



ISSUE 9

November 2016



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Scott "Geezer" Grant

Dan Winter

Rich Austin

Crackoff

Simon Pomeroy

Part 3 of Keith Moors - Living The Dream

Plus - Catch Reports and much much more

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Welcome to another edition of Talking Carp... the magazine written by the angler, for the angler.

Autumn is well and truly upon us now. The leaves are starting to fall into the lakes and the surrounding bushes, lilies and reeds start to disappear as quickly as they came.... and that means one thing ... its pop up season!! Stiff hinge rigs, chods, multi rigs, and the Ronnie rig all come into their own now at this time of year as we try and present our baits above the settling mulch that is gathering on our lake beds. So, before casting out your chosen hooklink and bait, just take a moment to look around your pegs... are you surrounded by trees? Are they looking bare? Where have all those leaves gone??

It's also that time of year when the carp tend to go on their winter feed... it's no coincidence when you consider all the free food that's falling into the lakes right now as we have just discussed... so fish accordingly, think about how you present your bait and how much you feed to get them in your peg and keep them there...

This month we have some thought provoking writings to really get you thinking as the long dark nights draw in!! these writings will blow the cobwebs away and get the grey matter ticking over....

Make sure you check out Crackoffs piece on how changing your view on your own fishing can make a difference.

Dan Winter turns his rig thinking upside down.... Stiff rigs over weed?? Oh, yes he does...

We welcome Simon Pomeroy who brings a completely different, and dare I say very successful, view on carp bait and feeding habits.

Anyway, I will continue with that another time... for now, have a great month! We wish you all good luck and tight lines to those fishing and keep those catch reports and articles coming in, and watch out for some big announcements in the coming weeks.

All the best, Team Talking Carp.

Email brian.dixon@talkingcarp.co.uk





THE BEST ALARMS?



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*An askance view of carp^{ing}.
Part 2*



*Keep It Simple Stupid
by Crackoff*

Keep It Simple Stupid

By now I'm hoping that you can see that the purpose of these articles is to help you re-evaluate your views on your fishing. The way we all look at our fishing, needs to change. We aren't fishing for anyone else, we are only fishing for ourselves, and to try and fish for others benefit is pointless. There are too many views, and too many that are willing to pull us back. My first article was based around how others perceive our PB's and how that can cause a preconceived view of us as fishermen. This next article looks at how we can take a step forward and start getting away from the hype that surrounds carp fishing. Way back

when Lenny Middleton started using the hair rig for carp, (and you'll notice I don't say invented, because it was already a concept used for perch) he shattered the idea that carp was uncatchable, and some sort of mega intelligent species that was the previous view. My view of carp is that there is no such thing as a riggy carp, just cautious ones. As Izaak Walton taught "study to be quiet".

And that is how I now think of carp fishing, let them know you're there and you will struggle, stay hidden, and you will be rewarded.

Way back in the mid to late 80's, many people spent a huge amount of time trying to create the next Hair Rig. I was one of those intrepid fellows, and spent many a night fishing an all new contraption, and

gaining an understanding of rig mechanics. At the same time, I spent many a school day some 17 miles away from my school, sat studying at the London School of biochemistry, sneaking into the Kings College on the Strand, and using their extensive library in an attempt to understand the requirements needed to fulfil and attract carp in a boilie mix.

The 80's were a huge step forward as far as carp fishing went. The understanding of our target's needs, and how to get the hook to behave exactly how we wanted it to, and at exactly the right time, both gave us massive steps forward in our chosen pastime. It was a time of learning for an awful awful lot of carp anglers around at that time, and though my time was spent

seeking answers, and to all intents and purposes, getting the answers I wanted, I can honestly say it was time well wasted. Yes, I learnt how to understand rig mechanics, the fundamentals that get a hook to react how I want it to, and see and understand how someone else's rig works. My time at the college gave me a reasonable understanding of how Carbohydrates, Fats, Proteins, etc are all used by the body of living creatures, and also gave me a fair understanding of things that would make a carp

investigate a bait. But let's leap forward 30 years and see where I am now with regards my fishing, and how this knowledge has got me where I am. Years of playing with rigs, have caught me a fair few carp. Some I'm

sure I would never have had if I hadn't been playing about and trying stupid things, but the simple truth is I now fish a rig that is basically a rig that is 30 years old in design. 95% if not more of my fishing, is spent casting out the humble Hair Rig, as on its day, I know it will hook just as many carp as any other rig I have worked with. I have had carp from well known "Riggy" waters on it, and carp from not so well known hard waters on it, so why would I go and change it?

Years of making bait and catching quite

successfully on them were good, but the time spent making them began to grind. Work, family, friends and relaxation all take time, and something must give, and four hours a week making bait recently became a quick online purchase of a respectable food bait. I still get a bit bored sometimes and decide to change bait from one season to the next, but being lucky in that fishing certain waters in certain areas areas through my angling life has made me some great contacts in fishing, means that a few phone calls and I can



usually get onto something a bit different reasonably quickly. At the end of the day, the biggest thing I've learnt over 40 years of carp fishing is that both rigs and bait, are only there to do a job. Neither has to be perfect, but they both have to be good enough, and that's where I like to be. By leaving out the effort and time of thinking up a new wonder rig, or sifting through various company websites looking for the new wonder ingredient for a bait, I can release that time for either actual fishing, or more often than not, just watching the water I am concentrating on. This makes the chances of catching far better simply as I can start to see where I need to cast that rig with its bait on. Relying on a bait to pull a carp into

an area or spot that it doesn't want to feed on is only going to give limited success. If that spot is somewhere the carp feels threatened, or cautious around, then you are already onto a loser.

The last thing I'll say on bait and rigs, is that no matter what type of water you fish, big or small, easy or hard, you should always use what you have confidence in.

Understand why your

though I won't go into it on this piece, just know that confidence is one of the biggest factors in success. It doesn't mean you use the best bait you can buy, nor do you need to use the most technical rig there is. Simplicity has a way of keeping you doing the things that matter, and that is putting the rig in front of feeding fish. . Once you know your bait will catch carp, and your rig will



bait and rigs work, because with understanding, comes confidence, and

do the same, it leaves you completely open to fishing how you should. . Moving when



needed, needn't mean changing rigs, I guess I could fish half a dozen swims in a half a dozen waters, and other than a minor hooklength change, I'd be just as confident in any of those swims with just my basic rigs. The only exceptions would be heavy silt or silk weed, pretty much everything else I would be 100% happy fishing over. Heavy silt or silk weed are dependent on the depths of either, and if only light, longer hooklinks could again fix the issues. I think the super rigs brought out in the angling press do have their place in carp fishing, but at the same time, I also feel that young and novice anglers get dragged into believing the

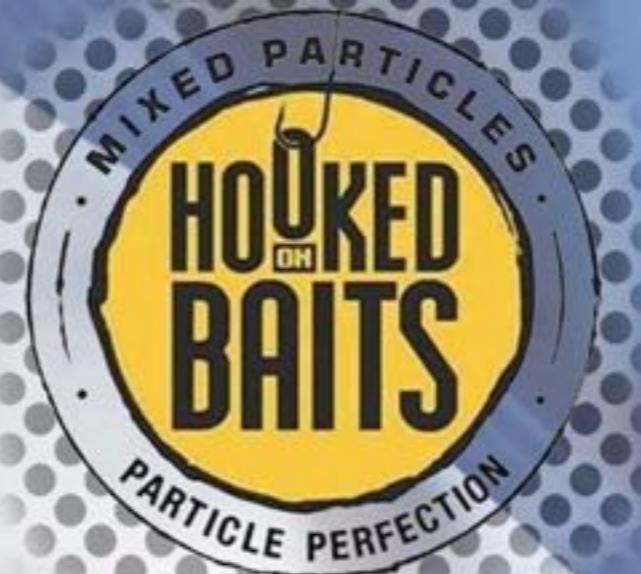
effectiveness too easily by unscrupulous "experts" sponsored by companies to peddle their wares. If after 40 years of carping, I can tie an effective rig, with a hook, some hooklink and a swivel, a rig that I will happily fish in any water I have fished so far, and some have been real headbangers, then surely the need for all these little extras is minimal. Yet every week in the angling press is another twist on a rig, another added cost, and another unnecessarily confusing addition to try and remember. All these rigs, baits, and must have bits of tackle filling the young or novice mind with fluff. But I'll say it now, get rid of all this clutter and concentrate on the main target, the actual fishing, and you

will see a far better result than if you sit trying to tie the latest wonder rig. We are led to believe that if we don't fish these rigs, we won't catch, and if we aren't on this new bait, the carp won't even come to dinner. It's rubbish. A good bait, and a good rig, in the right place will



catch more than the best bait and a wonder rig, in the wrong place. Well, enough of my meanderings into madness. Tight lines guys, and see you on the bank sometime.

Crackoff



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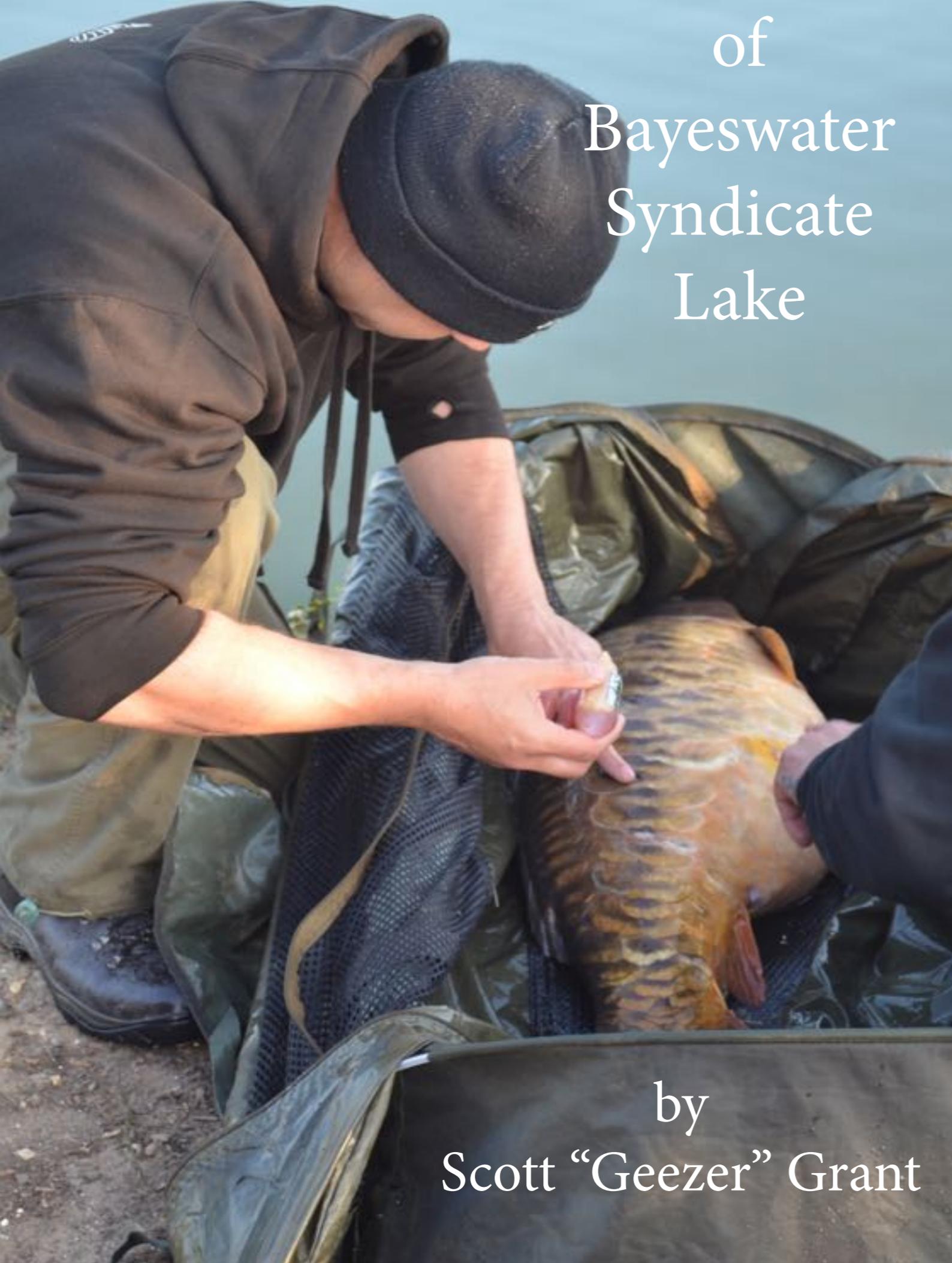
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Hidden gems of Bayeswater Syndicate Lake

by
Scott “Geezer” Grant



Finally, after a few years of being on the waiting list I got a call from Gary Bayes to say my ticket was available, and do I want it? Well after a lot of deliberating all of 2 minutes I said of course I want it.

