod, over which I then placed a good amount of pellet. The first night was spent with Ady discussing the finer points of ample women, while making sure that the wine I had bought tasted all right. I shouldn't have worried though, as it tasted just fine. Too fine in fact, because come the end of the evening we had drunk it all and shortly after I was lying there on my back snoring like a hippo.

My left-hand rod jumped into life the next morning and after a short fight in the deep margins I landed a 22.12 common. Ady came and did the pictures.

"How's your head this morning?" he asked.

"It isn't," I replied and we carefully released the fish. After a cup of tea we went to the imaginatively titled Cafe Catch to celebrate with a full English breakfast. The newly imposed diet was going a treat then!

I had a week's trucking and looked forward to going to Kingy. There were another two 40s in there, the 007 fish and a 41lb common, which, not surprisingly, Quickie had caught at the tail end of the previous year. There was a load of 30s as well and anything would do me, as I hoped to really break my bogey status on there.

~The Best Of The Best~

The start on Kingy was fairly busy as is the norm. The season started on the 1st of May, which was a Thursday. I had planned to go down on the following Monday morning. On the Saturday morning I texted Big S to see how things were going and I was absolutely delighted when I received one back saying that Little S had landed the big common. I rang immediately.

"Are you joking?" I blurted.

"Nope," came the reply. "I am on the way down now!"

I don't think I have ever been so happy about a capture of a fish in my whole life. This was absolutely brilliant. A sweet Norfolk fella, 74 years old, catching his first 40-pounder and it was a common! I just had to get there, this was fantastic. Any plans went out of the window and I made my way up to the lake as fast as I could, collecting bottles of red wine and tinned curries as I went. Little S was set up right at the back of the small bay to the right-hand side of the dam wall. I left my barrow on the dam wall and went round to see him.

The swim is tiny, only big enough for two rods and there he was, sitting in his bivvy grinning away, just out of sight behind a bush. At first, I thought perhaps he had chosen this swim because it was too far for him to push his barrow all the way round the 26-acre lake. That's not being horrible, he often chose a swim which was close to the car park for this reason and of course he wanted one close by, so he didn't have to walk too far and could tend his allotment every day. I was wrong this time; he had chosen that swim on the draw at the start, because he knew he would catch that big common off the bush on his right-hand rod. He just knew it. He had angled specifically for that fish. He had clocked that his son Steven (Big S) and Quickie had both caught the common off that bush, so he geared his game plan up around that, the sly old devil! Well it had worked, that was for sure. He caught a carp so big he could barely lift it!

Everybody was really pleased about this one, as he is a very popular character around the lake and I hasten to add, he has caught a bloody good amount of its 30s too. When I returned to set up in my swim, I was really made-up about the whole thing. Now my old dear reckons that watching that



He just knew it.

film Mamma Mia makes you feel good, because it has a feel-good factor. Personally, it makes me feel sick and want to throw up everywhere. However, I did understand just what a feel-good factor was that day and it made me want to sing as well, although not Abba, more a bit of Iron Maiden. Yeah, Little S definitely rocks! I had, of course, left after drinking a cup of his tea, which meant that I had also received a torrent of friendly banter and abuse, Norfolk style. It just made it even better. As the sun went down behind the island that night, I put it down as probably one of my best day's carping ever. The fact that I had scoffed a bloody great curry and sunk a half sensible amount of booze were purely incidental. Little S had bagged the big common and it was great. Happy days!



It was time to go home.

I had a pike pick up my back lead the next morning and the day after that a duck picked my bait up on the bar, so it was business as usual for me. The sun was hot and I spent most of the time hand-feeding a large pheasant. I fished for three nights, but as usual without success. I could have stayed on longer but my boxer shorts sent me a message. It was time to go home, get cleaned up, and back to work for a fortnight, as the annual trip to Les was just around the corner and the funds needed topping-up again.

~Make Poverty History~

When I returned home I received some really good news. Although it would take a few months to come through, my cash payout after tax was going to be a bit more than I had imagined. There wasn't enough to put down on a house and start again and with the credit crunch looming I didn't see that as a good idea anyway. I had a £250 van (called Clarissa) but had told everyone that I was going to get three years out of it, so she wouldn't be replaced for at least a year. If there was going to be anything useful to come out of this money then it had to be a spot of serious fishing! I mean, who wanted a designer suit and shiny shoes? Not bloody me! I had decided when I moved back that it was so that I could go fishing and get stuck in. I had nothing to lose, because that had all been pretty much lost when the fridge company went pop.

If there was anything at all to do, then it had to be operation book! I think by now you can see just how much I love my carp fishing and as I stood at the Carp Society do at Dunstable years and years before and bought my signed, limited edition copy of *Casting At the Sun* by Chris Yates, I had always said just how much I would love to do a book. It was my dream. Then having read *A Merry Olde Dance* by Mickey Gray, that just made me want to do one even more! I had got -up with Mickey and some others at the *Carping On* show in early 2008. I told him that I planned to do a book when I could and he said, "Do it. Just do it!" I had spoken to (okay pestered) Cliff at Mpress for about three years about it and he had said, "Ring me when the time is right. We'll do it for you." The time was now right. I could finance a good few months off, just. I could turn my dream into a reality.

Slight problem though, 'Wouldn't it help if you had actually caught a few more carp, Spug?' I thought to myself. 'You've got the and fart stories, but a few carp might just help it a bit.' You see, I had only caught seven English 30s by this point, and let's face it, that isn't all that these days. Yes, it helped there was an English 40 and 50, but I really felt short of English fish and especially 30s, even for a book that wasn't so much about the fish and more the giggle. The only

problem was that my main lake was Kingy, and there was absolutely no way I would carry out this newly thought out campaign on there, as I knew it would stick it up me. I called my old mate, Mick Barnes.

"What can I do to get my grubby hands on a Gold Card? I have got some money coming in August and I really want to fish somewhere special!"

Now, I had my name on the waiting list and had indeed been offered a Gold Card before, but couldn't quite get the funds together (surprise, surprise) Mick knew this and replied, "Just send the cheque down and put your fish in the paper!" Job done then, well, provided I caught some.

These reasons were also the perfect excuse to do some serious fishing. It didn't really matter if my plan didn't come together, because let's face it none of my plans ever do, but either way I was on the brink of an adventure. I just had to be patient. Yeah, right! Still, the money was just round the corner and so were the Iron Maiden outings. Things were looking better by the day. I had two weeks at work, then a trip to Les planned. It would give me time to start planning my adventure.

We knew just about everyone on the trip. Out of the 18 people, there were only three people we didn't know so I was really looking forward to it, especially as during my last trip I had been sitting there, myself about whether or not I had a missus. This time I had Voluptuous and as it turned out that caused me a lot less turmoil.

Myself and four of my nearest and dearest each caught a new PB and all were 50s. It was the best trip that we had ever been on for a multitude of reasons and each one personal to all of us. We sat and spoke about things on the coach on the way home.

"How good would it be to write a chapter in the book called "A Tale of five 50s" with my friends? I mean five 50s doesn't happen every day now does it?" I suggested. There were a few nerves.

"But no one will know who we are?" came a couple of nervous replies.

"Don't worry about that. It's not about names, it's about mates and the laughs we have. This one is for us, so get home and get typing!"

They did, but before we start, guess whose chapter came in last and only just before it was too late? Shandypants!

~A Tale Of Five 50s~

Wayne Macaskill, Paul Smith, Shaun Mcspadden
and Jonathan Dye



~Wayne's World~

So far, 2008 wasn't proving to be the best year of my life to say the least. I had just gone through a separation from my two year-old's mum and I wasn't exactly looking forward to being a part-time dad. I'd seriously considered not going to Les Quis, because my head was up my and I didn't think that I could just forget all what had gone on in the past few months and enjoy myself. Hogg put me right.

It's a very long journey from Stoke to Folkestone so there was no lack of chitchat about Les or other fishy talk. Ever since my second visit out there, I'd always wanted to catch a 50-pounder. On my first visit I had managed to catch a 30 and a 40 so I suppose it was the next milestone. Everyone back home knew that this was my target weight. So it was no surprise to receive a text message from my dad while I was on the motorway saying, 'have a good trip mate, try to enjoy yourself and I hope you catch a 50!' So did I!

We arrived at Tesco in Folkestone and went in to get some beers, as we always did on any trip, so we could have the car park social while we waited for the coach. After several beers, a visit to Hogg's Les Quis merchandise car boot sale, and about two hours of Spug just generally being Spug, we loaded the gear on to the coach and climbed aboard.

There was a group of us who knew each other from previous trips; there was me, Smithy, Tim, Spug, Hogg, Trevor, Ken, Shaun, and the bailiffs, Tob and Spook. With the possibility that we wouldn't end up fishing next to each other, Smithy, Tim and I had brought along walkie-talkies. Realising that we had enough of them between us, we quickly decided to hand them out to some of the others so we could all keep in touch. This opened up a whole new world of fun let me tell you!

Spug had decided to give everyone a codename to which they were to answer at any time when called on the walkie-talkie. Spug was Dragonfly, Smithy was Wolfden, Tim was Little Boy Puppy Ears, Hogg was Mosquito Testicles, Shaun was Foxy Lady, Trevor and his wife were Mr and Mrs Gandalf, Ken was Aragorn, Tob was Tiny Tim, Spook was Casper the Unfriendly Ghost and that left me. My name for the week was Buddy! Yes, Buddy! Spug had decided that the only way for me to get over the split from my ex was to get myself a buddy! I thought that this was hilarious so the name stuck.

Me, Smithy and Spug ended up fishing the shed bank on the Long Lake. The

first day, night and following morning are always a little quiet with everyone being tired from the long journey but there was one person who was full of life, Spug! I awoke to see him jumping around the outside of his bivvy playing the air guitar with his throwing stick, singing an Iron Maiden song at the top of his voice, bouncing around the bank thinking he was Bruce Dickinson! I was in hysterics and laughed all the way up to the lodge for breakfast. The fishing was quite slow, for Les, as the fish were in spawn mode.

Tuesday 13th May was the day I will never forget. It started with more commotion in the shed swim from Mr Redfern. Not only was he running around like a lunatic but he was also using his throwing stick as a microphone this time, pretending to be some sort of boxing match announcer.

"In the camo corner, weighing in at 200 pounds (yeah, right) Big Spug Redfern! In the wet corner, weighing in at 50 pounds, the biiiiiig common!"

I know Smithy has put this in more detail so I will leave that there, except to say that we all knew a big common happened to be Spug's target fish. His little charade was one of the funniest things I've ever seen.

That night after tea was when it all started for me. I'd been having a few fish from the left-hand tree line, casting tight to the trees in a little opening. This involved me getting into the water to cast, then walking around quietly to the little opening and baiting-up. Just before dark, I had a take on the left-hand rod. I played the fish into the margin and lost it in the weed, which I had all in front of me about a rod length out. I told myself that I would get in and get those weeds out in the morning but something made me to do it then, so I did. I didn't fancy losing any more fish, which were getting hard to come by. So it was almost dark and I was in the water up to my waist with a pole, dragging weed into the edge and getting savaged by mosquitoes! Great, that would cheer me up no-end!