From the moment Gary first got the lake I took an interest. I knew in years to come the place would be special. The fish that he stocked in there which were doubles are now proper units! The fish I have been keeping a close eye on over the past couple of years are real stunners: The Tiger fish, the Caribbean Queen and the Coconut Common, but to name a few. These fish are on everyone's radar and you can see why. My ticket started on the 1st April but due to my shifts I couldn't get down there until the 13th.

I had 2 nights ahead

of me and to say I was excited was an understatement!

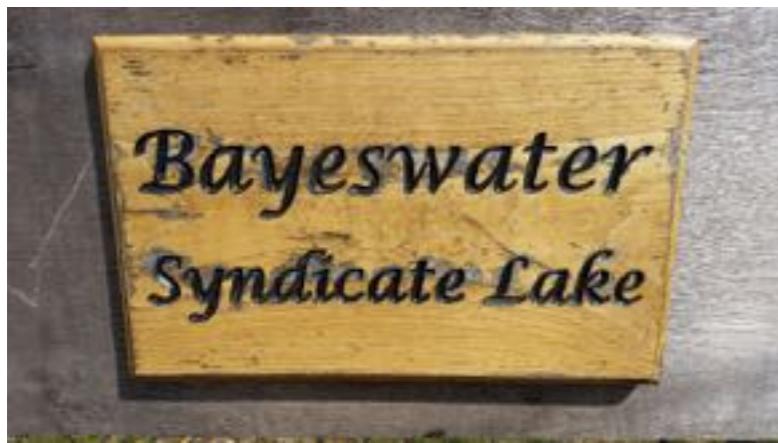
After a quick walk around I decided to fish swim 4 which had done a few fish throughout the winter. The weather was cold with a north easterly wind; the only positive sign was the pressure which was 1010. Zigs are deadly at this time of year and I knew a few fish had come out to them, so I decided to fish 3 rods on zigs at different depths and the other rod a bright pop up with a few baits scattered around it.

Zig fishing is an art in itself, it can be a deadly tactic... once you locate the depth at which the fish are sitting at.

The zigs were fished at 4, 5 and 6 foot all in 10ft water. I used different coloured foam and combinations on each rod until I got a take, then all zigs would be fished to that

combo... Once all the rods were sorted the house was set up and the kettle went on. Steve Bugg the head bailiff came around and we chatted and drank tea for over an hour. Steve knows his stuff and what's happening over both the syndicate and day ticket lakes. You couldn't wish to meet a nicer bloke and will advise anyone. It wasn't long before the night started in and drawing in and





my bed was calling me. As I laid there with just the radio on all sorts was going through my head. Mainly what happens when one of my rods goes off. I drifted off to sleep quite late and was awoken in the morning with the sound of coots going mental. I sat and watched the water for any signs of activity with a coffee in hand. All of a sudden I had a single bleep on my right hand rod, my arsehole was twitching like you wouldn't believe, I was bolt upright just watching the rod tip, then my alarm beeped again and the rod tip knocked I lifted the rod and felt something on the end

after only a few seconds the line went slack!!! When I reeled the rod in my hook link had been cut half way up! I was gutted but the only fish that could have done that is a pike. I wasted no time and tied a new hook link and cast it out to the same area hoping the next fish that takes it will be a stunning carp. Needless to say nothing else happened and after a quiet day and night it was time to pack up and head home. My next session also drew a blank in a different swim and it wasn't until my third session that it all seemed to come together. It was the middle of

May and I turned up at the lake on a Sunday evening around 18:00. It was quite busy but most of the anglers were doing overnighters and going to work in the morning.

As I watched the water the fish were in front of swim 4 in numbers. There was an angler in 4 so I decided to go in swim 8 opposite as this would give me the best view in the early morning and hopefully the fish will show themselves.

Throughout the night the fish were active but my rods remained motionless. First light I was up and sure enough the fish started to show in front of 4. I wasted no time and started packing up and getting my gear around to 4. The angler was gone by 07:00 and I started setting up very excited.

I kept the noise to a minimum and didn't cast the rods out until

late morning. I had made notes from my previous trips so I knew exactly how many wraps and landmark to cast each rod to. The bait for

high teens. Monday came and went and when I woke on Tuesday morning the lake was covered in fog, I couldn't even see the island. Fish



this trip was the ever faithful Nut Job pop up fished over a scattering of freebies. The weather wasn't too bad with daytime temperatures of 16 degrees but the N/E wind did have a bit of a bite coming straight into me, but according to the weather app the wind was due to change tomorrow to a nice S/SW which meant daytime temperatures would also be in the

were crashing but I couldn't see where. There were a couple of anglers on who turned up last night but I didn't know if anything had been out. Within the hour the fog started to lift and a beautiful lake started to emerge. As I laid watching the water my middle rod burst into life, a one toner!!! I jumped up lifted the rod and was playing my first Bayeswater carp and an angry one

at that. The fish put up a great fight and after 5 or so minutes I slid the net under a cracking fully scaled. Bailiff Mark Twin was fishing in peg 2 and had seen me playing the fish and made his way around to me. With the camera, weigh sling and everything else sorted I lifted the fish from her home and safely put her in my unhooking mat. As I unfolded the net I was blown away, the fish was in immaculate condition, a real gem. Mark recognised the fish immediately and said "well done mate", on the scales the fish went 32lb but to be honest the weight was totally irrelevant, just catching a fish from here is an achievement in itself. Mark obliged with the camera and took some cracking photos. . With the fish returned the rod was rebaited

and cast to the same area and a few freebies dispatched. I was due to leave later that day but now I just wanted to stay. I managed to blag a day off work and that was me sorted. Unfortunately, nothing else happened that day and the wind really got up and the

fish moved down to my right, but with anglers already in them swims I didn't have the option to move again. I sat it out for another night but to no avail, so come the next morning I packed up and drove home grinning like a Cheshire Cat.

Bayeswater is a special place with top anglers fishing there and I cannot wait to get back there. Be safe if you're out on the bank and remember it's only fishing All the best "Geezer"



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My Carping Summer of Madness

by Andy “Hauling” Hyden

My Carping Summer of Madness

I started my spring into summer campaign fishing my local water Fisherwick lakes in Lichfield. It's a 3.5-acre lake with loads of features and various depths. I started off my session on the trout bank which is shallower fishing to a tree line and reeds it didn't take long for the carp to start and get on to the feed baiting up using Naturesbaits Alpha boilies which has been going in here for a couple of seasons now and using a combination of 3 rigs; the blow back rig and the kd rig... basic rigs compared to some of the rigs anglers use but they work for me so I don't need to complicate things.

Using 2 types of hook the Fox Armapoint SSC and ESP Krygen. I like a curve shank hook it seems to nail them every time and the hooks being ultra sharp very rarely get hook pulls. After baiting up my areas that I know produce fish of the past it didn't take long before I started to get in amongst the fish and over the next couple of sessions the catch rate started to get better and better. The carp seemed to be getting on the feed more and still using my faithful rigs and my Naturesbaits Alpha I started to hit the bigger fish and the odd grassie. Then the cats started to make an appearance!! My first cat out of here was 47lb 10 oz, the fight was unbelievable it took me 40 mins to get it in. The head on it was huge. That session continued to

have 16 fish... a great session. The next session I did was on Fisherwick again but this time I went on my winter peg which I had a great campaign on here on this peg . I fished one rod onto the treeline which is only about feet deep baited it up using Naturesbaits Alpha but this time using Naturesbaits Alpha wafers and White Ice wafers which was an



instant hit and in the following 48 hrs ending up having 13 carp and 1 catfish all off the tree line.
2 weeks later I did another 48-hr session on same peg with my right hand rod fishing



to the treeline, my middle rod 2 rods lengths out in front on me and my left hand rod about 3 rods lengths out. All 3 rods on different hook baits over a bed of Alpha. This session I intended to swap things about using a combination of hook baits trying to see what the fish preferred but things didn't go to plan didn't matter was hook baits I used I was catching on all rods that session and I ended up having 16 carp so it looked like I was going to have to come back next week to see what I could do. So the following Fri I arrived I had a

walk around the lake to see if any signs of fish showing ,I decided to fish the trout bank again this time I was sticking to one method all three rods on a blow back rig with Naturesbaits White Ice wafers on over a bed of Alpha, the first thing I did what put a few hands full of Alpha and try to get the fish in my swim and give them a free feed . After setting up I put a few more hands on each spot and just watched the lake for about a hr rods still up against my brolly just sat and watched the lake after about 20 mins I saw my first

signs of a carp boshing out over one of my spots I baited then fizzing started so I put a couple of handfuls of Alpha over my spot and casted out with a White Ice wafers on. I hadn't even put the bobbin on when my rod rips off. It felt a nice fish, and after playing it for 10mins it decided to give up as soon as got it I the landing net it was a decent 20lb+ and when I weighed it, it was 24lb 10 oz... a nice start to the proceedings. I rested same rod out and putting a couple of handfuls over the top just picked my second rod up to cast out my first rod rips of again certainly a few fish in area I landed that one another 20lb+!!! A fantastic start I recast my first rod and put my second rod onto the edge of my first rod just went to pick up my third rod when second

rod rips off.... this felt like a catfish straight away as it kept to the bottom and gave powerful runs but after 30 mins I finally got it to the surface and it was indeed a catfish weighing in at 33lb 4oz. Not surprisingly it when quiet for a couple of hours so time to have a brew. I try and keep everything simple and my style of fishing is bait little and often and my rigs are very basic. I find no need to over complicate things sometimes you must swap and change things especially if carp are being cagey. If they are up in the layers or is see them on the

surface then my floating pellets come out for my favourite type of fishing on the surface, I can't wait from

end of March until end of summer my surface rods come with me. There is nothing like getting carp competing for pellets off the top... that first slurping sound of the season when carp taking of the surface sends chills through my body I absolute love it and I have had some fantastic results. Sometimes in the summer I just come for the day only with my surface rods and pellets. My biggest of the surface is 26lb 10 Oz which was a beautiful common, I have also had a mirror 26lb 10 Oz of the surface, sometimes I

get at Fisherwick for 4.30 in the morning and they instantly taking floaters. I use the fox bubble float because they are self-hooking and when you see that pair of lips come up and take your hook bait and a big swirl and your line rips off in my opinion there is nothing better, sometimes I have to work hard at it for a couple of hrs to get them taking confident but when they are it is fantastic. My summer carping madness is nearly over with 100 carp caught and a few cats and as it ends and descends into autumn and into winter, I did my last session on Fisherwick a week ago.



I decided to go to Fisherwick to try and get a couple of the bigger fish in there, I was supposed to get their on Fri night after work but I didn't finish early so I went early hours of Saturday morning so this session was only going to be just over 24hrs because I had to be gone for 10 am Sunday morning. I arrived and one of my favourite pegs was empty so after barrow in my stuff to my peg which is the big point I've put 2kg of Alpha 14 mm boilies in on 2 spots, I set up my brolly set my rods up and only fished boilie this time... no wafers or pop up just 18mm Alpha on a blow back rig. Once I had set up I put a few more baits out then I put my left hand rod just in front of me about 3 rods



lengths out where I had a few carp from on other sessions and my middle rod was half a rod length to the right of baited spot and my third rod was on 1.5 rod lengths to the right of my swim not far from the edge of deep hole which goes to nearly 30 ft, it wasn't long before my left hand rod went off... it was a mid-double, so I recast it back out and with 20 mins it rips off again, this time playing the carp was completed different? The movement was slow but powerful, I was hoping it was one of the big girls so I was playing it for about 10 mins but as I got some line back the carp was taking it

back! As soon as I got the better of it or what I thought I was it proved me wrong. I knew this had to be a good one for here they are not massive in here biggest is just under 30lb mirror but their are some beautiful commons just under 27lb which don't come out often ,so after 20 mins I started to get nervous hoping that I didn't get a hook pull then it come to the surface. I knew when I seen it I was hooked into one of the big commons and I was buzzing, but getting more and more nervous but it was getting closer after another 5 mins it kept coming up taking gasps of air so I knew it wouldn't long just hoping the hook didn't pull then it was in the net. The feeling I got when it slipped into the net you anglers know that feeling.

I unhooked the common in my cradle and put into my floatation sling and put it back into the water for 10mins to recuperate because it was a fantastic fight. I was standing in anticipation waiting to find out big it was .so after 10 mins or so it was time to get the beauty out and weigh it **27lb 2oz my biggest uk common and new UK pb!!** I was overwhelmed with joy after having a lot of time on here through the winter and into spring and summer and finally I was rewarded with one of the big girls. I put the beauty back into the lake making sure she was fully ready to go back then into the darkness she swam away but my session wasn't over. I cast back out to the same spot, just putting the

kettle on to sit their and think about what I had just had and my left-hand rod goes again this time it was a 18lb 4 mirror, another beautiful carp. Once again I cast back out then it went quiet for a few hrs so I rebaited my spot with alpha over the next day and night till sun morning I ended up having 13 carp. 4 carp over 20lb mark a 20lb 6 Oz a 21lb 6 Oz a 23lb 6oz and anew pb common of 27lb 2oz the other 9 carp was mid to high teens ,I know by today's standards these are not the biggest fish out their but I don't have the time to travel around due to work so I have to limit to close to where I live to fish but when you catch a beautiful fish it doesn't matter if

they are 10lb or 50lb ,my fishing isn't about the size of carp, it's about being out on the bank enjoying the scenery relaxing after a hard weeks work and hopefully bagging a few carp . This year so far Fisherwick has been kind to me over 190 carp a few recaptures but a fantastic season so far and capped of my spring and summer season with a new uk pb common so let's bring on autumn and winter and see what the future brings. I just love to be on the bank fishing.

Andy.





Rigs, Bits and Tackle by Dan Winter



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Rigs, Bits and Tackle

Well it certainly hasn't taken me long to start getting involved with talking about end tackle and rigs. It seems the customary thing to talk about in magazines and I think we've seen and heard every single way to fish every single rig in every situation. In fact, you wouldn't be far from the truth if you thought that some magazines simply take the same article from years previous, threw some new pictures on it, changed the wording slightly and reprinted the same article.

This month however I want to talk to you about something that goes a little against the grain. In fact, it was a friend I was fishing with recently that prompted me to throw this in my

article even though it's a small edge of mine. Stiff rigs on weed? Now I'm not for a second thinking I'm the only person that does this and I imagine some of you may do the same as me. Normally the rule of thumb goes, soft on weed or stiff on clear or hard areas. The principle being that stiff materials sit up and obvious in weed, and the softer materials lay themselves better to sitting on the weed nice and inconspicuously. The reverse applies to harder spots where a rig doesn't need to take on every contour and can lay flat. It also pays to have something that is more likely to self-set rather than tangle, which is easier to do on clear hard areas than in weed, apart from with a chod rig and perhaps a hinge stiff rig if you're fishing it correctly.

But what if I told you that in a lot of your fishing situations, you can rely on a stiff rig to lay better on weed than a supple one? The thought occurred to me a few seasons back. I was struggling to find a rig to make my own, a rig I found confidence with. I looked at some of the best rigs around that have consistently caught fish everywhere. Two of the rigs I mentioned already, the humble 'Chod rig' and the superb 'Hinge stiff' alongside with the 'Withy pool' are probably some of the most notorious carp catching rigs we know.

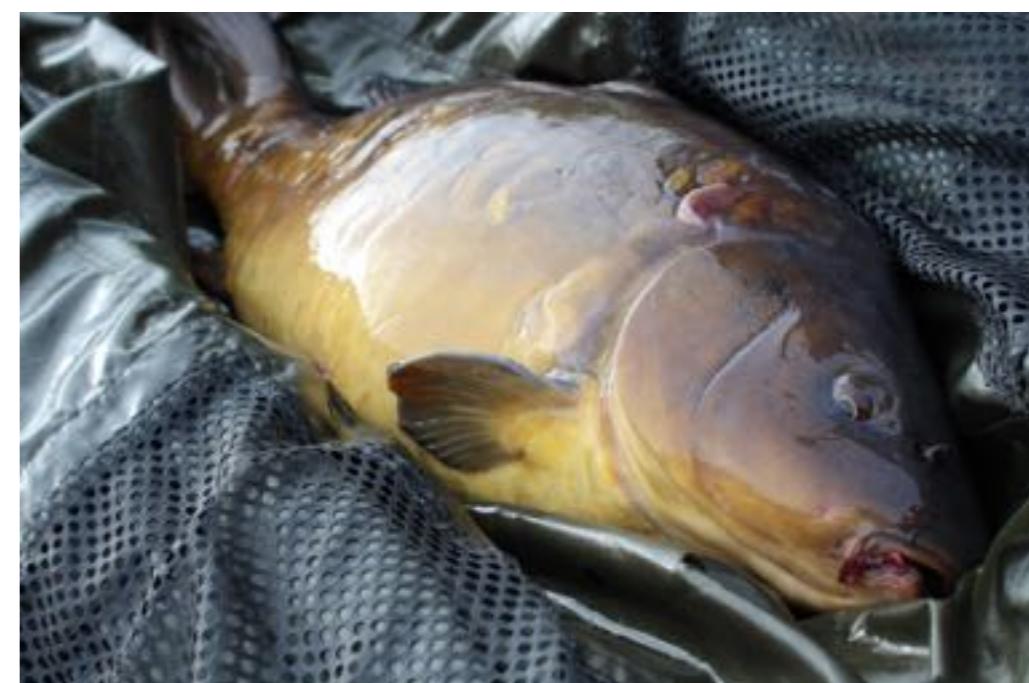
But why?

Well to be honest I think everyone has an opinion on what rig does what, but for me, the key is to the stiffness of the rig. They can all be sucked

in, but on ejection it's a different story. These rigs virtually have to be blown out in the same direction they entered. That's quite difficult even for the sneakiest and smartest of carp. Of course, they use the lead as well to shake these rigs out, but I believe if you're fishing these 3 rigs effectively, this still troubles them. So, for me my 'go anywhere' rig had to either be stiff, or have a short stiff link they could suck in easily that would be difficult to blow back out. To the tackle box I went and what I made was effectively a bottom bait hinge stiff rig, removing the curve, keeping it dead straight, and changing the 'D' on the hook for a KD style braided hair. This enabled the bait to move freely and away from the hook, while the short stiff link kept

the hook inside the mouth primed and ready to prick the inside of the mouth and set the hook home. I used this to great effect with a mono boom that sat nicely on the bottom but maintained enough stiffness to reset itself. The rig worked like a charm and while most the other successful anglers were picking up 1 or 2 fish in the mornings or the day, I was getting my bites through the night when others weren't whilst fishing shorter sessions. This was a certain tell tail sign that the rig was doing its

job. The only problem I had was with hook holds. They were too wild and even though I was hooking a lot of fish, I was dropping them just as easily. Most of the time I would lose them in close where the angle of the rod in relation to the fish would increase, pulling the hook out. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to work out something needed to change. So, I changed over to the more commonly used IQ D-rig. I changed the hook pattern and went over to the simply amazing H2O fluorocarbon hooklink from



Rig Marole, and I was set. No fish dropped, even more runs, and a good season.

But that wasn't all I was doing....

One of the best places to pick runs up has always been close to, or in weed. I would put a hefty bet on a lot of you fishing weedy waters where simply finding a drop is like gold dust. This means that 99% of the time you're probably fishing over choddy bottom and you're looking straight away to tie up a chod or a hinge and set your rig hovering above the low-lying weed.

I took a different approach after sussing something out about weed and stiff rigs that many may have noticed but may not have tried.

Tie yourself up a stiff rig, set it up with a wafer or neutrally buoyant bait, drop it in the margin over an

area covered in weed, what you'll see is the stiffness working in your favour. The strands of weed hold the rig perfectly on top with the hook roughly lying flat. Obviously take into consideration the depth of weed and type of weed. This won't work in 6ft of Canadian for instance. But the majority of low lying weed you'll get the same effect, especially on blanket weed. Throw a few freebies over the top and watch them lay on top of the weed and your rig will mimic this perfectly.

Like most of you I had the same image of my lead going in the weed and a big loop of fluoro extruding out making the rig sit upside down or in mid-air and generally very badly. To counter this all you have to do is lengthen the hook link to suit the

weed. Sometimes you can get away with a short but sweet 6 inch hooklink and other times you should look towards fishing 14 inches to 18 inches if need be, but it will lay flat.

Another advantage is the hook lay. If you get it right, it should lay the hook down on top of the weed making it nice and easy to be picked up. If you find your hook sinking in a centimetre or 2, change your bait for one ever so slightly more buoyant and take your time. The idea is to mimic the free offerings that are going to lie on top of the weed, making your hook link

completely invisible to any carp, and your hook bait identical to those around it. You must remember that fish do most their feeding in weed and are perfectly used to picking food items off the weed and this is in no way a struggle for any fish. The problem with using something soft is two-fold. The hooklink will fall between the weed as fish travel above and wave action rocks the braid between the strands and out of site. Good for camouflage but it can also pull the hook down with it. Also, the hook has a very good chance of grabbing the weed, restricting it from entering a carp's mouth. Sean Harrison wrote a very good article years ago about using barbless hooks in weed to stop this happening and increasing your run rate.

Give it a try and give me some feedback from your next session. Coming into the late autumn and fish are very much harvesting the last bits of life left in the weed while the water

temperature isn't too low. It might just change your fishing.

Angling and technology

There is one piece of kit we all use as modern day carp anglers that I think most of us would be lost without. Our bite alarms! I know a lot of you were probably thinking about your Ridge Monkey that you've taken more pictures of than actual fish, but no. I've been looking at a new company making what look to be an awesome bit of kit, and include technology that wouldn't be lost in your home or work place. New Direction Tackle (ND) is not the newest thing out, but they are relatively unknown in this country, or at least they would be if it wasn't for social

media. Now I don't own a set, I haven't seen a set, or know anyone with a set of these bite alarms, and I think it's a crying shame. In fact, I'm so impressed with these that I'm considering buying these myself!

Current top of the range bite alarms from Fox, Delkim, ATT and Nash, constantly divide opinion and offer different strengths and weaknesses. They are however slaking on the technology front.

Let's look at what they do...

They have a roller or vibration sensor, settings for tone, sensitivity and volume. They have a receiver, and if you're lucky they can even detect if a burglar is trying to steal your set up. Clever stuff. But I can spend £30 on a phone with more

technology than what is currently housed in our bite alarms. So why does a decent set of 3 bite alarms and a receiver cost up to £500?

Take a look at what ND is doing with their new K9 bite alarm and it'll make you wonder why everyone else hasn't done something similar.

They come with the normal customary bite alarm features. Roller wheel, volume, sensitivity, a night light, receiver etc. They also come with several extra features.

Illuminated snag ears, illuminated roller, multiple LED colours for you to chop and change however you see fit on the day. Also, a mute button that lasts 30 seconds while you set your bobbins. These are just a few of their handy features that come standard on the new K9 bite

alarms. But its receiver is where I think some of the coolest features are.

It has an actual screen! Yes, a screen! Where you can properly see what's happening instead of working to f

lashing lights and single beeps. It has a function that checks the range so you can see when you're starting to move too far out of reach. It also has a 'low power' mode, where you can reduce its usage to give you longer battery life. You can also use it to change the

sensitivity, tone, volume and night light, all without leaving the comfort of your bivvy. On the display, it even shows you the date, time, signal strength and battery life. Everything wrapped up into an easy to use interface with menu. You can even buy a separate

infrared burglar alarm that goes onto any bank stick and will do a better job of alerting you of people coming in your swim way before anyone gets close to your rods or bivvy.

It doesn't stop there!

They even have an app you can download to any smartphone that will turn your mobile into another controller for your bite alarms should your batteries run out or you break your receiver.

Here comes the best

feature of them all. The price!

A 2-rod set up with receiver, box and the illuminated snag ears, only costs £150! A 3-rod set up is £190 and they do a 4 rod and 5 rod set up reaching only £270 to set up 5 rods! And they don't look at all out of place either if you think you're going to get some cheap nasty

imitation bite alarms with a few features thrown in to paper over the cracks. But there is one pricey piece of kit they do, but I'm dying to get hold of them and I'm extremely impressed as a man that invents products.

The bobbins are insane. They have carried out the same features into their bobbins to perfectly compliment the set up. They are different to anything you've seen. Using a central arm that pivots under the bite alarm, similar to a swinger. It passes through the centre of the bobbin and allows it to move freely side to side. What you get is a bobbin that will move up and down, side to side to pick up subtle twitches on the line.

This is complimented with a vibration alert feature which makes the bobbin light up upon any small

movement on the line your bite alarm might miss. Clever stuff aye! There are however two drawbacks. One being the weight. They use a battery to power the bobbin, and not a small battery you'd find in the back of a watch. No, a much bigger battery, which unfortunately adds weight, which reduces sensitivity. The other drawback is the price. A 3-rod set up will set you back £75. You certainly get the quality for the money, but will it be as effective as or better than current industry standard bobbins?

I'm not sold as of yet. They are however a simple accessory and not important to the set up. But if they do sound up your street, they will fit on any bite alarm on the market.

Unfortunately though, to finish this seemingly

glowing report is some negativity. Looking at the reviews online it seems this amazing gadgetry for such a cheap price does come with a few problems. The saying 'you get what you pay for' does certainly apply here. The plastics are cheap and people have complained of water getting in and killing their alarms. Buttons falling off also seemed to be fairly common, and battery life is reduced to only a couple of sessions. Not ideal from an angling perspective. But my question still remains... why aren't the big boys following suit? The technology is there, it's clearly not expensive tech to produce, and some of the features are extremely useful. Hopefully with new companies like ND coming out to show everyone what's

possible in fishing, we may see vast improvements around the corner.

Visit them online on www.newdirectiontackle.co.uk if you want to look for yourself and give them the once over.

I'm off to Holme Fenn Next month so with any luck ill have an awesome article for you with some stunning fish on film possibly. I'm also taking the new Rod Hutchinson rods I've been using and will be reviewing them for you in the next article.