After I'd cleared most of the weed away, I got into the water again to cast the rod back out to the opening in the tree line. One wrong move and I was in a mess. First cast and 'bang', right on the money! So I baited-up again, locked up tight and the trap was set. At 11:40pm my left-hand rod went again. I grabbed it and the fish almost pulled the rod out of my hands while diving for the snags. So again, I was in the water trying to turn its head away from the trouble. After a 15-minute scrap I could see that it was a big fish, my good friend Smithy slipped the net under it and she was mine!

He looked in the net and said, "I'll let you deal with that. I ain't carrying that to the mat."

I could hardly lift it out of the water and with a struggle I carried the net to the mat and had a proper look. I couldn't believe my eyes. It was a right old lump, and definitely close to 50 pounds, so I let Smithy and Spug do the honours for me and weigh it.

Spug made me stand well away from the scales so I couldn't see the weight and said, "Three? Yep, three." Smithy agreed, and there it was. A full 53 pounds of French mirror carp.

"HARIBO, HARIBO!" I shouted. I'd actually done it. All the hard work had paid off for me, big-time! After she was safely returned I checked my camera and the pictures were crap, you could only just see her, but did that matter? "Are you having a laugh?" as someone would say. I had caught a 50-pounder!

It was straight up to the lodge for some beer and we all celebrated well into the night. I am sure my stock of beer got robbed a little when I wasn't looking but, hey, who cared? I didn't have the sore head the next day, Spug did! I was so pleased I had gone after all. Right in the middle of the worst bit of my adult life all this had happened. Brilliant. Apparently, it was time to go home and get a new bird!

This is Buddy signing out. Please keep the airwaves clear...
Wayne Macaskill



I checked my camera and my pics were crap!

~Smithy's Story~

We arrived at Les Quis (heaven in my eyes) at about 9am. The banter was already in full flow on the patio area and then Hogg received a phone call from his wife, a copper. We quickly found out that Spug had left the window open on Hogg's Range Rover. Hogg said, "Don't tell him!" Everybody was helpless with laughter. Let the fun begin.

My choice in the draw had arrived and there were three swims on the road bank still unoccupied; The Gate, Next to The Gate, and Man on The Long. Just for the social and for a decent chance of some quality fish, my choice was the Gate swim next to Spug in the Shed. With all the gear in the peg and set up ready for action, I followed one of my traditions by kissing a 50 pence piece and flicking it into the water with a few words to the carp god.

The first bit of action for me was at 1.30 the following morning with a mirror weighing 24.8. Phew! A fish under my belt in the first night of angling - the pressure is off. About half-six that morning, Spug shouted to me.

"Try this for a drink, Smithy you'll love it."

"What is it mate?"

"Vanilla cappuccino," was the reply.

"Top man, Spoogles."

A few drinks and smokes later it was time to reel the rods in and take up new weapons; knife and fork it is then. All fed and watered, it was time to replace the rods on the spots. The spots I had decided to fish at the beginning of the week were easy for me as I've fished this peg before. Left rod was on the edge of the plateau at 60 yards, middle rod was roaming between the bar and far margin, surrounded by tree cover. The right-hand rod was also on the far margin at 90 yards, tight to some rushes. All the spots have produced fish for me in the past so it was a good place to start from.

As night was closing in, it was time for the walkie-talkies! These pieces of equipment opened up a whole new world of fun for us lot, and it was time to be silly. A few beers, or in Spug's case, a bottle of red wine, later, the walkie-talkies were brought into action, starting with general talk then quickly progressing into endless fun and aching laughter, between about eight of us all spread out around the complex.

Without a doubt, the stars of the show were Spug and Hogg. They were so quick and witty and what with knowing so much about each other's pasts it just had to be a winning combination. Everything said on the walkie-talkies was in a

German accent. It just made the scene much more side-ripping. I think the German accent came from the fact that the fish had been renamed POWs and it was our job to catch, interrogate (weigh) and release them, but as they were the enemy, we had to use false voices when we spoke, as the enemy might be listening. Well it all made sense to Hogg and Spug!

It must have been half-six the next morning, just as I was stirring in the bag, when I heard something very strange coming from my right.

"Weighing in at 200 pounds, standing in the camo corner, he's a carp-catching, red wine-swigging monster from Norwich, England. Please welcome Mike 'Spug' Redfern!"

I was now outside in my boxers watching Spug cheering himself and waving his fists in the air, thinking to myself 'what is he on?' It continued.

"Now weighing in at 50-odd pounds! In the wet corner! We have a boilie-munching machine from Les Quis in France. Please welcome the biiiiig commmmmonn! LETTT'SSS. GETTT. READDDDDY. TOOOO. RRRUMMMMBLE!"

God it was loud, but it was really funny and after a few seconds of laughing, I started to cough up rubbish from the endless amount of cigars consumed. Spug shouted across.

"I see you have some lung butter there mate!"

This started both of us off coughing, laughing and spluttering.

After a few minutes I said, "What was all that about fella?"

"Don't know, but that was funny wasn't it?"

"Oh yes, mate it was." And I have to tell you it really was!

With breakfast over and eaten, the next job was to recast the rods for the day ahead and with everything sorted by 9am, it was time for cappuccino. As I filled the mugs with hot water, stirring the mixture, my red light lit up on the receiver. Just as I started to walk over it started to run. A short battle later Spug did the honours of landing the fish. With a 20 safely on the unhooking mat, I asked Spug to deal with putting the fish back so I could recast.

The rig was back out there with a fresh, glugged bait on the hair. As I waited for the foam to hit the surface, I picked up my throwing stick and a handful of boilies.

"Thanks for that mate. Time for that brew I think." After a few more mouthfuls of warm cappuccino and a cigar, there was another beep on the left rod.

"It's okay, mate. It's just the poisson chats I think," I said as another beep sounded and then another. I hit the rod just as the clutch started to spin.



'Wolfden'.

"Here we go mate. This is a better one," I continued as it was now kiting right towards my middle rod. Spug just lifted the tip up slightly until I was clear. Ten minutes of arm ache later she finally went in the net. Oh yes! That's better.

"Wayne, are you there, mate? I've got a good'un in my net!" With Wayne and Spug in my peg and the net full, it was time to grace the bank with the fish. It wasn't only the net that was taking the strain, so was my back.

"What is your personal best Smithy?" Spug asked as the scales creaked.

"50.4, mate."

"Not any more, mate. It's now 51 pounds eight ounces!" he grinned at me.

"HARIBO!" was the next shout from the Long Lake. Happy days!

This is Wolfden signing out. Please keep the airwaves clear.

Paul Smith (Smithy)

~Shauns' Take~

Having preferred to tackle large European lakes and reservoirs over the past few years, I was, let's say, very unsure about Spug's invitation to the well-known French commercial carp fishery, Les Quis. To cut a very long story short (approximately six months of constant verbal abuse from Spug) I gave in and agreed to join the early May trip in 2008, with a few regulars.

The thought of 18 anglers on a coach, drawing for swims didn't really get the juices flowing. However, after further investigation and being informed of cooked breakfasts, evening meals, beer fridges and Sky Sports I was overwhelmed with enthusiasm and raring to go! For entertainment value, Spug always makes a complete of himself so this was surely going to be a pretty luxurious trip compared to roughing it for a fortnight at Salagou or some other European venue in the middle of nowhere.

May soon came round and Spug agreed to meet me at a motorway service station for the short journey down to the secured car parking area where we boarded the coach. The scene was set and I imagined what lay ahead as Spug stepped out of a top-of-the-range Range Rover in an Iron Maiden T-shirt, combat shorts, a can of Stella in hand, and a full volley of were soon sent in my direction.

We were soon locking the motors up for a week and I was forced into the car park party atmosphere with several firm handshakes and a large can of ale. Happy days! The rest was a bit of a blur to be honest.

A nice peaceful ferry journey and luxury coach trip to France? Like I had forgotten for a moment that this trip included Spug and co. Let's just say the DVD player was in full flow throughout. I'll let you imagine what movie was played!

Time for the all-important draw on the coach to find out where I would be fishing for a week, not that I knew very much about the complex. I was purely relying on what Spug had told me (which was probably complete). Surely, I couldn't go wrong with such comprehensive information, could I? 'Bottom bait, running lead and bang it out,' were Spug's words of sheer wisdom! I drew number seven. I'd get the seventh choice of swims on three lakes.

I eventually decided on the Elf Lake due to the intensity of activity around the place. Carp were crawling up the banks. Spug had somehow got the Shed swim, probably the most prolific swim on the Long Lake and the home of two very big

commons that Spug had mentioned once or 300 times already! I thought to myself, 'this guy could fall into a bucket of thumbs and come out sucking a

In my eagerness to jump on to these seemingly active feeding carp, I forgot the possibility that they could actually be Hard life, eh? As a consequence, I only managed to land a double and lose a better fish in my first three days. Time for change and a lengthy visit to the Sky Sports arena and beer fridges, again. After several hours of weighing up my options (over just one more beer) I decided to up sticks and move to the far corner of the Long Lake. This was the only swim that was left on this lake and was known as Man on the Long. You're not kidding. It should be named Man on the Mile Long Walk!

Anyway, I was sure the effort would pay off. However, with the swim being well out of the way the social scene had disappeared. I didn't care as I was firmly in carp-only mode. Spug, however, was slightly up the bank on the opposite side so I could always wind the rods in if required for a social. There again, I could hear his every word from where I was, noisy bugger.

At least I was now catching carp and had eight on my first night to 35lb. However losing six on the bounce after that was getting seriously frustrating. The weed in front of the swim was very thick and any adjustment in hook pressure was losing me some big carp! Toys were firmly out of the pram and I marched to the sanctuary of the beer fridges, once again threatening to move swims.

This was a big mistake as Spug had got wind of my thoughts and he told me exactly, and I mean exactly, what he thought of them! After a barrage of abuse from every angle I was even calling myself a useless and told myself to pull my finger from my own and don't move swims as my time would come! Maybe these were the words of wisdom I expected and needed to hear?

I wanted revenge, big-time, and quickly dragged a huge weed rake I found near the shed round to my swim and proceeded to strip down and remove every bit of weed from in front of my swim. As you can imagine, Spug and the crew looked on in amazement from the other side, and plenty more abuse was exchanged over the next two or three hours.

I got a few strange looks that evening during tea, but my first bite that night resulted in a successfully landed 52lb 10oz mirror and a huge amount of satisfaction. The fish did exactly what the previous six kippers did and swam straight for the weed beds under my feet, which I could now easily control with constant pressure without any problems. Rods in, mile sprint for large quantity of beer, party in the shed! Just for the record, I did endure the long haul back to the



'Mcwinkle' aka, Foxy lady.

Elf Lake for the last night (mainly due to my Rugby League team being live on Sky Sports) in search of a little carp revenge which resulting in a pair of 30s and a 41lb mirror.

Awesome! See you next year and the year after...

Shaun Mcspadden

McWinckle, McSpod, Useless

~Hogg's Tale~

The week's fishing began well and I was catching steadily, particularly from the left-hand margin, although as is often the case with kerb-crawling, the sizes of the fish were not huge. Then on Monday, I found a really good, hard spot in open water at around 60 yards. I had seen a few fish roll here which also gave me added confidence. I got out the throwing stick and put out around 100 baits, cast to the hard spot and duly started to pick up a few fish. A couple of 30s graced my net so I was very pleased with the results thus far.