'Gone Fishing'

Daniel Winter



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GETTING IN TOUCH:



A Foreign Affair
by Rich Austin

A Foreign Affair by Rich Austin

I am going to start this month's article with one word...
WOW!

Ok, over the next few paragraphs the reason for the 'WOW' will become clearer and you will understand that in all fairness a 'WOW' really wasn't enough of an expression.

I have been fishing over in France for quite a few years now and every time I have made the journey across the channel I have had a great time, in all the times I have ventured over I have luckily or skillfully, I prefer the latter, blanked only on two occasions, once in very cold conditions, where out of 6 anglers only 1 fish was caught, and then the total opposite, extreme heat with the water levels right down, and a summer temperature that went through the roof, not ideal for the fish, and certainly not ideal for me as I much prefer fishing in the cooler months - because I am happier on the bank when its colder, and also out of the heat of the mid-day sun I believe the fish feed harder, unless obviously you have got them going on the top which is a whole different style of fishing altogether. I have been to what we call runs waters over in France, which turn out to be very enjoyable, and a busy holiday, catching high teens and twenties through the week on a regular basis with the chance of a thirty or forty pounder gracing your net, and then there's the other end of the spectrum... lakes that have very few teens and twenties on offer, but cater for the bigger fish angler who are after thirties forties & the chance of a big girl, and then there's the specialised waters, lakes that are known as hard waters, that the average weight of a resident is a thirty/forty pounder with a good handful of fifties and sixties and then you're getting to the jewel of the crown with lakes that have inhabitants of seventies, eighties, nineties & amazing specimen fish and true wonders of the carp world. Nobody likes to go to France or anywhere else for that matter and blank so we have to weigh up the pros and cons of each trip and what you want from it. One thing that makes me very angry is the ignorance of some people when they say "France is easier than the UK or your French fish don't count".

Are you serious? Jog on! what a truly ignorant point of view and they are usually from the people who have never fished abroad before, whether it's jealousy or just plain ignorance who knows but you are very very wrong. There are easy waters just like the UK, there are also some very rock hard waters just like the UK and to be perfectly honest I think that France is now in general a lot harder than UK en masse, as the lakes in France are hammered 365 days a year full to the brim with anglers and masses of bait going in to the water so think about it in those terms. The lake I've just come back from was 15 acres with 300 fish, some would say that's a good head of fish, and in general I would agree, 20 fish per acre, now let's add in another parameter, this lake goes to 24ft deep, so now that's 20 fish per surface acre but you now have to go 24ft deep also in that acre now imagine 20 fish in that acre 24ft deep square, and that is if every fish in the lake is in their acre quota which we all know they are not, lets add in another factor, the air pressure was high... 1030's! OUCH, a huge effect on the water and feeding habits, now let's add in the weather, in the day time we had cold easterlies but with sunshine that pushed the daytime temperature up to 18/19 deg and at night the temps plummeted to 4 deg... now you add all that in together and tell me that wasn't hard fishing. My French fishing partner and very good friend Terry Clayton was at one end of the lake in his shorts in the daytime, and at the other end of the lake where the sun made a daily appearance for one hour the guys were in their winter thermal suits all day because of the easterlies, it was a crazy scenario. When we arrived at Lac Des Lesmont now owned by ex-Premiership Footballer Lee Bowyer I could see it was a special place and also knew by looking at the water that I had my work cut out this week, not only through all the research that I have done, but also the top name angler friends of mine that have fished here, and some of whom have blanked for the week so I had to be on my A game that was for sure. We met the bailiff Louis who was a great host as was his misses Rachel, making us feel very welcome and always on hand for information and help if we needed it in our party of 6. He walked us round the lake and straight away once passed Peg 1 which we had agreed to take out of the draw to open up the water for everybody we could see fish fizzing quite heavily up the top end of the lake (the cold end) Pegs 11, 10, 9, 8,

7, 6 all had lots of fish movement in front of them and my initial thoughts of wanting Peg 4 was wavering and I was looking for reasons to change my mind as I could see fish feeding, and crashing cleaning their gill rakes. The thing that was worrying me was that they were all in a line from Peg 11 to Peg 8 then a little spread out and I knew there was a silt gully there so I got it in my head that they seemed to be pre occupied with naturals, bloodworm etc. There was sporadic weed in the lake so I knew there wouldn't be lots of snails etc but a lot of silt so bloodworm were definitely on the menu, anyway we continued around the lake and got back to the communal area, where we had a nice bacon roll and cuppa Rosie waiting for us which was a nice touch as we all chose to drive and survive and not take the food package as there were supermarkets 10mins away. I prefer bankside cooking anyway, as it breaks up your day and is an excuse to push the boat out and get the steaks in the Ridgemonkey ha-ha. Our group consisted of a father and son, and 2 pairs of good friends, Stan and Kev and Terry and myself, well Terry had visited Lesmont before and had in his mind the swim he wanted which was one he had not fished before, I wanted swim 4 because of all the snags, it definitely is the snaggiest peg on the lake and right in the corner also so it was definitely a gamble right up the other end to the fish we had seen feeding, on discussion with the others, they wanted to double up in swims 5 & 6, and 9 & 10, it was just a matter of who was going in each, Terry and myself didn't want to pair up as we wanted to cover more water at the other end of the lake (and he snores like a bear so I would've made my excuses anyway)!!! The two pairs flipped a coin for the two doubles and father and son Paul and Dave got the high pegs with Stan and Kev in the low double. I stuck to my guns with my gamble of Peg 4 and Terry went around the other side of the bend to Peg 3 (of which he decided to vacate 2 days later in to Peg 2)

I got all my gear sorted in the peg and was just looking constantly at the water for signs of fish, of which there were none forthcoming had I made the right choice it was a struggle for the first couple of hours not to beat myself up a little and a tiny percent thought I'd made the wrong choice after seeing so many feeding up the top end, but I do love my snag fishing, and the challenge for me on that type of fishing is more than

if I were fishing open water. I didn't have to change much of my tackle from what I usually use at home etc as I fish snags predominantly so I just stepped up the hook size to 4's. I knew by speaking to a good friend of mine and the previous owner Andy Stevens who owns Carpe D'or that there were the usual snag resident fish who always inhabit the area and make an appearance every now and then. So after my initial doubts my confidence started to flow again and my mind was back in the game. I brought 30kg of CC Moore Pacific Tuna & Live System boilies with me and 10KG of CC Moore Trout and Belechan Pellets. When I'm fishing in France, I don't usually start getting itchy feet until the Tues/Weds and barring anything silly won't consider a move until the Thursday if I have too, so I was relaxed and prepping my bait, I had chosen 3 spots and was going to fish them religiously building beds of bait which is my normal long stay approach, the water contains big fish and I want to keep them in the area if and when they decide to make a feeding appearance. Spot 1 was 40 yards out on a gravel bar dropping off to 21-24ft and the bar itself rose to 13ft, I baited the top and the right side. Spot 2 was a margin snag in front of a tall fir tree in front of the shower block, the margin there was itself 7-9 feet and I baited that heavily with around 3kg boilie and 2kg pellet to start with. Spot 3 was a margin snag again a little further to the right in an indent, under a willow and some dead branches I baited that the same as spot 2 in similar depths.

First couple of days the boys at the top end where the fizzing fish were had a few nice fish to high 40's and the guys in the first double had a 30lber out so there were some fish feeding, Terry nailed a nice 40 after his move, and it was just me left to catch, Terry's swim went silent as did Stan and Kev in the first double but Paul and Dave were still pulling out 1 or 2 each a day. Tuesday came all so quickly and I started thinking about various options and changing this n that, I had in my mind thought about a move on Thursday for a night, but I wanted to persevere with this swim, Tuesday morning my Spot 2 rod ripped off and what a battle that ensued it took a couple of moments to get it out the snag with walking back in my swim and dropping the lead helping for sure, it came out and went straight for open water, across my other rod which didn't hurt as it was so deep it missed the lines, it reminded me of my sea fishing

trips, pumping the fish through the water column, pulling a lump through 24ft of water was incredible and my arms were burning when he came across the chord. I was over the moon and so glad I didn't change my tactics, my confidence was right back up there and moving was the last thing on my mind again. The fish which I call 'Mr. Pecs' for obvious reasons weighed in at a healthy 33lb 15oz it was a long mirror of superior power. After the usual rituals of weighing and pics the fish was returned and after a new J Precision size 4 hand sharpened Katana hook was attached to my Rigmarole Skinfull I reset the rig back on the spot with its twin 15mm Pacific Tuna boilies. I put another 2kg boilie and 2kg pellet back over the spot and topped up spot 1 & 3 at the same time. In the meantime, the crayfish had started becoming a pest so after a visit up to Gigantica and some new armour it was time to protect some baits, so I did about 20 or so to tied me over. It was the second time I had visited Gigantica for a walk around the first being 3 years ago when I fished Napoleon Lakes, nothing really changed except they now farm and bring on their own fish which was great to see, I caught up with carping legend Rod Hutchinson and had a brief chat, unfortunately he was blanking and the week was running away with him.

With the boys at the top end still picking off the odd fish it had slowed down a little and we had a 24hr lull with only 1 fish out between us. Wednesday morning saw me lose a fish from my Spot 2 rod again in the snag to a hook pull, I think I hit in to it a little early and bullied it too quick as I didnt want to risk losing it hahaha karma hah! after another reset

and another 2kg of the faithfull CC Moore going in, I settled down for the night after re-casting spot 1 and spot 3 which still had nothing to report. Terry had a nice upper 20lb common so although slow he

was still picking the odd one off. After cooking up some bankside tucker and washing it down with a cuppa my spot 2 rod tore off again this time after a pleasant fight I banked a stunning long mirror weighing in at **42lb 12oz which was a new Pb for me beating my previous of 41lb 6oz.** The evening came and went uneventful in my swim but left to me and the top end had a couple more, the mornings were so cold dropping over 10 degrees from the day before, I set my alarm on my phone for 4am everyday so I could be awake for the early morning stillness and to see if anything was moving around, I did through the week try moving my Spot 1 rod and fish off the back of weed and gravel etc but nothing was interested what so ever it was strange that so far Id had 2 fish banked and one lost to spot 2 and nothing else. It didn't take long for the sun to come up and the mist to start rising off the water with another couple of kilo of bait gone in on my number 2 spot I felt confident I would have another, and I was hoping for one of the big girls as nothing over 48lb had been out and for a lake with a nice selection of 50's and a couple of 60's we were all itching that the next take would be a biggun, I wasn't to be disappointed, SPOT 2 rod AGAIN melted off even though she was locked up to just under breaking strain it had gone in the snag enough for me to have to take a deep breath and utilise my skills in trying to get it out, and after about 10mins I had movement and then all of a sudden it powered off out to open water and took line like nobodys business I had to loosen the clutch a little before things started melting, diving deeper and deeper and then with a bit of finger pressure I managed to slow it down, and eventually turn it, I started to pump the rod and retrieve very slowly the line that had been stripped off, it was a bit back and forth for a while through very deep water, I knew it was a lump and then you get that sick feeling every time it starts to peel line off, please stay on please hook hold, please link etc etc I managed to get the fish to the surface my veins were bursting my arms burning, I was shaking - I managed to get in my Vass Waders and get in the water up to about 3 feet to give myself some space. I was still on my own as I didn't call the others as I didn't want the pressure of being watched with such a big fish, I managed to get her across the chord and I'm not going to lie I did shout out "YES YES YES!!" and slumped down on the



decking for a moment to gather myself. I thought yes a definite new PB. I took the rig out which was nailed perfect centre bottom lip, I still didn't grasp what I had in the net to be honest I just thought maybe a fifty as one not been out all week, I knew it was biggest so far though, I got the fish in the retainer and couldn't get my arms round it, when I lifted it I knew it was a lump but still didn't realise who it was, I got my Fox Digitals on the weigh station and zeroed, Kev had arrived and said "F@*\$ me boy that's a biggun" we hoisted her up to the scales they bottomed my Fox's out at 66lb!!! I rang Terry for his Ruebens and he wound all his rods in bless him, Louis the bailiff arrived and said "You've got Masson I'm sure of it". "Oh" I said "errrrrrm...." **I was in shock shaking, the lads took over the weighing for me and she went 69lb 2oz!!!**

Yeah a new Pb and a fish of a LIFETIME also the biggest fish in the Lake and current Lake Record of which it stands at 69lb 8oz so 6oz short but who cares



"Wehhhhhhhey!!!!" and that's where my WOW comes from, I am still buzzing now a couple weeks later still not sunk in what I have actually had. I had fed over 10kg of boilie over spot 2 up until Thursday night and 5kg Belechan and Trout Pellet it was the only spot that produced for me all week, I didn't have any more fish but I certainly didn't mind that, I had the biggest fish in the lake, I wound in all my rods, had a shower, went for a social with Terry for a while and tried to reflect on what had just happened, it's hard to describe the emotions and only a carp angler would understand, I was shaking quite bad at one stage, I was in shock at another stage, I had a tear in my eye after I settled down, it really is a magical moment in your fishing journey, we all strive to catch a stunner or a Pb and to have a fish of a lifetime well that's something else, and something that I worked very hard for. I persevered when others were all catching around me, I nearly moved, so all those things, correct baiting strategy, correct rig choice, bait choice, hook links, they all matter and they all give you confidence. I think we finished the week with 25 fish - an average for that water in good conditions of which we certainly did not is about 20 so we rocked it to be honest and Paul and Dave did very well with Paul busting out another low 60 final knockings. Thank you to all the guys it was a pleasure sharing my special moment with you all, especially my good pal Terry I know it meant a lot to you to see me catch that fish and that means a lot to me buddy.