After a particularly heavy drinking session on Wednesday night (for me this was around four beers) and general buffoonery involving walkie-talkies and a vivid sense of imagination and humour, I did not get to bed until the early hours.

It was a very still moonlit night, typical for that time of year and when I got up at around 3am to for England, I noticed that the fish were slowly showing more and more to the right-hand side of the swim in open water. With the light from the bailiff's cabin illuminating the lake in front of me it was easy to see where the fish were showing and I clocked the spot, adding it to my carp memory bank!

Thursday arrived and there had already been some significant captures for some of my friends on this trip so I thought that it was about time that I got involved in the serious action. Wolfden, Buddy, Foxy and Spug had already had 50-pounders!

I'd already had quite a week. I had been dealing with the Kent Police as Spug had left the passenger window of my car open in the secure car park at Folkestone. What a complete nugget he is sometimes. If he had been born with a brain, I would genuinely fear for the continued existence of mankind!

Anyway, back to the job in hand. I had a couple of 20s on Thursday afternoon and tea was drawing near. Food and socialising is a massive part of my carp fishing. That's really what it's all about for me and if I can pop out a few decent fish as well then so much the better. For me, when the fishing becomes more important than the mates that I go fishing with, then I shall hang up the rods as there will always be carp fishing but you won't necessarily always have your mates to go with.

I wandered back from the lodge feeling very happy with the world and realising how lucky I was to have such good buddies around me. I was contemplating what the rest of the week would deliver as I arrived back in my plot, when I saw a number of fish roll so I thought that it would be a good idea to chuck the rods out and sit back and have a smoke. Nothing too technical there then.

It was about 7.15pm when the right-hand rod decided to let me know that it was attached to a fish and the Stevie Neville erupted into life. God, I love getting a run. It's the I picked up the rod, which took on a very pleasing curve, and there was a nice steady plod associated with this fish and at the time I thought that was a reasonable sign. My friend Tim (aka Little Boy Puppy Ears), who was fishing the point, sauntered into the swim smoking a very large cigar and let me know that he would do the honours with the net. It was a proper fight, with the fish not making any huge surging runs but just using pure dogged power around 15 yards out and hugging the bottom as best it could. Now, me being somewhat of a lightweight, I was getting fairly after about 10 minutes and I had convinced myself, along with the help of Little Boy Puppy Ears, that we were dealing with an upper-30, possibly a 40, so I thought it was time to get it in. Unfortunately, the fish was not on my wavelength and decided much to my disgust to carry on the fight! I was not having that so I called on my Mr Muscle reserves and told Tim to sort his life out, to stop talking and to concentrate on netting my fish or I would change his sexual orientation with immediate effect. It worked and in she came.

"Get in there!" I shouted as Tim and I looked at each other and thought, 'Mmm, maybe slightly larger than we first imagined.'

I was dead-chuffed when Tim lifted up the scales - I was far too weak after that fight to contemplate any manual work - and they read 53lb 8oz! I then let him put the fish back in the landing net while I did my hair and got the correct T-shirt on. Unlike some anglers, I like to look good in my photos. It has taken Spug many years to realise that. It's only recently that he has started to look mildly more attractive than the carp!

So there it is. What a great way to share my tale with you and the simple moral of this story is that if Hogg can catch a 50 then anyone can!

Jonathan Hogg Dye.

Mosquito testicles aka, Shandypanis!



'Dragonfly'.





~The Strangest Of Weekends~

Sometimes, pictures speak louder than words. My common weighed 58.2 and it's my biggest carp. I am still absolutely buzzing about it and I think the boys covered that week well enough. Back in England and still grinning, for once I happily drove around in a lorry for the next couple of weeks and looked forward to the next time I could get down the lake. It was the last weekend in May when I turned up on the Friday and Kingy was packed. I swung round in the car park, made the short journey to Catch and was delighted to see that there were only a couple of people fishing the syndicate. The weather forecast was sunny and warm for the Saturday so as Split was empty, I jumped in there hoping the weather forecast would be right for once.

Amazingly it was, and after a breakfast in the café the next morning, I stood opposite the swim having a good look in the shallows and around the lily pads. I found a group of fish including a bloody long common high in the water milling in and out of the pads. There was no point in trying to cast a bottom bait at them, they were a good six feet above the bottom of the lake, so I decided to try a zig rig. Now zig rigs (or 'one upstairs' as they say at Les) are definitely something I can't get my head around. I have seen Tob and co. rinse Les out on them. In fact, I have even tried one for five whole days out there, but up until this point I had failed miserably while using them. I knew it was me that was the problem and this little opportunity that had arisen at Catch made me want to try and get one right.

When the carp had momentarily left the swim I very carefully popped my marker out and found that the depth was seven feet where the fish had been milling about. I quickly got the marker back in and waited for the fish to return. Luckily they did, so it was a quick return to my swim to tie on a long hooklink. The hooklink was set to six feet deep and I tied on a 'pineapple' as we call them, which is a pineapple hi-viz pop-up. I cast between the pads and popped the indicator on. After that, I cast the other two rods out, one against the reeds and the other in the deeper water.

It only took an hour and the zig rod was away, I ran over and hit it, only to see a gull flying in the opposite direction. I thought it was a bit odd. I flicked the



My heart was in my mouth.

rod out again and waited for things to settle. When they had, I grabbed my binos and scanned the water between the pads. There it was, on top of the lake, a bright yellow pop-up for the whole world to see! 'Ah, perhaps it's not quite seven foot deep,' I thought to myself. I knew the lake dropped down in front of the pads, so I carefully wound in until the pop-up slowly disappeared out of view, which as it happened, was a couple of feet in front of the pads.

Back in the bivvy, it was time for a brew and I had just drunk a cup of tea when the zig rod roared off and I was in. Happy days and my first take ever on a zig! I grabbed the rod and leaned into a fish and then as quickly as it had started it was all over and the fish fell off. Gutted! I looked hard at the whole set-up and tried to work out where I was going wrong. I had no idea, but unperturbed I recast the rod and then pulled it back gently until the pop-up sank from view once more. It was only half an hour later when it ripped off again.

"Oh please don't lose this one," I said to myself. This fight was definitely different. I guess the lead was not high up in the water like on a short hooklink and the fact that it was a subtle 4oz one probably didn't help either! I was beginning to think that if this one fell off, I would have to change to a lighter lead, when a long common came to the surface.

"Oh It's the big one! Oh no, please, please don't fall off, not this time,

please!" My old knees were knocking again and my heart was in my mouth. The big common was a 40-pounder in those days, and not only that, it was one of the two I really wanted. Pressure on! As the fish slowly came closer, almost sideways in fact, I could see my four-ounce bomb swinging below its mouth. It just had to fall off or so I thought. Luck went my way, however, and after some hairy netting the fish rolled into the mesh.

"Get in there!" My fish-spotting skills turned out to be as refined as my zig-making skills. It wasn't the big common after all, but it was a big common. In fact, it was an English PB common, weighing 35.12!

"Yeee-Haaa!" I jumped up and down with delight, which was not the best thing to do with my present physique. Pikey Lee was up the other end of the lake having a daddy/daughter session with his little girl Morgan for the weekend. They came along to do some pictures and have a look at my prize. With Morgan on the video camera, Lee took some pics and they walked off smiling as I returned the fish. I couldn't believe it, a French PB common and an English one within three weeks. Excellent!

As I sat in my bivvy after re-chucking the zig rod, I noticed fish were moving the reeds opposite me, so I reeled all three rods in and cast one over the reeds and on to the bank opposite so I could go round and spoon one into the edge. I grabbed my spoon and pellet bucket and walked round. After finding my rig up a tree, I carefully untangled it, put a bait on and placed it into my baiting spoon. With Lee on the end of my rod to keep the line reasonably tight, I lowered the rig just off the reeds in the margin.

"Cheers mate," I called across to him and made my way back to the swim.

Now, my baiting spoon pole is broken, the plastic bit on the end shattered when I dropped it and this means that when I walk around with it, I have to place my hand underneath and carry it in a similar fashion to how a soldier while on parade stands holding a gun. This means it sticks a good five or six feet in the air. As I was daydreaming my way back to the swim, the spoon clipped some branches and I heard a funny rustling noise. I didn't really pay any attention to it until THUMP! a bloody goose landed smack on top of my head! I screamed as if I had broken a leg and ran off in a state of extreme panic, dropping my pole and depositing my pellet all over the grass. Puffing and panting I turned round to see this goose thing flying off over the trees.

"You alright, mate?" Lee called out.

"Yeah. God knows what happened there. A bloody goose just landed on my

head!" I called back. Lee was laughing.

Now I'm not one of Bill Oddie's bird watching brigade, strangely enough, so I can't tell you what type of goose it was, except it wasn't a Canada and it was a lot smaller. Apparently, it was an Egyptian Goose or something. I am not too sure if it crashed into the tree or was sitting up there on a branch, which some do apparently. All I know is it hit me on the head, scared me half to death and provided everybody with another excuse to rip the out of me, which they did.

Back in the swim, I recast the zig and deeper water rods and opened a bottle of red to toast my PB common. An hour later, the zig was away again and I landed a 23lb common, this time on a one-ounce lead. I didn't take a picture of it or recast that rod as the sun was starting to set. It had been a good day and the wine slipped down nicely, so it wasn't long before I was tucked up and away with the fairies.

At 11.30pm my spooned-in goose rod was away and charging off the shallows and into the deep water to the left of the swim. It felt like a heavy fish from the second I hooked it. After five or so minutes under the rod tip, it rolled into the net and I was right, it was heavy. It weighed 30.8lb and it was one of the mirrors.



This was unheard of for me.

Blimey! Two 30s in the same session? This was unheard of for me! I was leaping up and down again. Lee kindly did the photos and walked off muttering 'Jammy git' or something maybe a little more Norfolk, should we say. I was lying there on my bedchair grinning away and cracked open a Carlsberg to celebrate.

The next day came along and I awoke around 6am with morning glory and two new 30s in my photo album. The day couldn't have started any better. The sun was just beginning to poke out from behind the trees and I put the kettle on for a brew. At this point, I decided to recast my zig rod and thought I had better do the spooned rod, as I hadn't bothered to do that in the dark. It landed just off the reeds and I thought I would spoon it out later after breakfast. It had only been out about 20 minutes when I heard a single beep and watched the line tighten up.

"Here we go. Come on!" I said as I sat there watching it. It didn't do anything it just stayed tight. It was about ten minutes later that I received a message from the department, and not wanting to receive a parcel like I had on Kingy a few years before, I got up to reel my rods in so I could go for a Richard and save any further embarrassment. I wound in the zig rod and then went to wind in the spoon rod, only for a fish to charge off to the right as soon as I lifted the rod!

'Oh no, I've foul-hooked one,' I thought, disappointedly and started to wind the fish in. The fish felt funny as I played it but as it came closer, I realised it wasn't foul-hooked and it was violently shaking its head from side to side. Obviously, it was a cute carp and it must have sat there with the hook in its mouth, trying to shed it for ten minutes after I had received the initial single beep. Now as far as I am aware that's the first time that had ever happened to me. Another first was the fact it was another 30, this time weighing 31.8lbs. Three 30s in 12 hours! I was blown away. I sat there



Three thirties in 12 hours!



His prize in his arms.

then he could do no wrong whatsoever!

On the Monday afternoon he called across to me that he needed some help as he had one stuck in the lilies off the swim called Lawn. I reeled in and went round to help him. It wasn't the most pleasant sight but he stripped down to his boxers, dived in, and swam across to the bar where the lilies were, and stood up looking like the Creature From the Black Lagoon. He carefully followed his line down into the lilies and then stood up cradling a common in his arms! He walked along the bar and carefully lowered the fish back into the lake away from danger, as I stood there holding his rod. The fish belted to the right and ploughed straight into another set of lilies above the plateau, so after calling me a fool he swam across to the next set of lilies and repeated the process. How that fish was still on, I will never know, especially bearing in mind it was on a barbless hook, but it was. Des stood up once more with his prize in his arms, and this time he walked between the pads and shouted out.

"Right you fool. Reel the line until it's tight this time!" I did.

He placed the fish in the water and I started playing it in. Des then swam back to the swim and grabbed the rod off me. Two minutes later, I landed the fish and we both burst out laughing.

"You are the jammiest so-and-so I have ever known," I said.

"No, I'm not" he answered. "It's skill!"

"Get lost, you turkey" "I replied and then proceeded to take his

afterwards and I just kept pinching myself. What a month it had been for me! I was so chuffed.

Lee and Morgan went home on the Sunday and I stayed on for a couple of nights. Sunday evening came and so did Des. Now Des had really been catching them this year. I think he had caught eight 30s and the big common at 42lb by this point, and if I thought I was a lucky sod,

pictures. On my way back to my swim, I couldn't stop laughing. What a strange weekend!

The next month was spent driving around, laying down beer tokens for a trip to Paris with Scott. I did manage a couple more 20s but my mind was elsewhere. Scott and me went to Paris and had a real blast. Maiden



Dave Murray on the left...

were on fire! Both shows were sold out and the second night was out of this world. We both really enjoyed it and the icing on the cake was at the Eurostar tunnel on the way home, when Dave Murray, one of the guitarists, was standing there with his missus and daughter in the queue in front of me. Flipping heck! I was about to lose control and inadvertently punish him by telling him a million things about how much I loved them and all that, when sense (for once) got the better of me and I just got his autograph and told him how good the second show was. He thanked me and I walked away thinking, 'what a nice bloke.' Scott's camera memory stick was full of nearly all of our shenanigans so I didn't get a pic, but not to worry because I was only a month away from the Bruce Air trip and I was pretty sure I would get one there.

I had a couple of trips to Kingy but it had all gone wrong down there. I lost one and the 007 fish had gone belly-up because it was spawnbound. What a shame that was. A group of lads had come on there and upset the regulars by announcing that they were going to pull it apart on their bait and how they were going to do this and going to do that. It had created a bad atmosphere down there and rightfully so. Those old boys like Big S and the like knew how to catch them. In fact, Big S was catching them one after the other. I think he had nearly caught 20 already; now that's bloody good angling!

The final straw for me came one day when Ben rang up and said, "You ain't going to believe this one!"

"What's happened this time?" I replied.

"Well, allegedly, a new member had a fish stuck in the weed and went out in the boat by himself."

~An Interview With Bruce Dickinson~



August the 7th, early o'clock at Gatwick airport, Bruce Dickinson walks out and says hello to everyone. We are on our way to Poland and he's flying the plane. Not a bad start to the day. I had gone by myself and already made friends in the airport; such is the way with the Iron Maiden extended family of fans. I have already detailed at the end of the last chapter how the 'Birthday Bomber' was going to run and I think it pretty much went according to plan and everybody had a good time as expected. One thing that didn't quite go according to plan, however, was my pic with Bruce. It had been taken at Warsaw airport before we then flew to Prague, and I checked to see if it had come out all right and it hadn't.

It was blurred! This was probably the one chance I would ever get and as usual, I had ballsed things up by not telling a newly-found mate how to use my camera properly. Panic on!

Put yourself in my position; 25 years of being a fan, bought all the records, CDs, DVDs, dressing gowns, hats and the rest of it and I had just got a blurred photo. What a I am! I stood there wondering what to do when I saw him in the Duty Free, I threw the camera at my mate, gave him a crash course in noddy photography and we walked into the Duty Free.

Now I don't know that much about Bruce, other than the fact he is a commercial airline pilot, speaks fluent French, has written a film and some books, used to be extremely good at fencing, in fact I think he did or nearly did, get into the British Olympic team. Oh yeah, and he is the lead singer of the world's greatest band. Other than that, I guess he's done all! Anyway, there was no way I was going to punish him. I could see the constant attention he was getting in the airport and to be fair it must get to him and other famous people at times. I know just how he feels, of course. I mean, in my clubbing days there were birds throwing themselves at me all the time! Oh yeah, that was a tranny in New York, wasn't it? Oh well, I had my interview planned and I didn't take it for granted that someone was invading his space again, I walked up and this is how it went:

Spug: "Hi Bruce, I really don't want to punish you, but my photo has come out blurred. Is it okay if we do it again please?"

Bruce: "Yes mate, no problem"

My mate then takes two pics. One is clear.

Spug: "Cheers. Thanks for that. See you later!"

Bruce: "Yeah, bye."

Interview over!

Top man. I was pleased about it and the whole trip was great.

Now speaking of Iron Maiden, I have always said that every man and his dog love Iron Maiden and in honour of the world's greatest band, I am pleased to give you Maiden Mugs.

~Maiden Mugs~







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BENSON LODGE

2010

with Trevor Cook
from Bluebell Lakes
- by Mark Carper

To kick off this new section we have managed to get an insight to the life of a Bailiff on a very busy, big fish, day ticket water, Bluebell Lakes and I got to spend a day as 'Apprentice Bailiff' with the Head Bailiff, **Mr. Trevor Cook**



“That’s because there’s no weed in front of his swim...!!” Is one of the most used comments about the ‘Bailiffs’ swim on the incredible ‘Mallard’ Lake on the Bluebell Lakes complex, but then again so are comments such as “he’s a miserable git”, “he doesn’t care if you catch or not” or even, “the blokes a complete ****”, I will leave you to use your imagination for that one..!!!



These are all real comments made about Trevor Cook, the Head Bailiff on the fantastic Bluebell Lakes.

A few weeks ago, I contacted Trevor and asked if he would be the first Bailiff to feature in 'Talking Carps' new monthly section, aptly named 'Bailiffs Tails', and he very kindly agreed and invited me to spend the day with him and actually shadow him for the day as he went about his usual business of overseeing up to 150 anglers over 105 acres.

I arrived at 10:30 and by that point, Trevor or 'Elmer Fudd' as he is affectionately known by some of the regulars and fishery members, had already opened the gates at 07:00, greeted some of the first to arrive, driven and walked the complex to see if any issues required his attention, given advice to some anglers new to the place and had breakfast in his well-organised and setup 'Bailiffs Swim' on Mallard Lake.

Arriving at his Nash Bank Life Gazebo, which is set up next to his newly installed Nash Titan T2 Bivvy, he welcomed me to his Bankside home, where he had been for the past 15 days, without a break...!

Totally self-sufficient Trev stays on site for weeks at a time with short spells away to do his 'other' job, a Class 1 HGV Driver. When he's off site, Jimmy, the Fishery Manager oversees things and Lee Birch also helps out with the Kingfisher Lake, which to be fair, appears to be with the main draw of the complex. Kingfisher Lake or 'Kingy' as it is known to its

regulars is home to around 180 Carp with 28 known Carp over the 40lb mark and a large head of 30's too. It is no wonder then that this lake is always busy and a target water for numerous anglers from all over the UK and even further afield.



Being stationed 'bankside' is part of the Job so it is Bivvy and Bedchair life for Trev, but he also gets to fish throughout the night, although this is regularly interrupted for numerous reasons. He also winds in

all four rods when he needs to be away from the swim at any time.

His normal routine is he winds in just before 07:00 to go and unlock the site gates and if he gets chance, he puts his rods back out while he has his breakfast. He then winds in again about 10:30 every morning and usually tries to get the rods back out, if possible, at some time around 17:30, when he goes back to his swim to have some food, clean up and then winds in again just before 20:00 so he can go and close the gates and do his evening and night checks. He then normally gets the rods out around 22:00 and the



routine starts all over again the next morning. On occasion, when issues need dealing with, he doesn't get the rods out at all, but that is all part of the job, a job that he absolutely loves and is dedicated too.

The first thing I realised when speaking with him about Bluebell Lakes, is his total passion and pride for the place, which was a far cry from some of the comments I have seen made on the dreaded Social Media.



“Rules are rules and it's my job to make sure people don't break them”, he told me, “but that is only part of the job, and I get involved in all manner of things, from giving advice about spots to fish, rescuing fish from snags, checking rigs and dealing with disputes between anglers, and the odd drunk too..!!”.

Trev then gave some examples of the abuse that he gets while simply trying to do his job and the criticism aimed at him because he has a

swim set aside for his use, while living on the complex....

..."I've been called every name you can think of, and normally this is when I have caught someone breaking a rule or they have had one, or a dozen too many beers..!" I asked him how this makes him feel and to be honest, it's a good job we are not a Video Magazine as I would have spent most of my time with the 'Bleep Machine'....and that's after he told me he has mellowed... "I'm not as bad as I used to be and have come to accept that people get frustrated and will then aim that at me but nowadays, I tend to be more diplomatic and have learned very quickly the best way to diffuse any situation and thankfully, aggressive customers are few and far between and I have made some very good friends at this place".

Trev has dealt with all sorts of situations from simple rule breaking to couples having sex in the shower block and bivvies' and that is why he always give a shout out as he approaches a bivvy, "Hello, Bailiff" is his normal approach, just in case anyone is having a "private moment to themselves" as he so eloquently put it..!!

He has dealt with numerous drunken anglers and even a group of drunken anglers that decided, after several warnings about their noise and behaviour, they would dispose of the three empty Vodka bottles and the fifty empty beer cans, in the lake... needless to say, they were escorted off site, never to return and now the complex will not take group bookings from people they do not know.



His love of the fishery and its inhabitants, including all the wild life, is clear to see and if you ask him about any lake and any swim, he will tell you the 'spots' to be on. This was apparent as we did a complex walk to do some rig checks. A family from Shropshire had booked on for a few days and had set up the night before, so Trev went to see how they were doing and that they had settled in. He also did a rig check of one rod from each of them and to my surprise, he gave them the choice of which rod to bring in....

"I always ask politely if they can bring a rod in and always allow them to choose which rod it will be", he explained, "and I always know if they are using a Hook, Rig or Bait that they shouldn't be, as they get stroppy with me for no reason", he continued. On asking what he meant by 'stroppy', he told me the most common scenario was that the angler would say "what, I've just got my rods on the spots..!!", or, "you're kidding right, is this a joke..??", or even "F*%k Off who do you think you are..!!!"