I'd like to thank
CC MOORE Baits & J Precision Hooks for supplying me the best bait and equipment, Rigmarole for the best tubing and hooklink I've used and Harefield Tackle for all the other bits I need.

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*Living the Dream
by Keith Moors*



*Chapter Three - All Part of
the Dream*

Chapter Three - All Part of the Dream

By mid summer 2002 we had been in our new home for 7 months and been open for business for four. We were both enjoying the new life but there were times when we had time to realise just how far away we were from our three lovely daughters.

I guess every Garden of Eden has a serpent and this would always be ours. It seemed that almost every week revealed some more discoveries and oddities. It seemed that, in the words of the song, there were proving to be "more questions than answers."

Since owning the lake we had a considerable amount of work to be done so my fishing had been confirmed to short sessions adjacent to wherever I needed to be working or evening stalking sessions after the "bubblers."



This change to my style of fishing, as well as the fact that it is a shallow, estate lake, had resulted in some new problems to overcome.

The vast majority of my angling in England was on typical gravel pits and finding a feature was generally the first part of the jig-saw. This feature could, in theory, hold the carp for the entire session and failure to get into the "going swim" could result in a resounding blank.

This was one of the main factors in making us decide to purchase an "estate" type lake. Again, in theory, this kind of uniform depth and topography, should result in the carp visiting every corner of the lake and thereby giving every one of the anglers an equal chance to catch during their week's holiday.

We had to remember that each angler had just one week to be able to work out how to catch. . It was never going to be like a club or syndicate

lake where you could spend some time working out how and where the fish fed and then start catching later in the season or maybe even next year. With a holiday venue the watching and learning had to be done for you and the advice needed to be thorough enough to enable you to start catching early on.

This was borne out early in our existence but it still became apparent that the better anglers caught more than the less experienced. The good anglers were able to use their watercraft to benefit from the signs of feeding fish. One other small problem was that the carp in our lake had absolutely no experience of ever having been fished for, let alone hooked, and this fact alone has thrown up some more unexpected results.

Let me try and paint the relevant picture. The lake is fifteen acres of water with a depth ranging from three to eight feet with a bed of clay, sand and silt.

When we bought the property the entire 33 acres had been kept entirely as a nature reserve for the herd of deer and thousands of ducks, plus a handful of geese. Without any fishery management the fish stocks had been allowed to run riot with the result that there was no weed growth whatsoever and the water was permanently murky with suspended silt. On top of all this the lake also contained the French plague, "poisson-chats. Literally translated this just means cat-fish but is now the accepted name for the American bull-head catfish which some clever bastard imported many moons ago.



Basically they have thrived on the French climate and are a major problem, eating almost every bait or food item presented for the carp.

We removed the floating duck nests early on and a lot of the waterfowl departed as a result of the anglers being present.

Our next target was to start a planting campaign and began by putting in water lilies and oxygenating sub-surface plants.

At the first opportunity out came my rods and three boilie-baited hook links were cast to a baited patch in front of the lodge. I carried on with my work to the lodge in the knowledge that it would be just a matter of time before my first ever carp from my own lake rattled the alarms. Day one ... blank, followed by another on day two. Time for a rethink.

I was concerned that the bait may be burying into the silt ... or they weren't used to boilies yet ... or I was just bloody useless.

The fish continued to bubble in the margins so they were obviously feeding. Feeding Carp I moved swims as I worked around the lake and after a couple of days a pattern was emerging. As I moved to a new area I would see large carp roll over yesterday's baited patch.

The following day would see fish feeding heavily over the bait. It had to be done, a one nighter was planned so that I could fish over an earlier baited patch. Two rods were baited with boilies and the other with critically balanced sweet corn. By midnight all three rods were on corn and by dawn they were all in the hedge and I was knackered.

In one night I had gone from blanking to hauling fourteen fish to twenty eight pounds.



Cracked it ... or so I thought.

Isn't it strange how you can go from feeling totally confident to wondering how the hell you are going to buy the next fish. We knew that we had the dreaded poisson chat and as the water temperature rose so did their feeding frenzy ... on sweetcorn.

Luckily our lake has sluice gates built in to allow it to be drained and we already knew that this action would be imperative in order to control the unwanted species and to maintain the balance of the biomass of the

carp and cats. Anyway, I switched to boilies and, as if by magic, I again started to catch numbers of carp.

The next interesting happening was that I started to experience twitches as well as full blooded runs. I refrained from striking knowing that the baits were hard enough or meshed well enough to withstand the ravages of the small fish until the carp arrived. This was again the case during the early hours of a one night session.

I was fishing a new area to find out a bit more about it in order to be able to offer advice to new anglers. I woke to the bobbin going up and down like a tart's drawers but with the line still in the clip.

I was convinced that one of the pc's had hung itself and decided to leave it until after I had answered the call of nature. I then picked up the rod to wind in the offending fish when all hell broke loose. That is a good description of what happened next.

The carp in my lake had already gained a name for being extremely hard fighting fish and I must say that they are the strongest carp that I have ever caught. It turned out to be a twenty four pounder which must have been hooked for at least fifteen minutes without ever moving far enough to pull the line from the clip. Had that happened in England I would have put it down to constant angling pressure and the carp's ability to "learn". "It knew it was hooked and was trying to deal with the hook." Well this fish had never been hooked before in its life so what was happening? Did it continue to feed or did it feel the tension and decide not to pull against it? Whatever the answer, this would not turn out to be an isolated case. Almost every angler reported experiencing "twitchy" bites which would eventually turn out to be carp. One angler revealed that he had seen his bobbin rise to the rod just into dark one night. He decided that he didn't want to disturb the bait because it would be difficult to get the rod exactly back onto his baited



patch in the dark. He waited for the run to develop but eventually drifted off to sleep. His other two rods produced fish during the night but the original rod remained silent until he wound in for breakfast. As soon as he picked up the rod it exploded into action and he landed a twenty seven pound mirror.

That fish definitely didn't continue feeding and must have lain motionless all night. How long would it have stayed like that? Does this mean that some fish simply don't pull against tension and if this is the case then any form of being tethered could result in them just sitting there until they die? The experiences that I encountered during my "hands on fishery management experience" had produced even more questions to be answered.

In May 2002 our first guests arrived and despite bursts of feeding activity from the pc's they stuck to their boilie approach and caught sixty three carp. By this time we were still trying to work out the best presentations.

The margins to about twenty yards out are firm sandy clay and a critically balanced bait or short pop-up produced the goods.

The centre areas are soft clay and silt and despite trying pop-ups over these areas I have failed to get them to work. In fact, I have watched carp move on to baited patches and produce plumes of bubbles where they are devouring the bait while ignoring the pop ups.

As a test I decided to fish two tigers over a big bed of maize, chick peas, pellets and broken boilies and, low and behold, the first bite that evening produced a truly gorgeous looking carp and at thirty one pounds, my first thirty from my own lake.

As far as I was concerned I had cracked it. The carp were feeding in the silt and a pop up was being missed because it was above them.

The following week our next group of customers arrived. Out went a fluoro pop up while they set up the bivvies and ten minutes later one of



their Delkims went into melt down. After almost an hour long scrap a twenty seven pound mirror slid over the net.

The other amazing fact was that it was the same carp that had sat motionless one week earlier. What is it that would make a carp completely change its attitude to being hooked?

As the fishing continued through our first summer it became apparent that previous spawnings had been very successful and we were overstocked with double figure fish. We had already planned a "vidange" (emptying) for the autumn and would have no trouble getting rid of the unwanted carp.



I remained convinced that, with the fish sorted out, the bigger females would prosper and grow rapidly and to this end we had already stocked eight large catfish in an attempt to keep on top of the fry. In the meantime I decided to catch some of the smaller carp using a float rod and sat happily on the dam wall catching beautiful little fully scaled and zip linear mirrors. The most beautiful of these were placed in a stock tank for future use.

This was such a nice and relaxing situation that it became a regular morning ritual and one Wednesday morning I cast my two fairly hard split peas into the area of my two handfuls of freebies and sat back to await the bite. The next thing to attract my attention was a massive swirl of bubbles around my float and then the float drifted off to my left. The float never actually buried but moved steadily enough for me to realise that it just needed a firm strike to set the hook.

I swept the rod round to my right but actually it was only the butt of the rod that moved because the tip continued towards the left. It was obviously much larger than the targeted small carp and the only effect of

the strike was to make the fish roll briefly at the surface and then encourage it to head straight up the centre of the lake. It did speed up slightly but never to the sort of pace that caused panic. It just determinedly headed south and continued to do so. Luckily I had already set the clutch before casting out and had also wound on 100 yards of new ten pound line. However, the rod remained hooped over in full battle curve and the clutch of the reel maintained a monotonous tick while I simply held on to the rod and stared at the slowly spinning spool.

The excitement of hooking what was obviously a big carp gradually turned to realisation that nothing I did had any effect on this fish. It simply continued on its original bearing and at its original speed.

In horror I watched as the colour of the spool gradually changed as the shade from the backing line began to show through. The next ten yards or so were going to be crucial but still the fish continued on its way. Then, alongside the ticking of the spool, came the pinging noise as the knot travelled through each rod ring and still the fish continued relentlessly on. Suddenly it was gone.

The life in the rod died and it became just another stick of carbon and I felt almost as lifeless. I wound in to find that the hook link had parted so the good news was that the fish had only been left with a hook and very short piece of mono.



Then the questions began. Was it a catfish? No, I had seen it roll and knew it was a carp then so why question it now? Was it foul hooked? Possibly but when it rolled it was the head that had been lifted so the hook was somewhere near the mouth.

How I wished that I had been using my three and a quarter pound test curve ESP rods.

C'est la vie!

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It's Only Natural

Watercraft comes over time, and with simple common sense, but bait selection is a skill on the day in question. I've always accepted that to increase my odds for catching is to have more fish in front of me and then the skill is to find a bait that my quarry will readily accept above any other offering. Another vital ingredient to add to the mix is to try and find out at what level the fish are feeding. These are certainly not great secrets and outside of carp fishing they are consistently, and successfully, practised. The best example for me is undoubtedly the fly fisherman. Here is an angler who will locate the trout, work out the level they are feeding at and then will be prepared to try a multitude of flies before, hopefully, hitting on the right pattern. As an avid fly angler of many years, this practice walks hand in hand with many successful days fly

fishing for me and many others. The difference between catching your limit and blanking can be a very fine line with only the slightest change of pattern or colour causing that trigger to turn the fish onto the feed.

The same principle also goes for the successful match angler, show me one who wins matches consistently but sticks with only one or two hook baits – I've never met one!! Or for that fact the pike angler who only uses one lure, just look at all other areas of fishing where the use and selection of different baits is a key part of the angler's successful strategy.

So, that begs the question why do so many carp anglers limit themselves to one bait fished at one depth?

Over the years I have met many carp anglers who a) will select one flavour of boilie for their year's campaign, b) would never consider to use a hook bait other than a boilie and c) only fish with their bait pinned to the deck. Don't get me wrong if you are happy with this and

enjoy your fishing that is what it's all about at the end of the day, but for me I want to catch and catch consistently. Pallatrax, along with many other companies, manufacture boilies and I'm the first to highlight the success of our boilie ranges, in particular Jungle, but I would never tell a customer, and therefore a fellow angler, to stick with a single bait and to only ever to consider man made baits. From my previous paragraphs, it just doesn't add up – carp are no different to other species and will feed on different food sources at different times and at different levels.

To compound the evidence, though there are other key factors that one should also be aware of e.g. presentation etc, as carp anglers we can spend days and nights blanking even though fish are rolling in our swims, our hangers are jumping around and alarms bleeping.