The family we visited, did not hesitate to comply with the check and all were using the correct hooks etc. Trev then spent five minutes, pointing out the 'hotspots' from each of the swims they occupied, and they were very grateful for the advice. I asked if they minded that they had been asked to bring a rod in and they had no issues at all, in fact they said it was good that the fishery took the rule enforcement seriously.

While on our walk around the different lakes, Trev gave me some 'inside' tips of some of the swims and spots to fish, should I return to the place with my rods and also told me some more of his tales, of which he has so many...

...the funniest, but actually not the strangest for me was the one about the two anglers that had decided to have a night under the stars, no bivvy, just their bedchairs and had set up about 5 meters from the waters

edge. For some unknown reason, they had also decided to put their rod pod with three rods, in between the bedchairs.... They had also obviously decided to have one or two alcoholic beverages and got off to a sound sleep.

During the night, Trev could hear regular, 'single' bleeps and went off to investigate the noise. On arriving at their location, he could see the two guys were fast asleep and oblivious to the 'bleeping' and the quickly realised the cause of the single bleeps was due to 'liners', but it was not the fish causing the nuisance bleeps, it was due to the 'Rabbits' running up and down the grass bank in front of them... "liners from bloody rabbits, can you believe it..??!!" Needless to say, he woke the anglers and gave them a bit of advice how to avoid such a situation in the future...!

We carried on with chatting to anglers and checking rigs and happened across a couple of guys on Mallard that were literally 'brand new' to carp fishing. On checking their rigs, this was very apparent buy the fact that



one of them was using two 15mm pop-ups attached to a 2 inch hair on a 2 foot 'Zig'....but at least they had Barbless Hooks...!! Trev quickly gave them the advice they needed and showed them were to put the rigs out to and then we were on our way to the next check....

Trev took me in to the swims that had been closed off on Mallard a few days earlier as the Carp had started to spawn in that area and told me that the day before he had had to go and tell two anglers that had ignored the signs, put six rods in one swim and were casting to the spawning fish, that they could not fish there and they couldn't see what the problem was. "Some people just don't get it, they don't understand about the fish or fishing and just want to catch at any cost, but I won't have that, no chance" he told me. "Etiquette is also a thing of the past, although on this place it isn't too bad as we don't allow it to get out of hand. We also have a thirty-minute bucket rule for swim reserving, and I enforce it all the time, I've actually got a good collection of pellets now...." He joked with me...!

The complex operates a two-strike rule, which basically means, if you are caught breaking a rule, you get one warning, unless of course you are being abusive to staff or fellow anglers. But for a 'Barbed Hook' you will get the one warning. Get caught again, and you are asked to leave and not return.



Trev had this a few weeks back when an angler was checked and found to be using a Barbed Hook. The angler apologised, swapped his rigs and was allowed to carry on. Trev went back the next morning and to the anglers obvious surprise, he was checked again....and yes, you've guessed it, he had put the Barbed Hooks back on Trev stood with him while he packed his gear and then escorted him off the site....!!

"They always say, I never thought you would check or never thought you would check again, and that's why I do check several times. You get to know the ones that are likely to break the rules no matter what. After all, I've done a bit of poaching in my time, they don't call me Elmer for nothing....!!"

Having fished the place for many years, Trevor has only been the Head Bailiff for three years. He is due to retire from his driving job next year and will then become full-time on the complex and it is something he cannot wait to do. "I love it, I love this place, nature and just being outdoors. Tony (the owner of Bluebells Lakes) is a great guy and a great boss, and this place means so much to me, what a way to spend your days."

Having spent time with him and going round the lakes, meeting and chatting with the anglers, I could see exactly what he meant....although, another of his 'stories' did have me questioning whether he was pulling my leg but the story was confirmed and as Trev said, he tells it how it is and this has to be the strangest and most bizarre of them all....

He was called to a swim by an irate angler with the complaint that he had major of snags in front of him. On arriving at the swim, Trev instantly knew there were no snags and tried to explain this and calm the guy down. "I am an international angler, a very good and well known angler in my country", Trev was told, "I should be fishing here free as I can

promote your place to many anglers, but you have too many snags...!!”
He went on to tell him....

...Trev then explained to me that the guy was complaining that every time he wound in, his Hook Link would be missing. On investigating and asking the guy to show him a Hook Link, they guy produced a role of PVA Tape....yep, you couldn't make it up....He was using PVA Tape to a short hook link to connected it to his leader....he even told Trev is was “invisible in the water, it is very good”....!!!

After a dozen or so rig checks, we moved on to Swan and that is when it happened....my first encounter with a ‘Rule Breaker’...!! I could tell the guy was up to no good, the minute Trev asked his mate in the next swim to wind a rod in. He was just looking at Trev with a puzzled expression as if to say ‘really...??!!’...as his mate was bringing one of his rods in the guy went to do his and Trev asked if he would wait. He likes to watch them bring the Rod in so that they cannot attempt to swap the hook links etc. People in the past have tried to fob him off with rigs from on top of their tackle box etc. but Trev wants to see it come out of the water.

He didn't wait though, and I moved over towards his swim so I could see what he was doing and as he



hurriedly brought one rod over to his bivvy, Trev arrived. The other guy was fine, but Trev could immediately see there was something wrong with this one. Firstly, it was hair-rigged with three 'Tiger Nuts', a bait that is banned on the Bluebell Lakes complex...and...he was using 'Barbed Hook' too...!! Double whammy and Trev was absolutely fuming. However, he kept his calm but told the guy, in no uncertain terms how annoyed he was. The guy was mortified and started apologising immediately.

His excuse, "it's the first time I've fished here, I didn't know", which as we all know, is not an excuse at all, ignorance is no defence...!!

The guy also had a 10kg bucket of Tigers with him that fortunately due to him just finished setting up, had not been put in to the lake. Although I could see Trev really wanted to kick the angler off, he stayed calm and applied the first strike rule, although technically, it was a double strike in one. He told the angler that he would be removing the bucket of bait and asked to check his other buckets and vehicle, to which the guy agreed, and Trev said he could collect the bucket of tigers as he left the site. The pair of anglers were booked on for three days and this could have easily ruined their trip but as Trev explained, "I try to be fair as possible all the time, but I will keep an eye on him for the



rest of his trip. I take no pleasure in asking people to leave and even less in banning them, but sometimes, it has to happen. This one was close as it was two rules broken at once but to put it in to perspective and to justify why we have a two-strike rule, a few weeks back, I did one hundred and thirty one rig checks and found eighty nine anglers using Barbed Hooks...the problem is, they never think they will be checked, but trust me, they will...!!!”

We moved on to ‘Kingy’ and Trev said this is the worst water on the complex for Barbed Hooks. Due to the size of the carp, no one wants to risk losing one but then again, would you want to risk being barred for life from such an amazing water...??!

The majority of anglers that were fishing on there were ‘members’ and even they had their rigs checked. As Trev said, “the rules apply to everyone, no matter who you are or how good an angler you may be” and with that we happened upon the swim occupied by Kev Hewitt. Now, Kev was not in his swim as we had spoken to him 5 minutes earlier as he went to get food, but Trev told him we would be checking his rigs and Kev said his rods were out the water and to carry on.

I actually got to check the rigs and I was happy to report; all was in order...and those very rigs had accounted for six fish so far with four over 30lbs...no one else was catching at that time either...!!

I never intended this piece to be about the fishery per se, or about tactics and captures etc. It was to give an insight to what the Bailiff on this busy place actually deals with day after day and I hope the next time you visit this amazing fishery; you take the time to go and meet ‘Elmer Fudd’ and see his passion and tap in to his knowledge of the place. He will definitely point you in the right direction and be pleased to do so.

He knows every inch of this place like the back of his hand and is always willing to help out and give advice, you just need to ask him. Ten minutes with Trev is better than three laps of the lakes.

For the record, last year, Trevor caught two hundred and thirty-seven Carp from the complex, with fifteen falling to him in one night. He also lost 'Dave' twice due to Hook Breaks, which he was not happy about and promptly told the owner of the tackle company that produced the hooks, as he was on the complex filming at the time. He's not spoken to Trev since...!!!

On a final note, if you think the Bailiff job sounds easy, keep in mind that Trevor Cook is one of only a handful of Bailiffs in the country that are Licensed 'Armed' Bailiffs...!! He currently holds a full Fire Arms Licence and is trained by the police to deal with intruders after a particularly nasty incident where intruders came on to the site and were armed.....and..... for those that were wondering, he does have plenty of weed in water in front of his swim, he's just used to fishing in it and actually, he's not a bad angler either, forty nine Carp from Mallard since the end of February is not too shabby is it..??!!!!



The next time you are on the Bank and see the Bailiff, on any fishery, say Hello and remember, they are there to do a job, which at times is not easy but someone has to do it and they do not deserve to be abused or ignored.

I would like to thank Trev for taking the time to let me shadow him and give me a great insight to his role at the fishery and also would like to say a thanks to the Bluebell Lakes 'family' of Tony, the owner, Jimmy the Fishery Manager and the grandson of tony and to Jamie the onsite Shop Manager and Paul that works alongside him, who are son and grandson of Tony also, for making me welcome and allowing me to have full access to the fishery.

...and I couldn't finish without mentioning Carla who runs and provides the incredible food from 'Bensons Kitchen' onsite...it's worth the visit just to eat.....!!





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Reviews

*Ridgemonkey
Modular Bucket
System
by Mark Carper*

Ridge Monkey – Modular Bucket System – Reviewed by Mark Carper

It is no secret that I am a fan of all things RidgeMonkey, with the exception of their End Tackle and Line. That's not to say I do not like the End Tackle or the Line, but I have no need to use it as I am more than happy with what I currently use.

I own many items, including the Quad-Connect Stove, Large Kettle, Thermo Mugs, original Sandwich Toaster and the newer Connect Compact version in both Standard and XL sizes, Deluxe Plate and Cutlery Pack and the full range of plates also, Heavy Duty Water Carriers in all three sizes, Air Dry System MK2 and the Collapsible Water Bucket and not forgetting the VRH300 Headtorch and Action Station, and I have pre-ordered the Clear Collapsible bucket too... so as I say, I am a bit of a fan and have found that everything I have purchased has been of great quality and very functional, which to be fair, is only to be expected....

...When the Modular Bucket System was released, I wasn't that excited and did not pay much attention to the advertising or Social Media chatter about them. To me, it was just a bucket in two sizes, Standard with a capacity of 17-litres and the XL with a 30-litre capacity. The 'additional feature' was that you could 'hang' a couple of 'Bait Trays' as they called them, from the side of the bucket... "Big Deal" I thought...!!!

It was only a few weeks ago, whilst in my local tackle shop that I actually came face to face with the buckets and thought I would have a quick look at what I presumed to be a bit of a gimmick....

....Immediately, I could see the benefit of such a system and promptly had a play with the 30L version. The shop also had the XL Deep Tray Twin pack and I unboxed them and tried them in the Bucket...what a great idea, I thought and proceeded to purchase two buckets and two additional packs of the XL Trays. To be honest, if they had the 17L in stock at the time, I would have purchased a couple of them too.



However, what they did have in stock was the Cozee Bucket Seat and the Cozee Toilet Seat and you've guessed it, I purchased one of each of them too..!





Now, I'm not going to tell you what you can put in the Buckets and the Side Trays as I will leave that your imagination, but I will say that as a long or short session Bait Carrier or even a Stalking Bucket, they are ideal. They are well made, and up to now, although I have only had them on the bank a few times, have been robust and not felt flimsy or 'not up to the job' and I have loaded one Bucket with 6kg of boilie, split between the two XL Trays and in the main section carried three 1kg bags of stick-mix and the handle never felt like it was going to drop off..!!

You will see in the pictures that I have one bucket for my boilies and one that houses all my 'Hook Baits', PVA, Catapults etc. and I use one of the shallow trays that came with the Modular Bucket System to store my made up PVA Mesh Bags, glug and dips for the session I am on.



I have since purchased another pair of XL Deep Trays and have stored boilies in these that I can simply swap in and out of the bucket, depending which bait I want to take with me. I have one which contains pellet too and there is more than enough for an average 24 or even a 48-hour session. The bait storage options are endless really and you could even have a Spod Mix in them.

Speaking of spodding, I have used the XL Deep Trays, containing my boilies, to spod directly from. I use a DOT Spod and the tray is stable enough to allow one handed filling of the DOT Spod, even when not attached to the Bucket. A point to note is that if you have the trays on the outside of the bucket and want to remove one, you need to ensure you support the bucket or it could tip off balance with the weight of the opposing tray.

The supplied lids fit well and on both the Trays and the Buckets and the Trays are also 'Freezer Safe', so no need to transfer boilies from tray to bag to re-freeze after a session. The XL Deep Trays also have two small 'flip-down' side supports to ensure they hang level on the outside of the Bucket, which is a nice idea. All the trays fit nicely in the Buckets and each bucket will hold up to two trays. The Bucket lid then fits tightly on, and I do mean tightly to ensure the contents remain dry and secure.

All in all, I am very impressed with what I first perceived was a bit of a gimmick and have found them extremely useful and to be honest, would not fish without them now. They also stack well and if the trays are empty, they stack inside each other so minimising the space required for storing them empty...I would definitely recommend the Modular Bucket System....!!

But I'm not finished there, there is more and this was a real surprise to me as I definitely felt this was a 'gimmick' of the highest order...the Cozee Bucket Seat and the Cozee Toilet Seat..!!!

I bought these tongue in cheek and really expected them to be useless, but, I can assure you, they are nothing of the sort, in fact for me, they are an essential addition to the Modular Bucket System and here's why....

Firstly, the 'Cozee Bucket Seat'...this is a super little seat that can be used as Guest Seat or great for Stalking. As the picture shows, you can sit on the Seat and have your Mixers etc. in the Tray between your legs, with other items of tackle in the Tray behind, with plenty of storage in the middle too..!



Although it does have a Back Rest, it is not really designed to take the full weight of a person leaning back but is sufficient enough to give support, whilst sat on the seat. The padding on the seat part is comfortable and can be removed from the plastic frame for additional cleaning and drying off etc. The whole thing fits very securely to the bucket, even with the Trays on the outside and the handle on the bucket can still be used to transport the bucket as needed, making it an ideal 'Stalking' set up for the roving anglers amongst you.



Finally, that leaves the last of my purchase, Cozee Toilet Seat...!! Now, before you too say, what a waste of time, which, in different circumstances I would have said myself, but given the fact I fish venues that have no toilet facilities and using the bushes, on a Public Park Lake in the Middle of a Town in France is simply not an option, for me, this is 100% usable...!!

Over the years I have used the old 'Bucket and Carrier Bag' routine and even the 'Pool Noodle' or 'Pipe Lagging' on the rim for additional comfort, but to be honest, I'm not getting any younger and good sit down to my business, needs to be in relative comfort...the views from the Bivvy Door 'Letter Box Style' while I do my morning ablutions have been amazing, with sunrises to die for, even if the accompanying odour did not match, but I will not go in to that...!!

This Toilet Seat, fitted to the 30L Bucket is excellent and providing you remember to attach the 'Toilet Bag' beforehand, you will have no concerns. It is a great height to be comfortable and the seat fits very securely...you even get a little wire toilet roll holder that easily attaches and removes from the seat...bonus...!!

As I said, this is not for everyone, but seeing how I have the Modular Bucket System that I will use on every session, having the Cozee Toilet Seat as an addition made perfect sense to me, due to the types of places I fish both here and in France.

The Seat comes supplied with five absorbent bags and additional ones can be purchased from various tackle shops. There are alternative bags on the market too or you could use a standard carrier bag, but check it doesn't have the little 'air holes' in the bottom or it could get a bit messy...!!!!

Mark Carper





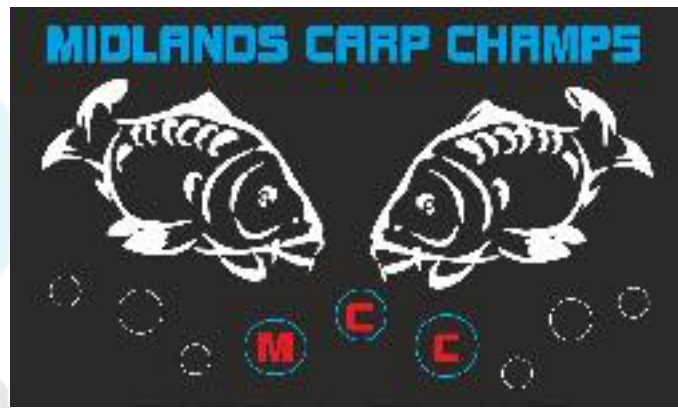
CoZee Bucket Seat

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FEATURES

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Event Overview:

We enter our 4th year at the Midlands Carp Champs 2019, year on year the event has grown but we have decided again to keep the format of the events this year the same as previous with 2 x 10 Peg qualification rounds where the top 5 pegs - decided by overall weight of carp caught in 48 hours will then go in to a 10 Peg Final, the events can be fished as a pair or single you simply purchase a ticket and the option is yours.

Throughout 2019 we have decided that we would give what we can back to the sport so we are supporting Rob Hughes and Carp Team England with this each ticket sold has a £5 admin fee attached and these fees will be given directly to Carp Team England – Rob has informed us that these funds will go towards supporting the England Ladies Team in the forthcoming World Cup in France. We believe this is a fantastic direction the sport and the team are taking and we wish them the very best of luck in their efforts.

We are delighted and honoured to have been given access through the night to this magical day only water and we thank the Ranger team for allowing us to host both qualifying rounds and the Final of the 2019 Midlands Carp Champs back at what we believe is the best carp day ticket lake in the Midlands – Kingsbury Water Parks - Pine Pool.

The 2019 event we have again tried to keep the cost of entry to a minimum whilst still being able to offer competitive prize money, vouchers, trophies and complimentary leads that are provided by our fantastic sponsors – this year we thank and welcome on board JMC Tackle who have provided vouchers for the winning pair and Chameleon Leads (Alan Scholes) who has continued to support the events in the past couple of years.

Venue Overview:

- Size of Lake 7.52 Acres
- Type of Lake - Day Ticket – No Open Access Night Fishing
- Ticket Cost £5 per day (2 Rods, 2 x day tickets required for 3 rod use)
- Fish Stock Good stock of doubles and 20s
- Biggest Fish 30lb+
- Features: Islands, gravel spots, bays, weed, reeds, shallow area

The water parks extensive fishery management plan over the past 2 years has seen the stock grow impressively and they have added a number of home grown carp into the water in 2018 that have settled in well and have made great additions to an already impressive stock of carp.

You can find us on Facebook “Midlands Carp Champs” Follow us for all the latest news, updates and live footage from the 2019 events.



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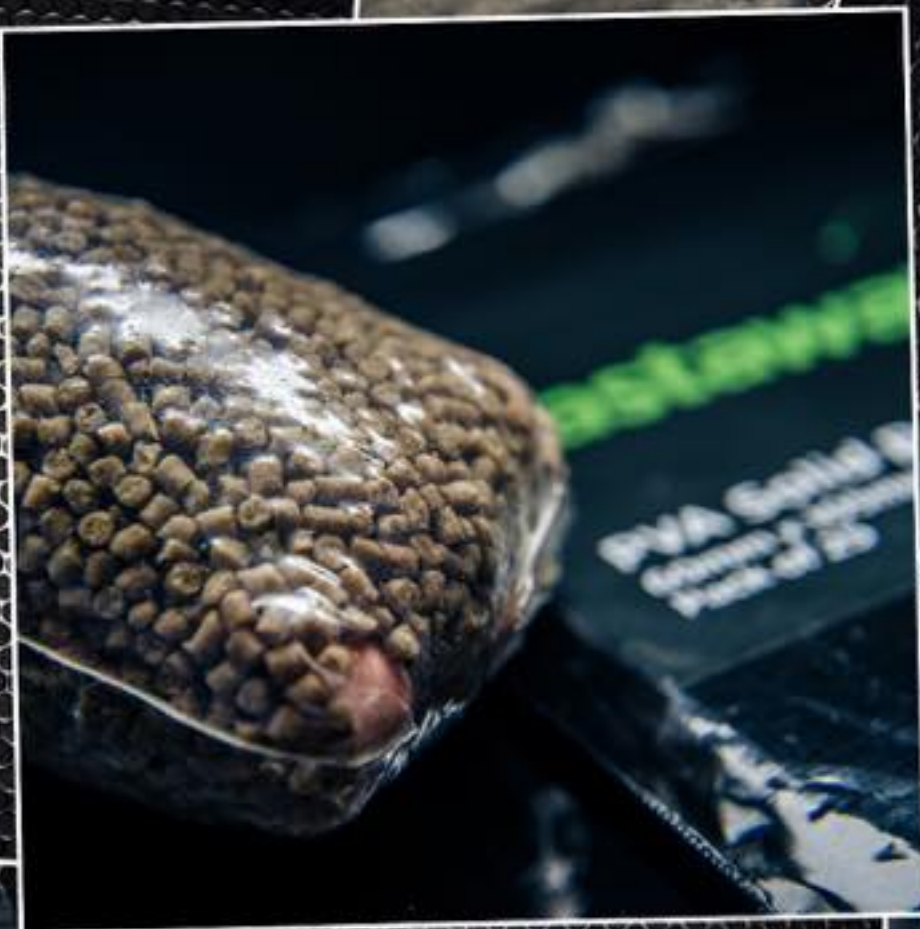
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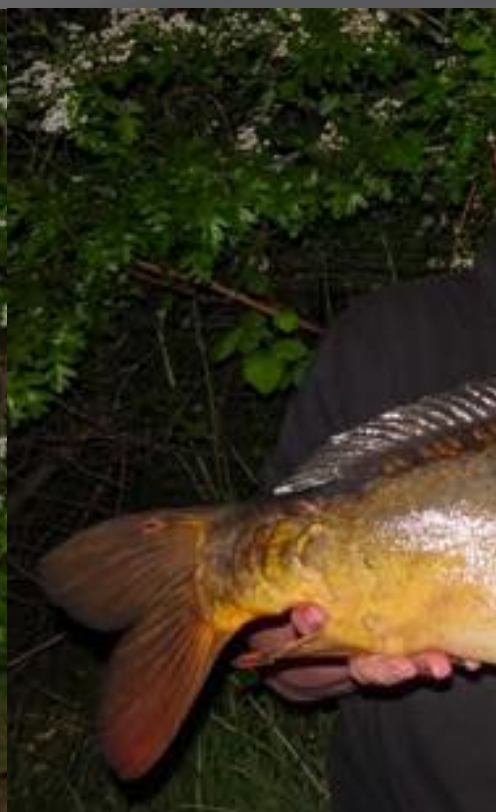
Your Name: Ben Flockton

type of fish and weight Mirror carp 40lb 7oz

Location of catch Linear fisheries

Info about the catch

I was fishing a baited spot at 30 wraps/120yrd using rod Hutchinson kmg glugged in red spicy salmon krill and size 4 crank hooks from carp. online. The biggest of 20 fish from the session and a new pb for me



Over the last couple of weeks from mid-May onwards I had a few successful sessions with some cracking fish down on my local canal.