We can sit there and blame all manner of things but the one fundamental fact is that

for whatever reason the fish aren't eating the hook bait. It's not necessarily the case that there is anything wrong with your chosen bait it's just more the case it's not effective at that time. If this was the situation presenting itself to the fly angler he would immediately be changing his fly, yet many carp anglers I've met wouldn't consider changing their hook bait. Many will say, along the lines, I had a good fish on it last month or I've seen a 'celebrity' angler catch on this DVD, through to the fact that they've still got fifty kilos' in their freezer! If that is your mind set fair enough, I'm not here to lecture or appear arrogant I just see this as one of the many fundamental flaws in modern carp fishing which greatly impacts on the anglers catch rate. This leads me into the main body of this piece which is to highlight that there are baits that are not only completely overlooked but that are also completely under rated. Over millions of years' fish have evolved on our little planet to

where they are today. Water is one of the key factors in the birth of life on earth and for us anglers where we fish. So, what did fish, and for the purpose of this feature carp, feed on before the advent of modern baits, especially boilies and pellets? In a nutshell, they fed on the natural food sources available to them within their habitat. Food sources which give them a rich diet full of nutrients and proteins that they require, and need, to survive healthily and reproduce. Our waters, both still and moving, are the breeding grounds of thousands of different species of natural food sources for fish and it's an undeniable fact that carp will happily feast on 'natures larder', and in many cases, far more readily than man made offerings! The number of these natural foods is incredible, from Burrowing Mayflies through Backswimmers, Giant Casemakers through to Diving beetles, molluscs to shrimps, the list is

unbelievably long, literally numbering thousands of different species. To some I may now be appearing to be somewhat of an 'anorak' on the subject and maybe there is some truth in that! I actually find it interesting and enlightening to have made it one of my missions to understand more of this overlooked topic for two reasons, I love to understand and thus appreciate all facets of nature and if understanding only a small amount of this subject helps me to catch more fish I'm onto a winner. Outside of the experts I've met within London's Natural History Museum I'm yet to meet many, if any, who are as keen on the subject and I know for a fact that this approach is helping me and other like-minded anglers to catch more fish when the conditions are right. Historically it's been all too easy for me to say, "There's a hatch on the lake", without any understanding what is actually hatching or even thinking on how it may affect, and in many cases, have an adverse impact on my

fishings.
I think one difficulty is for us to easily understand that a fish such as carp, which has the ability to grow to huge weights can survive on invertebrates that in many cases we can't even see. Out of sight out of mind but the fact is they do and when questioned I always highlight the Basking Shark, this massive fish,



the second largest fish on the planet which grows to incredible sizes in both length and weight lives off our coasts feeding on microscopic plankton. This incredible fish with lengths of over 30 feet and weight into the many tonnes swim around with their enormous mouths open wide simply

hoovering up huge quantities of a food source almost undetectable to the eye – a great comparison and they certainly don't feed on man-made baits! Just think how many times we see carp cruising the upper levels on a hot summer's day and refuse to look at any bait we are to offer them. It happens time and time

again so is it the fact that they are only gorging themselves on daphnia a protein packed water flea, or another hatch or even one of many different species hatching on that day?
So, in appreciating where, dare I say I've been going wrong, how was I going to rectify the situation? I

always feel somewhat uncomfortable that my angling instincts will always impact on the products that become part of Pallatrax's portfolio, thus to the cynics anything I write or portray will always appear as a flag waving exercise! All I can ask is that you read what I've written with the knowledge that I totally and honestly believe in what I have to say!

Trying to find the right quality products that I hoped would harness the natural elements proved to be far more of a challenge than I could ever have imagined. Where do you go to when you want a tonne of water fly or a few hundred kilos of small snails? But needless to say, I managed to source a range of products which certainly looked to fit the bill. Looking at this new angle emphasised I needed food sources that were high in nutritional value and protein that basically fish would need to feed on, and would want to eat. I wasn't looking for a flavour or food source base mix,

this was very much a different scenario altogether. I've always loved product development and this task proved to be no different. Like communism it all looked good on paper, but unlike communism would it work! I was convinced that I was onto a winner, the facts surrounded me from natural bait fishing across the angling world, e.g. maggots, worms, peeler crabs and sand eels etc. etc. I also don't claim this to be a first, this approach has been around for centuries I've just never really seen it pushed as a consistent way to fool carp. The question was without doubt how effective the many products within Pallatrax's Naturals range were going to be. Without question Pallatrax's dried Daphnia would never be as effective as a natural bloom but ours was as close to 'matching the hatch' as possible. And our dried Hidra range of three different snails and a water mussels can never be the real deal as fresh offerings – or can they?

Angling success for me will always be the amount of fish that our tactics and baits result in catching, so all I can give you is a taste of the angling tales that have unfolded as a small group of anglers set out to prove things either way! From there it is really down to you to question the fact that every day can be a learning day and if you open your mind to different tactics and baits it can, without doubt, improve your catch rate. Three examples stick in my mind, the first from my own personal experiences of late. With Pallatrax being bought out this year, and a new owner installed, my fishing has had to take a back seat with the move into a new factory just one of the many distractions that have impacted on my chances to get out on the bank. Fishing on a particularly difficult mere, two of us fished with method mixes crammed with an array of the rehydrated Hidra and Dried ranges. Though I only managed to squeeze in four hours my

exploding mix of naturals, wrapped around my Stonze weight still resulted in four carp to just over twenty pounds. And was it coincidence that the other angler fishing exactly the same tactic had several carp including one of the meres biggest residents at 32lb? One of Team Pallatrax members, Rich Shaw, was quick to grasp the positives of the Hidra range and especially the Brown Snails. About the size of your common garden snail these snails look more than innocuous in their original state, if anything they look awful until you rehydrate them with water. A hot tip is always to rehydrate in the water you are fishing is as the snail will fill back up with water and with tap water full of chemicals it is always good to be on the safe side of the fish sensing something untoward. Rich has fished the snails on a number of occasion and in recent months broken his pb three times. The last two were fishing particularly pressured water where he caught from the first

complex the largest resident with a common of 42lb and the second complex the largest resident, another common at 38lb. Coincidence – who can tell but strange that both the big fish fell to the natural baits and not the boilies the other anglers were fishing on that day! Whatever it again proves that the natural tactic is a working, and catching, tactic and something we should never rule out. My final example, and without doubt my favourite, is one of only a couple of weeks ago. I met a friend who I hadn't seen for some time; Shaun Passmore. Shaun is a really accomplished angler with some serious fish under his belt from many different waters but at the moment he's been having serious problems catching from a small syndicate lake. They can see the fish and have tried all sorts to catch but the fishery is stuffed full of naturals and the normal 'accepted' practices of a boilie and lead approach by the regulars is certainly not seeing many fished banked.

I persuaded Shaun that he should at least give a different approach a chance as, basically, he had nothing to lose. Yes, every now and again a fish may fall to one of the traps set but the odds weren't exactly looking to good!

Is it sometimes that we sit in that comfort zone thinking it will happen as

– surely a year of blanks must get you questioning your approach?

Back to Shaun, off he went with some Brown Snails, Small Snails and a Stonze weight. Coincidence again – perhaps, but he phoned me the next day to report that he had a stunning looking mirror in the low



it has happened before? Here is another prime example of anglers pretty much all competing for the same fish with the same tactics and for the majority of time, blanking. I've just picked up this week's Carp Talk and there's a story about a chap blanking for a year

20's. The fish had fallen for the hair rigged Brown Snail over a bed of Small Snails using a small Stonze to hold in pace. I take my hat off to the likes of Shaun and Rich, against the norm they have put the accepted practices of carp fishing on the side

line and fished an approach that is all too obvious but very much forgotten and caught!

In summary, boilies work, pellets work but ignore naturals at your own peril!

I can only confess to scraping the surface of the natural mystery but as I dig that little bit deeper

my understanding grows and dare I say my catch rate improves!

Food for thought...

Simon.

To take a peek into the world of naturals for bait take a look at the website www.pallatrax.co.uk



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Rig Tying Made Simple

by Stuart Mellors



Step 1

Get your chosen coated braid and form a loop like so



Step 2

Now create a over hand loop knot or a figure of eight knot



Step 3

Tighten down the knot slowly and making sure you moisten the knot



Step 4

Get your chosen hook and push the loop through the eye of the hook



Step 5

Now pass a micro hook ring swivel on to the loop which you have just threaded through eye of hook



Step 6

Pull loop over the bend and point of the hook



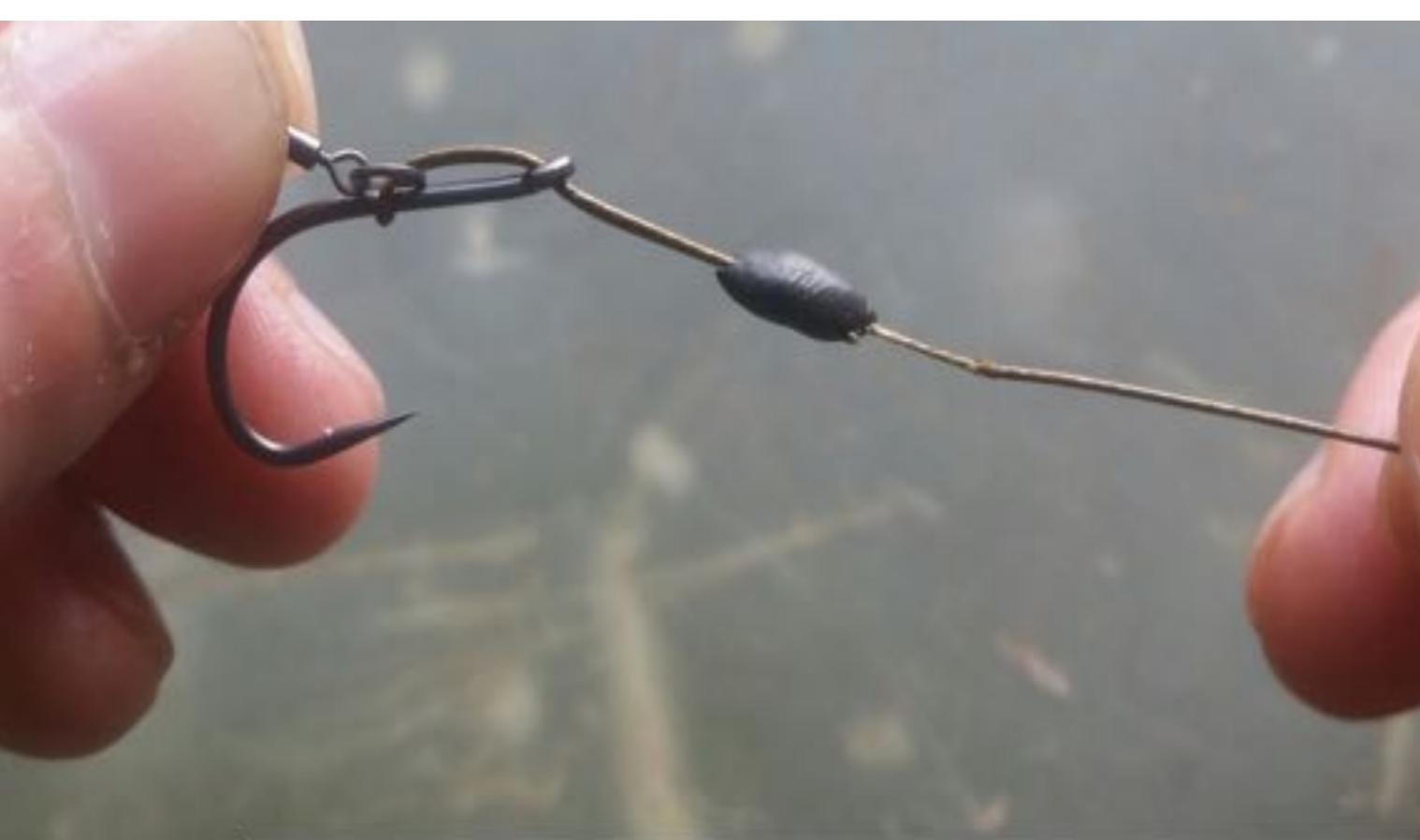
Step 7

Now pull the loop down to your chosen position like so and should look something like this



Step 8

Now peel a small section of coating off the coated braid



Step 9 Place some putty on the knot you created earlier on



Step 10 Create a loop at other end of rig for quick change purposes and the rig is ready



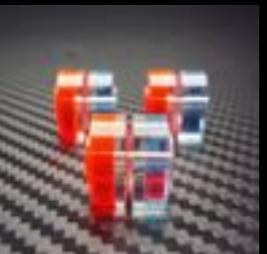
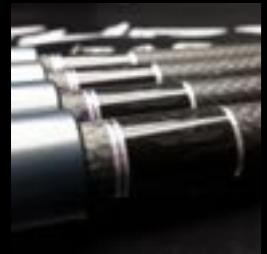
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Many thanks HCC



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Return to Murphys Lake
by Gary May

Return to Murphys Lake

So after timing it all wrong back in May and hitting the lake a day after spawning season had started, I headed back out to Murphy's lake in France on October 8th for part 2 and this time I was armed with the Finforce Special fins bait... after deciding on swims with the other guys it was time to settle into my bivvy for the week, with all the gear supplied and laid out ready for us it was soon time to get the rods set up and out in the gorgeous lake that's surrounded by massive woodlands and plenty of strange animal noises. Saturday night was about just testing the water getting everything organised and ready for what would hopefully be a good week. With

the rigs set up with a 6-inch hook length, a size 6 micro barbed hook with a 3 Oz lead on a very loose lead clip I was ready to go. With the spots chosen and baited up out went the rigs.