A few good size bream, a cracking tench, my first from the canal and some stunning old warrior carp.

A nice scaley 11lb mirror, a 16lb 6 oz mirror carp with lovely golden dorsal fin scales, an 11lb battle scarred starburst mirror carp, a 16lb 3 oz perfect mouthed mirror carp and finally a 17lb 2 oz golden mirror with a huge paddle.

They have all been caught on the following two baits with home cooked tiger nuts. Rod Hutchinson's fluoro squid and octopus 15mm popup and Rod Hutchinson's fluoro KMG 15mm popup all soaked in Rod Hutchinson's spicy krill glug, caught on my variation of the multi-rig using size 8 hooks.







Andrew Taylor

A quality 24 hours on another new venue for me at Hollyhurst Lakes, in Coventry.

I banked 10 carp in total to 19lb 6oz, it was a really enjoyable session.

All fish fell to a chopped down Mainline Baits Essential IB Wafter which was presented on a IQ D Rig using a RM-Tec Curve Shank Hook, RM-Tec Bait Screw, Green RM-Tec Anti-Tangle Sleeve and a RM-Tec QC Clip, which was attached to 4 inch piece of RM-Tec Flourocarbon Hooklink over a bed of Mainline Cell boilies.

That is besides one falling to a Mainline Link pop up, presented on a Ronnie rig using a RM-Tec Curve Shank Hook, RM-Tec QC Heli Ring Swivel, RM-Tec QC Clip and a Green RM-Tec Anti-Tangle Sleeve which was attached to a 6 inch piece of RM-Tec Soft Coated Camo Hooklink with a small Castaway PVA Stick of Link Response Pellets.







**Team member Lee fished oak lake at Coking Farm on Wednesday night he decided to put both rods out on a single Krilla boilie teamed with a pva bag with a mixture of Krilla, Blackfudge and Grafter whole boilies and then scattered a few handful of freebies over the top at 4:30am the alarms sounded and was woken by the left hand rod on a run after about a 10 minute battle this fish was in the net after waking team member Richard up to weigh the fish and take a few picture of the beautiful common and a new p.b weighing in a 30lb on the nose!
Great angling Lee**

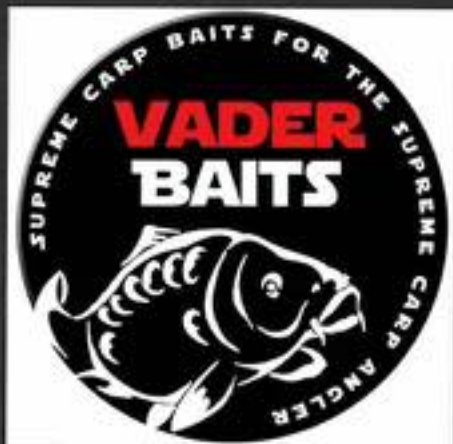


Team member Matt went to Oak lake at Coking Farm complex for a 12 hr night session! Matt choose peg 31 and after getting to the lake and watching his swim for some time he picked a couple of spots mid water he had seen movement on. His left hand rod he fished a single 18mm Grafter boilie and catapulted around 10 freebies over the top and his right hand rod he used 2 14mm SaTaN boilies and again fired between 10 and 15 boilies over the top!! With his rods in and set around 7pm he waited. At around 11pm he left hand rod rattled off but Matt had struck into nothing so he re set his rod on the same spot and waited again... at 4:15am it was his right rod this time white lining and as soon as he hit the rod he knew he had connected fish on!! After a cracking battle Matt managed to slip his net under a cracking 24lb 7oz mirror!!!

Great result good angling well done Matt



Team member Nathan headed to Four Ponds Fishery at the weekend for a social with some friends, Saturday morning came around and after watching the water for a while it became apparent a lot of the fish was high up in the water so decided to set to work working the surface gradually with Le Nutz glugged floaters building the amount of fish in his swim before introducing a controller float with a Le Nutz glugged floater put right in the path of a passing fish and he was in after 15 minutes it was in the net a nice 22lb common no more joy was had on the Saturday. Sunday came around and all was quiet until his alarms went screaming of again a real hard fighting fish this time coming from a spot down the right hand margin near to an aerator this time a mirror weighing in at 28lb it was tempted by a yellow Fluro Tutti Fruiti tuna 12mm pop up teamed up with a solid pva bag of 2mm and 6mm tutti Fruiti tuna pellet and tutti Fruiti tuna chops and crumb with a couple of handful of mixed 14mm and 18mm Tutti Fruiti tuna boilies over the top
Great angling Nathan



Team member Richard took to the bank up on Oak lake at Coking Farm Wednesday night with Lee!

Krilla and Blackfudge were their choices for the session with 4 rods in the water between them! The wind was in their favour, so he decided to bomb the spot with 2kg of 18mm Krilla and fish over the spread of his chosen bait. Night-time drew in and Richard had just got back to sleep when one of his rods went off on an absolute screamer of a take. The fish gave up after 10 minutes after an epic battle. He said it was the best fight of the year and another pristine common at 17lb. This fish was caught on an 18mm Krilla with 60 mm pva bag of crushed matching boillie and slug.

Richard rebaited with a single boillie and this time chose no pva bag and put it back on the spot...he went back to sleep for 10 mins just to be woken up to the same rod tearing off again, a mirror carp at 19lb! Well done Richard...!!



Wyreside



Latest from Wyreside.

The week the weather has been very unsettled with temperatures have been steady, and the fish are still coming this week with an impressive 32 fish being landed in 2 weeks.

This week we shall start on Foxes, it's been quite a success and leading the way was Peter Aspey landing 4 fish of 20lbs, 17lbs & 10lb all fish were caught on sticky.

Now we shall go over to Sunnyside 1 where it's still picking up with 22 fish being landed most fish are good. Wyreside first timer Stefan Butler had 2 stunning 14lb and 14lb both fish came to wafers over a bed of dynamite.

Now to Sunnyside 2 Dan & Mark did a three night session on a large bed of Denham baits & mixed particle (30kg) and landed twenty and topping it off was Dan with a stunning 20lb CROUCH Top Angling. Also, on Sunnyside 2 Ben V pay off with a beast of 25lb Common he tripped it up.

Now to the members waters Bantons has produced the action Anthony who manged 4 bites the best bite was over a bed of mixed particle at 15 wraps. Mark Thomas Wyre Mark Bowden had a stunning 22lbs scaley from Riley had a 27lb fishing close in from gravelly. The God and others just waiting for more info and pictures.

Sorry if I have missed you out.

Tight Lines for now stay Carpy.

www.wyresidelakes.co.uk



Fisheries

h wind, rain and sunshine however the
still on the munch. Sunnyside 2 led the way again
including 2 new 30lb Commons making it 3 in 2

angler wise however there has been 15 fish landed
h in the shape of a 21lb Common and then Mirrors
y bait Krill Floaters with matching hook bait.

l a little bit tricky with that being said things are
getting caught from the corners or the shallows.
Mirrors from peg 11 in the shape of a 16lber &
amite baits particle and crushed boilies.

stint in the point and decided to fish over a
and boy did it pay off, with 10 bites including 3
g long new 30lb 15oz Common now called PETER
Webb opts for a change of scenery and boy did it
up by using a kilo of convert baits boilies.

d a respectable 17 fish this week getting amongst
eing a 20lb Mirror all fish caught on a Ronnie rig
ompson had a lovely 24lber out of Woody's.
om Nettles on a new Hit 'N' Run Pop ups, Dave
ere has been more fish out to the rod of Sawyer /
res.



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A close-up photograph of a textured metal surface, possibly a piece of machinery or a tool, with a copper-colored pen resting on it. The metal surface is dark and has a pattern of raised, rounded bumps. The pen is a vibrant orange or copper color and has a textured grip section. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of both the metal and the pen.

It's time

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fade into it!!

Brooms Cross Fishery Specimen carp and coarse



Callum Robb with Black Tail at 26lb 2oz
from Upper Alt



Freddy Dowdall back
one being Pacman at
A



P.b. for Stevie the bailiff with Sue at 35lb
exactly



Rob Kay with a new
and this time with C



...ck with a bang.. this
... 27lb 2oz from Upper
... Alt



Luke McInerney with Shoulders at 30lb 2oz
from Upper Alt



...y.p.b. from Upper Alt
... Courteys fish at 32lb



Stevie the bailiff at it again with his 3rd 30 in
a month, this time Deebo at 34lb 8oz.



Team member Andrew Wescott has banked an epic carp steeped in history from the iconic RK Leisure's Wraysbury 1 in the shape of The Broken Lin

A massive congratulations from all of us here.

Over to the man of the moment

I arrived at Wraysbury on Tuesday evening after work and took a walk around, there wasn't anything showing so I dropped in a promising looking swim and had a lead around. After an hour of leading around, I found a lovely hard spot. The lead went down with a crack and the spot was big enough for 2 rods to be placed.

Using a Ronnie rig coupled with Carp Company Icelandic Red popups on both rods the traps were set. I spombed out 2 kilos of Icelandic Red boilies along with a kilo of Carp Company pellets mixed with the matching advanced bait soak.

After a short while my left hand rod ripped off and I knew I had hit into a hard fighting carp. After a battle, I guided the fish into the net. I had no idea what weight this fish was going to be until I turned my head torch on and saw there was a Wraysbury original in the net. I then weighed the fish and the needle spun round to 42lb 1oz, I was absolutely buzzing. I put the fish in my retainer and found out that this is one of the Wraysbury originals named 'The Broken Lin'. I asked one of the other lake members to take a few photos and then I released the Broken Lin back into

Wraysbury's gin clear water. I was buzzing and still am now as I'm writing this write up.