So, Sunday morning came and not a peep but it was still early with a whole week to go so in came two of the rods for a think but one remained along the very appealing road bank. After yet another filling meal prepared for us by Michele the evening came and darkness fell quicker than a brick out of a plane so we settled down again to see what would

happen. And at 2am I was awoken by the sound of my alarm ripping off, I struck into it and it felt a nice fish, a school boy error resulted in me not having a head torch as it appears you have to charge them to

work, but this fish was very helpful in almost swimming straight to my bank and in to the net once id found it. A 21lb common was up on the bank and in my cradle and I was happy with an early result just two days



in. The rest of the night passed and was smothered in silence apart from the crashing of something meaty down the far end of the lake, the guys over on polar point as it's been renamed as the sun just does everything to avoid them swims



were having a few out but I was struggling and drawing a blank. There was still a lot of crashing going on down the end so early Thursday morning after a heavy downpour and knowing that John my fishing buddy in the next swim was going home today made my mind up and brought about a move down to the other end of the lake, and after getting settled and after a few hours I had lost one and then in

the night another so after losing two in the snags I decided on dropping the bait and the rig an extra rod length away from the deadly snag to try tempt them further out and Friday lunch time resulted in a

take which felt like if I'd let it the fish would have towed me back to England but no! not this time I was 2-0 down to this swim and I was looking for a comeback so after an initial stalemate there was movement



my lot after all smashing my PB by 18lb is not to be sniffed at, but Pete the owner of the lake said there would be more and should stick at it, so out in the boat I went and the trap was set in the identical place.

The evening passed quietly and as darkness fell I was growing in confidence as the signs were there that there was something nice in the area and I was going to guard that rod with my life, the snags were to be avoided and any take that was left to run would be straight in them. 4am and I had sat there eagerly awaiting for that tip to bend round but nothing so it was to be a cuppa and then a few hours' sleep but no...there was a fish out there with other ideas and the rod went insane I lifted and like a crazy man I ran in

the opposite direction so to keep this fish from reaching its safe haven and as I see the line come away from the corner in my now powered up head torch I knew the fight was on with another great fish, after a pretty tough fight to begin with the fish came within rod length of the bank very easy but then a bit of a head shake and a stubborn no you're not netting me moment I fortunately had this cracker in to the net. It appeared that this fine specimen off a mirror was just over 44lb. Now I've got to say that even though I was going to a water with a lot bigger fish than my new PB of 48lb in I was never expecting one 40+ fish let alone two of Murphy's Monsters... So, thank you Pete and Michele for the opportunity to bag these and for the great food and everything

you did for us all. And a massive thank you to my sponsor Dexy and crew at Bank Tackle for supplying me with every bit of the important end tackle bits from hooks to swivels, lead clips and much more which I certainly needed to get these stunning monsters in to my net, And to Kieran from Finforce baits for delivering me my special fins boilies just in time for the trip...

So all in all to say I arrived back in England very happy is an understatement... never doubt your own ability and always take the risk a swim move may work it may not but you never know!..

so, stay positive and expect the unexpected.

Gary.





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D·A·M

Autumn... The Years Last,
Loveliest Smile
by Danny Smith

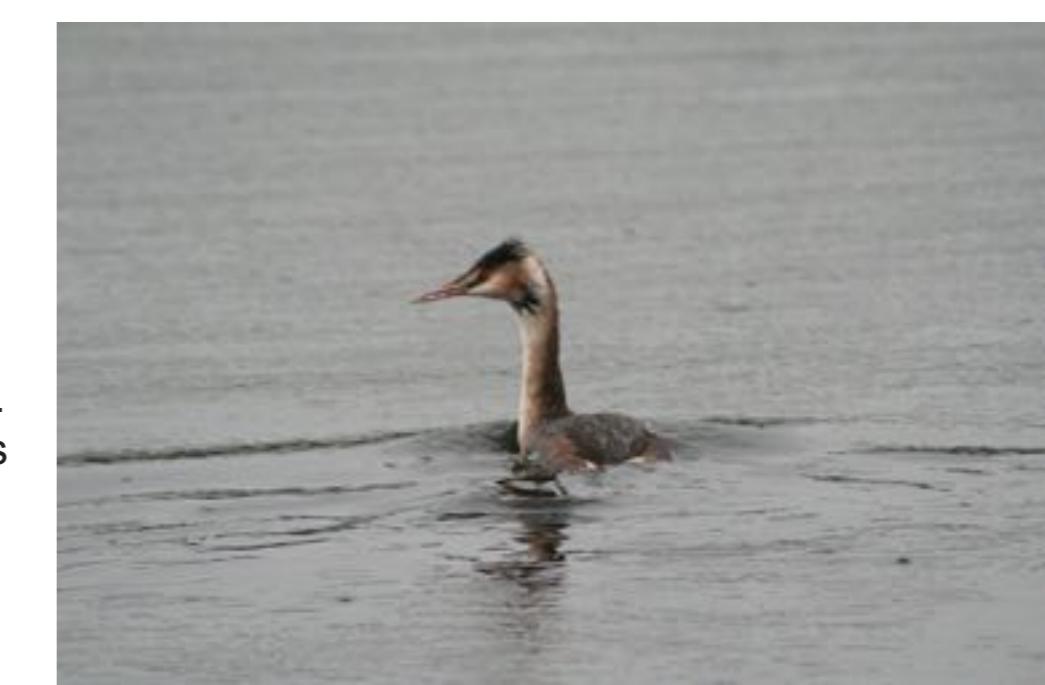


As the nights draw in and the temperatures begin to drop I find myself in my element. Autumn is a great time of year to be outside and enjoying all the British woodlands and country side. The trees are vivid colours, reds and yellows everywhere, the animals are out collecting food to last them over the winter and the rush of the wildlife brings the place to life. The sun is sleeping in later and later but when it rises the sight is breath taking, mist drifting slowly across the water and the shimmering shine off the dew that covers everything. Ripples in the water from fish moving up to the surface to embrace the warm sunshine. All these signs mean it's time to prepare for the best time of year for catching carp in their best conditions and colours. My preparations begin by ringing up my bait firm and ordering my Autumn/winter bait. Without doubt my favourite bait is the 365 from the RG baits stables. That done and all in the freezer it's time to prepare the gear, thermals, boots jumper,

jackets and hats now replace shorts and t shirts. Extra section to the sleeping bag is now required for the colder nights. Now all the gear is sorted it's time to knock up some rigs at home to save time on the bank, the last thing you need is to be ill prepared after finishing work and only having a short amount of time to get to lake before dark. The night before the autumnal campaign the gears all ready for loading in the van and alarm clock set. Today's the day! Up fresh as a daisy and loading the van. After a day's work I finish at 3pm and arrive at the lake. The lake is an 8-acre sand pit cut into the heart of Cheshire with a heavy abundance of weed and nuisance fish a lot of the tench residents have reached 8lb+ and there is also some massive rudd and hybrids. The main stars of the show are the carp, lovely dark and scaled mirrors and stunning scale perfect commons. I have a walk around and to my surprise only one other angler is on. I spent a good hour looking

around and up trees but the NW wind was just too much and was making too much disturbance on the water. I went with a gut feeling... not a great start but it's all I had to go off. I decided to set up on the South bank and got the rods out. One at 19 wraps skin tight to the far margin and one at 16 wraps to a sand bar that was reed lined. Making a mental note of night time markers and the number of wraps I was good for the night if I got a take knowing I could get the rod out bang on the money again. Rod one was a yellow 365 pop up on a Sharp Tackle size 4 kurv shank fished stiff hinge method. Rod two was a pink 365 pop up fished again on a Sharp Tackle size 4 kurv shank stiff hinge. I spodded 5 medium spombs of chopped formula and 365 boilies over the two spots and spread a handful with the stick. That same night at 11pm I was away far margin spot took off and I was into a 22lb mirror. It kited me right and locked itself into a weed bed but only just clipped it so I applied firm pressure and

luckily it came through. Slipping the waders on as I was playing it I went out to net the fish. It was a lovely dark mirror. Few pics and a bit of a recover in the sling and it was released back home. Rod wrapped up 19 times and night marker aimed at I was back in the game. Unfortunately, there was nothing else that night and only a tench to account for the night after. Homeward bound but at least I had opened the account! 1-0 Session



This time I had brought some particles as well as boilies to hold them in the area a bit longer as I felt last time they came



two back out again and arriving after work on a Friday. Quick walk around and a look about I noticed fish in the same swim clipped and baited but this time with an extra 15 spombs of particles over

in wiped me out and left. Leaving me with only one fish to boot. Same spots clipped and baited but this time with an extra 15 spombs of particles over

my 5 spombs of chops. Around 6am I had a tighten up on the far margin rod so I lifted into it, it soon became apparent it was a small carp and I had a small common in the net. I sent it on its way and quickly got my rod out before its mates clean me out. 30 mins later and the same rod melted off lifting into a weight it flat rodded me. The fish began to kite left and was breaching the water so I knew my lead was off. I managed to turn it but it came at me like a steam train and wiped my left rod out. As it kamikaze dove into a margin weed bed taking my left hand rod with it. I slipped the waders on and managed to get its head up and into the net.

A lovely 29lb mirror was my prize. Both rods back out and within 20 mins I was into a 3rd fish this time from the left hand rod on the reeds. It was a funny take couple of knocks that was it but I noticed the end of the tip knocking so I lifted into it. Fish had gone about 10 yards down the margin into a bay but this worked in my favour as I could now play the fish in the deeper water. By the time it had finished it was beat and I skinned it over the weed margin weed bed and into the net.

Looking down into the net I was staring at a stunning mirror wood carving and it weighed 26lb. Rods back out and more particles and chops on the spot I was ready for the next chance. That day the tench moved in and completely wound me up but I kept the bait going in and fed them off. Last night and rods set and ready. Around 3am I get a take from the far side rod it was a dead weight felt like I was dragging in a snag but with the odd bang down the line and kiting right. I couldn't get it up for the

life of me even dropping the lead this fish stayed deep and decided to turn coming away from a weed bed! Bonus I thought till it started making its way towards my other rod. It hit it bang on and managed to roll over the top of it for good measure. I was now in the waders in the dark stuck in a weed bed 3 yards short of my net cord and anchored there from my other rig it had buried in a weed bed. Stalemate! I could see the fish was getting distressed and made a final attempt to try to land it but the line gave and it was game over. After all the disturbance that was it for the night the fish had all moved off. Homeward bound but 4-1 up!! Session 3 another after work Friday finish and the lake was hammered only two swims left so I jumped in the closest one because I was absolutely knackered from work. I did see fish down my right hand margin so I lobbed a choddy down there on a 365 pink pop up. The other rod I leaded around

and found a clear spot that was like glass as I pulled the lead back. 365 wafter on a size 6 Sharp Tackle wide gape. Just a few handfuls of boilies catapulted over the top and that was it because I was absolutely shattered from work. Needless to say the next morning I woke refreshed but knowing I hadn't put the effort in so there was no reward. Determined to right my wrongs and save the session I jumped up a margin tree and spent a while up there. I was sat directly on top of my pink 365 choddy up the tree as I watched a fish move in. It went straight for it but turned at the last 8 inch. Something was wrong so I brought it back in and stuck a yellow 365 pop up on and moved the bead back on the leader of the Heli rig to get me as far as possible from the lead. Back out and I hand baited this rod from the tree with crushed whole and chopped formula/365 boilies. The other rod I left put as it was such a smooth spot and from up the tree I could see it was a polished off sand bar. I stuck a few spombs of

particles and chops on it with a 365 wafter. That night I could hear the fish breaching out in the open and felt I had messed up. Late morning and hadn't had a touch it was looking like I was leaving empty handed. The seagulls were now dive bombing my margin rod for the yellow pop up and the coots where diving on the crushed and chopped boilies nightmare!! All of a sudden the right hand margin rod swung around and a coot let out a massive high pitch scream as it spooked and fled the scene with the seagulls in tow. I was on! The fish powered off under the canopy I could feel the line grating on something most probably underhanging branches. I hoped the fish would pull left out the canopy after its run but it didn't! It battled me all the way back through the canopy one foot at a time. My heart was in my mouth and it began to play ball towards the last 10 yards of canopy. Soon as it came out it came back to life

and swung left straight over the bar I was fishing and into the weed bed on the other side. Locked solid I wasn't hanging around so I quickly jumped in me waders and started the 40yrd margin walk going close to the brim of the waders I was scrambling through silt beds on my tip toes. Finally, I hit the sand bar and stepped on to it. Rod tip out and over the fish and it came up like a rising submarine from the depths. Another lovely 26lb mirror in true autumn colours. I stuck the rod back on the bar but I wasn't expecting anything after all the disturbance but just 10 mins later the reel started to tick off the clutch and the tip was knocking. I lifted into a weight that dumped me straight away no messing in a weed bed. This time it was too far to wade over so I slacked off the rod and made a brew 10 mins later it was screaming off again and I was in contact. The fish went for open water and I let it.

Choosing to play the fish with steady pressure at far in the safe zone. By the time it was finished it was knackered. I slipped the net under a 28lb mirror. Homeward bound 6-1!