Arriving at the park lake early on a Tuesday morning, I was keen to find some fish and try to nick an early bite before the warm sun got the fish up on the surface. As I pushed my kit around a bay, I found some fish bubbling in a corner and after watching for a few minutes decided to flick out 3 rods from a swim that allowed me to fish up to them rather than set up on top of the fish. I got the rods out - single 12mm pink caviar & Cranberry pop ups with a light scattering of broken Icelandic Red freebies. After a couple of hours, the left rod pulled up tight and I lifted the rod into a tench! Slipping the little monster back I decided maybe the bubbling was tench and quickly packed down and moved out to open water where I found fish on the top. A good fish heaved out of the water 120 yards to my left, so I quickly cast a single 12mm pink pop up to it and within 30 minutes that rod whipped round as an angry fish tore off. I lifted the rod and after a spirited fight, I had a 37.8 mirror in the net. A great start - still only 10.30am in day 1 of my session. I positioned 3 rods over a scattering of ice red at 90 yards and got ready for the night. I always like to set the traps early and leave them so by 2pm I was set for the night. Two more fish followed that evening a 29 mirror and a 31.8 common both on the same rod within an hour! Then it went quiet (apart from 5 tench!!!) over the next 24 hours. Not a carp in sight but I knew the fish visit the area I was fishing in open water regularly so baited again with about 1.5 kilos of ice red and set the traps for another night, nothing was showing, and it had turned colder...

After a quiet night I started to get single bleeps on each rod - liners? At 9am the next morning the right hand rod pulled up tight and slowly the spool ticked - this didn't look like the tench takes I was having and I leapt up and lifted in to a heavy fish that decided to kite right along the face of an island. Chest waders on I walked into the margin with net. After 15 minutes, I lifted the net around a stunning common of 41lb.

A 12mm pink pop up again doing the do...

After some pics I slipped the fish back and fished on for a couple more nights, but the fish had gone, they can be moody on this lake and that's exactly what happened. With only a month left of my ticket on the lake I am itching to get back down and try to sneak a couple more fish out before I live onto pastures new...



Does lightning strike twice????

I think our Consultant James would agree with this epic carp!

AWOL at 50lb 8oz

Back from the sesh and managed two fish in pretty tricky conditions, the westerlies were cold, and the big northerlies were even colder but i managed to wrinkle two out which I'm happy with.

AWOL is a repeat capture for me having her 2 years ago from the same peg on the same bait weighing the same and even caught around the same bite time (night time bite)

Gets you thinking ay.

Do they have yearly routes that they have or was this capture just sheer coincidence?

Either way while its fishing tough I'll take a 50 pounder any day.

The mix i was using was 12mm carp company nut mix bollies hemp corn pellet sea snails with a generous splash of carp company hemp oil.



A kilo of the mix over each rod was more than enough to draw the big girl onto my baited area.

Around 3am my left hand rod melted off and we were ON!

After a tough 20 minute boat battle i finally managed to net this colossal mirror known as AWOL.

I Finished work around half 4 buzzing to get to the lake as it's only around the corner from me. I got a peg looking out at this point flat calm when I see 4 5 shows in front so I bucket the swim, I was happy. I purchased my ticket got set up found a nice spot not too far out. I proceeded to bait around 1.5 -2 kilo of carp company Icelandic red fished over the top with a stiff hinge with a 12mm coconut pop up.

I had a bream the first night, so I knew there was fish in the area if there's bream the carp are not far behind. Nothing through the day then at 4:30am Saturday night the A team member decided to send my Steve Neville into meltdown, after a hard battle I netted the monster and could finally see my prize, I knew straight away it was the big common and she spun my scales round to 44lb 12oz





Name

Wayne Locking

Type of fish

Mirror 35lb 14oz

location of catch

Northern syndicate

Info about catch

This is my first 30 and a new UK PB. Caught fishing to a snaggy corner of this low stock 28 acre lake. This fish came 1 hour after a 22lb mirror. It is the biggest fish in the lake. I have been fishing this lake for 13 years trying to catch one of the A team. The fish was caught on a Krill and banana cream snowman from Northern baits on a German rig made up of a size 6 korda curve and esp tungsten loaded coated braid.



Dale Hunter

I have just got back home from a 48 hour session on peg 7 on Newbridge lake at Burstwick (didn't want to leave) landed 9 and lost 2, included in that was breaking with a 17lb ghost carp and then a 25lb 14oz carp landed ranged from 13lb+ to 21lb+, all on hooks from Viper Tackle, fished on a 360 dumbbell waffer, over a scattering of spic a session of a lifetime. Thanks to Lance as usual, I will be back.





carp
my PB twice within an hour,
oz ghost carp, then the other
caught on size 6 curve shank
rig with a S.C baits spicy fish
y fish boilies. All I can say is
nd Michelle for the hospitality





Your Name: Damien Myerscough

type of fish and weight Common carp 29 lb

Location of catch Hillside fishery Burnley

Info about the catch Fishing the Hillside fishery after a bit of time with the marker rod found a nice hard spot under a marginal tree in 7 ft off water. I decided to use a cranberry and caviar 18 mill bait topped with corn on an iq2 rig size 6 precision hooks curved hook. After a quiet night I received a slow take resulting in a pristine 29 lb common



Your
Name: Steve
Cartwright
type of fish
and weight
Mirror 20+
Location
of catch
Northants
Syndicate
Info about the

catch Taken on Key Bait solutions ASM and Carp Tackle Online rig components.



type of fish
and weight
Common 30lb
4oz
Location of
catch Northants
Syndicate

Info about the catch Taken on Key Bait solutions ASM and Carp Tackle Online rig components



type of fish and weight
Common 27lb 10oz
Location of catch
Northants Syndicate
Info about the
catch Taken on Key
Bait solutions ASM and
Carp tackle Online end

game, just in front of a weed bed, came home few hours after catch as they decided to spawn.



Your Name: **Darren Ellerby**

type of fish and weight Ghostie 34.2lb

Location of catch Burstwick

Info about the catch Was fishing the cabin peg at Newbridge lake Burstwick was on for 72 hours I managed to find a clear spot to my left near a snag that had clearly been cleaned of as it was just glowing so I put a couple of handfuls of 15mm spotted fin catalyst over the area and set up camp I decided to match the Hatch and go with a kd rig in korda 20lb kamo and a size 6 curv shank r3 hand sharpened by rig it and a 15mm spotted fin catalyst boilie drilled and corked waders on I proceeded along the margin and dropped my rig on the spot perfectly nothing for the 1st 24hours then at approx 24.00 the next day a bleep on the left rod and it just melted of I jumped on the rod and the battle started it was just ripping line of then I managed to gain control of the fish after about twenty minutes I thought it was ready for the net no chance it ripped off again picking my line up on my other rod I quickly lifted the bail arm round 2 here we go after a further 15 min battle he was ready for the net and bosh a new pd ghostie 34lb and 2oz was absolutely buzzing was a right unit.



Your Name: Dean

type of fish and weight Common carp 51.4 oz

Location of catch Bounty lakes in France

Info about the catch First ever fifty from the venue!!



Your Name: James Winnington

type of fish and weight Mirror 50lb 12oz

Location of catch The Avenue

Info about the catch My first UK 50 come on the last weekend on the Avenue.

The business end was Nash 25lb combi link with a size 6 x fang topped off with a cut down scopex squid cultured fished over free offering of edge and scopex squid.



Your Name:
Jonathan
type of fish and
weight carp
34.8
Location of catch
Leicestershire
syndicate
Info about the
catch here's
my write up from
my recent trip on
new syndicate,
short and sweet

THE BIG
MIRROR new
pb

so I set off to do my first night on a new syndicate when I got there I had a good look around there was a spot that looked perfect for a bite, I couldn't see any fish anywhere so I sat in this spot for about an hour watching, still nothing.... so I decided to have a lead around and found a few spots, hard areas and some gravel they were not big areas just perfect if I'm honest.

Got the rods wrapped up got them out on the 3 spots I found, I baited one spot hard then fished the other 2 just on bags as I wasn't sure how they would respond to bait. I had so much water in front of me so it allowed me to do this without risk of ruining the swim.

The steady approach worked after a few liners in the night it then went quiet, but at 4am my middle rod rattled off and I mean rattled. I ran out of my bivvy in my socks after nearly ending up on my back. I hit into my first fish and she felt heavy!! after a nice fight I slipped the net under her and when i had a closer look i realised she was a 30 so i got her weighed and she pulled the scales round too 34lb 8oz. I was buzzing. I got her in the sling made sure everything was good for photos at first light, then it really hit home what fish I had, one of the other anglers said it was the big mirror which is older than me!!

I caught this over a small pva bag using MTC Baits United Kingdom KR1LL





Tammy Oakes

Mirror 38lb 3oz & 32lb

+ 2 x commons

Location of catch

Linch hill

Info about the catch

Using a size 4 Ronnie rig with A2 baits pop ups fished over a light scattering of bollies soaked in A2 liquid feed.



Catch Reports



Your Name: Matt England

type of fish and weight Mirror Carp - 35.01

Location of catch Frimley Pits

Info about the catch After a spur of the moment decision late Friday night to do a 24 hour session, I headed off to the lake early doors to get the most out of it.

After a poor start to the season and 12 nights blanked so far, mostly down to the inconsistent weather this year. I wasn't exactly brimming with confidence.

However after much consideration I choose my swim and my spots. I was mostly fishing for a bite to kick start this season off so concentrated heavily on this margin rod. I spent all day trickling in 40- 50 baits over the area every hour so, 6 wraps out to an overhanging tree a nice mixture of Mainlines cell & hybrid.

Then at 00.30 it ripped off after a few liners moments before.

After a good 15 minutes of the carp staying deep she finally gave herself up and graced my net. (To huge relief)

Not only did it start my season, it was a new English Mirror PB. Needless to say, I was a happy boy. Caught using Gardner Ultra Skin soft, covert Mugga hook with a whittled down 15mm cell boilie and a pink cell toppers.

****think the face says it all****

Catch Reports



Hi, I am Matthew Saunders from Nuneaton I am 16 years of age and only been fishing for 3 years. I started fishing with my dad and he taught me the basics on the float fishing small ponds and when I caught my first 11 pound carp I was hooked and couldn't stop getting better gear and learning more and more about fishing from a man called

Mark Timerick who ran a small tackle shop. From there I progressed more and more buying a membership at two lakes in Ryton-on-Dunsmore where I started to catch bigger fish up to 20lbs in my first two years of fishing which made me feel very accomplished and my dad very proud. Now in my 3rd year of fishing I am experiencing with bigger and more we'll know waters such as Cuttle mill fishery and linear fisheries where I did a few sessions with great success with fish up to 23lb on zig rigs on Brasenose one. Now on my 3rd time going to linear fishery's on the 28th of May, I fished Brasenose 2 I had a look around the lake which was very packed full of anglers but managed to grab two swims on the far end of the lake. It looked like it was going to be a hard few days fishing with nothing showing at all around the lake and nothing showing in our swims but I stuck with it and searched for gravel spot in the middle with my marker float clipped it wrapped all my rods to that distance and the spomb rod and stuck with what i know with spinner rigs with a candy crush pop as the hook bait This with a 5 to 10 spombs full sweet corn and hemp particle must of created a irresistible to a 34lb 6oz mirror carp which was my new personal best carp.

When I caught the beast it took me into a weed bed and I certainly thought I lost it but I kept pressure on the fish and eventually come free and when I see the fish for the first time my jaw dropped and it was one of the best moments of my life when the fish finally rolled over the net i was extremely ecstatic too have been given that chance to catch a big fish with the lesser experience I have. Now my dad's target is to beat me but I know it is not going to happen because I am now the one teaching him the ways.

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