Session 3 and arriving very late at the lake and only one swim available! Nobody had seen or had a thing so walking down to the NW bank to the last peg in the corner I wasn't full of beans as you can imagine. To my surprise upon leaving the woods to the open peg there 2 rods out was an upper 20 common and smaller one just 10 yards to the right! That was it adrenalin pumping I stepped back into the woods quickly sorting the rods out both on pop up but this time formula and plum for their less spooky colouring as there a washed red.



Last thing I wanted was to chuck a hi vis bait at them while they are already here. Tying up a 360 rig using Sharp Tackle size 4 kurvs and QC ring swivels I was going as fast I could and heard a big fish breach the far side! Great I thought even more fish I walked out of the canopy to see and it breached again a decent mirror but upon entering the swim the commons that where there had gone. I decided some 15 mins later they weren't going to return so I chucked over to the far side with one rod to where the fish breached. Nice touch down with a firm donk! Clip on and just about to retrieve and the rod banged hard on the clip! I was in!!!! Fish on the drop can you believe it. It was a firm thudding action until I was solid in weed. This end of the lake sees the most of the weed and it's like a 5 a side pitch most the year. I slackened the line off and waited but no joy. 15 mins later I made an attempt to wade out to the bar the common was on but it was too deep to directly walk out to it with

the margin shelf dropping out to 7 ft. I managed to pick the bar up down the left margin some 15 yards and was able to cut back on it. I still couldn't get the bugger up and now I'd been in the drink 20 mins and dark was coming fast. One last bit of pressure and I was winning only a little bit but the compressed rod was slowly straightening. All of a sudden a massive ball of weed came up and I thought I was done with no signs of a fish. I routed through the weed stood there in my waders and knackered when suddenly I felt a fish. That was it! everything went in the net all the weed the lot I filled a 42inch net and waded back along

the bar and margin. When I got it in the mat I began removing all the weed. It was a 24lb mirror that I had seen turn its nose up just last week at my pink 365 pop up when I was up the tree. As I played the fish I noticed fish bolting out the bay and leaving the area from all the disturbance and ultimately that was the outcome for the rest of the weekend. Homeward bound 7-1

Until next time... tight lines.

Danny smith



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Christmas is Coming...

So, there is no denying that Christmas is just around the corner and just in case any of our wonderful readers are looking to buy a gift for your favourite online carp magazine editor.... Here is a solid hint!!

For me personally, there is one thing on my Santa list I really hope makes an appearance under my tree this year and that's a book I still haven't got my hands on yet.....

"Heads Down Tails Up" by Martin Clarke and Friends. This book gives us Martins personal thoughts and insight on modern day carp angling. It covers a vast array of subjects for water and swim choice, fish location, baiting and so on... But even better than that he gives us a peek into margin fishing his way with some great tips and techniques that could really give you an edge when you are out there. Add to that the guest chapters and you have some mighty fine reading material and a book you will want to read over and over...

So, Mrs Dixon, if you are reading this, the book can be ordered from www.calmproductions.com or pick up a copy from Johnson Ross Tackle, The Tackle Box Kent or Browns Angling Centre and carries a R.R.P of £28.

So, stop hanging about.... Grab yourselves a copy (and feel free to grab me one too?)

Brian.

Heads Down Tails Up



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China Lakes 2016 - First Season Review

China Lake is 17 acres in size, with depth ranging from 2ft to 22ft and fish stock of 400+ carp. This lake is set in 85 acres of blissfully quiet parkland making it a real undiscovered diamond in the French carp-fishing world.

With the 2016 season coming to an end, it's time to reflect on the last few months. What a season it has been! April brought us cold nights and wet, rainy days, as well as our first two anglers in the shape of Charlie Higham and Phil Swift, both excellent carp anglers who worked really hard getting to know this new venue. They seemed to have sussed the swims they were fishing within a couple of days and they were catching 3 or 4 fish every single

day. They ended their week with 22 and 25 fish respectively, with Charlie banking the biggest one, a mirror tipping the scales at 46lb. It's fair to say we were off to a flyer, and the subsequent weeks threw up more fish with a surprising amount of 30s and 40s being put on the bank. This was a good feeling as we were not a 100 percent sure what size fish this lake held.

June came with a very welcome 49lb 8oz mirror previously unknown, and what looked like a fish that had never even been hooked. It was very apparent by that point that the fish had a clear preference for fishmeal boilies and fluoro pink pop-ups, as this combination was producing by far the largest number of fish.

With the temperatures on the increase, and fish feeding, anglers seemed to be catching all over the lake. As always some swims were outperforming others but all were producing fish.

July and August continued producing fish and saw another 49lb stunner tripping up in the Private Swim; surely we were about to have our first 50lb fish very soon.

So into September and the lake was still producing, all be it with some slower weeks. We were still very hopeful October would throw up the elusive 50lb fish we had been waiting on. With a whole host of beautiful commons and mirrors fighting like steam trains (as one angler put it) gracing the banks, all in

pristine condition, it was yet another surprise in the shape of a grass carp that had us amazed. We had no idea we even had grass carp in China Lake.

The second week of October was upon us and our hopes of a fifty showing up this year were fading quickly. With two weeks until the end of the season it seemed unlikely it was to happen this year. Charlie Higham came for his second visit of the year with 3 of his mates. We had a sneaky feeling these guys would have a fair few fish between them and we were not disappointed!

John O'Malley, fishing in swim 3, was struggling for three days but he was determined to stick it out. At 8am on day 3, alarm screaming, he was finally into his first fish

of the week. After a long battle he slipped the net under a 49lb mirror, just like that his week changed and for us it was the 3rd different 49lb this season. But still no 50! It was the penultimate day that would have us aghast in disbelief. We had just received word that John had a big fish in the net and that we should get to the swim as soon as possible.

Making our way down to the swim (at a leisurely pace of course), we peered into the weigh sling to see what looked like a pretty big fish. We turned to look at each other with eyes like saucers. The anticipation was just too much. With bated breath the sling was lifted onto the scales, the needle finally settling at 61lb 2oz. Finally a fish over 50! Not

just a little over 50 but smashing our expectations beyond our wildest dreams. All in all it has been a dream first season with three unknown 49s and a mind-blowing 61lb 2oz. Now it's time to start preparations for next season and I am sure some more unknown stunners will be gracing the banks of China Lake. Who knows, maybe even a 70??????

If you would like more information about China Lakes please visit www.chinalakes.co.uk and if you would like to book your place at this stunning venue, please contact us on **0033 297 343 572**, at chinalakesfr@gmail.com, or send us a message via our [Facebook page](#).

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61lb 2oz



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Disabled Angling Forum Wins Award



Disabled Angling Forum Wins Award

The Suffolk Disabled Anglers' Forum is the proud winner of this year's Cosyfeet Community Award. The charity has won £500 towards the cost of equipment and bait.

Known as the SDAF, the charity provides the opportunity for people with disabilities to gain access to angling, and runs sessions at Woody's Lake, Barking Tye from May to October. Volunteer helpers and angling coaches provide all the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to help disabled people to enjoy coarse fishing.

The group is 50 members strong and includes a number of octogenarians. It comprises wheelchair users, amputees and people with learning difficulties as well as those recovering from strokes.

Cosyfeet makes extra roomy footwear for people with swollen feet and has an active policy of giving back to the communities it serves. Launched in 2014, the Cosyfeet Community Award offers a one-off donation of £500 to registered charities or not-for-profit organisations working on local projects that support and enrich the lives of older people.

"I'm extremely proud of what our club means to people," says Membership Secretary Wendy Flinter. "Our members get as much from the bank-side banter as they do from the coarse fishing. It's no exaggeration to say that our days out by the lake provide a lifeline for them."

For more information on the Cosyfeet Community Award visit

www.cosyfeet.com/communityaward



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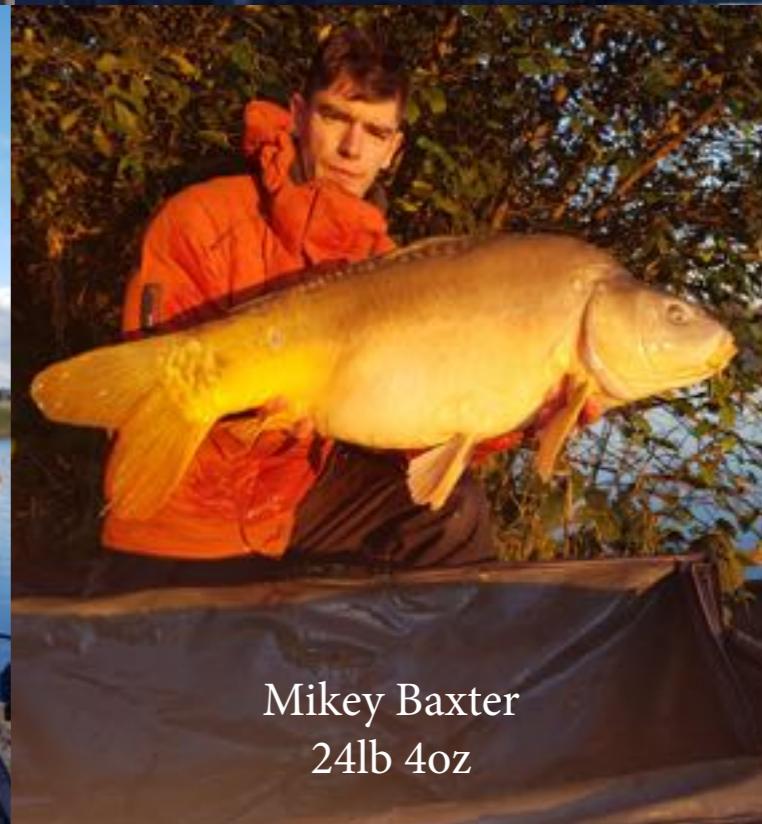
Jim Rattray
23lb 4oz



Kris McCullough
23lb 10oz



Tom Pritchard
19lb



Mikey Baxter
24lb 4oz

Brooms Cross Fishery

Specimen carp and coarse

Luke O'Neil
P.B.
24lb



Mark O'Neil
23lb 30z



Tony Sumner 19lb 4oz

Paddy
Cousins
24lb



Matty Baxter 23lb

GIGANTICA

by Robin Jeffries

after arriving at Gigantica Road lake on Saturday we had a walk around the lake and then drew pegs, unfortunately for me i drew the last choice so settles for a peg called the goo, that had produced 2 50's and a 40 in the week previous to my arrival, feeling less confidant and fishing into a NNE wind i decided to set my camp for the week and proceeded to bait up an area at 15 wraps with 4kg of Alpha and Scud Boillies and some particle, after 2 days of no action i decided to take a walk around the lake and try to find where the fish were holding up.

after seeing several shows i decided to settle for a peg called birches fishing into open water at 21 wraps, using the same baiting techniques settled for a bottom rig of alpha bottom bait with a white ice pop up fished snowman style on all three rods.

with the fish still showing in the area i felt even more confidant but unfortunately nothing prevailed from this.

after being tormented by the fish for a further 3 days i decided on a further move to a peg called turtles corner fishing on the back of the NNE wind and after a discussion with the main man from natures decided that instead of putting a carpet feed out for the the fish to feast on,

this time i fished for a single bite, using a alpha/whiteice snowman setup and incorporating a small PVA bag of crumbs and half boillies cast my rods to showing fish and decided to hit the hay for the night. when at 10pm i was awoken by a screaming take resulting in a 30lb 8oz common carp. saving a blank with 2 days to go i must admit that i was over the moon. unfortunately after recasting the rod to the spot that i was fishing i missed a take on the same spot 30 mins later.

the next day after having the catch from the night before i was feeling more confidant than ever, so resting the swim for a few hours i decided to just trickle a few boillies into the swim just to keep them interested. after dinner i applied the same tactics as before and cast the rods to showing fish settled down and watched the water as fish after fish decided to show over my spots. i woke up the next morning but didn't have any joy through the night.

i decided to leave the rods in today and see what happened but nothing through the night apart from the rain causing my alarms to wind me up with liners. Saturday morning i woke up at 6am and started to pack away when i had a slow take on my right hand rod, i looked over to the alarm stop but the rod tip bent to the right, i hit into it after a slow 10min battle what felt like i was playing a bream to reveal a new PB at 39lb 2oz of mirror carp.

it was a slow week this weeks fishing this week compared to the last time i visited France but none the less it will be one not to forget.



Wyreside Lakes is a family run business, situated in over 120 acres of farmland at the foot of the Bowland Fells in Dolphinton - Lancashire. On the estate there are 7 fishing lakes - with a superb stocking of carp, mixed coarse and pike. The Birkin family have continually used the same British stockists over the last 23yrs and the experienced to novice angler alike has an opportunity to catch a wide selection of beautiful two tone mirrors, immaculate scaly commons and the occasional leather carp.



The 7 lakes consist of 3 day / night waters, Sunnyside 1, Sunnyside 2 and River lakes. These lakes have carp up to 33lbs with an overall average of around 19lbs – there are also mixed coarse prevalent in these waters. There are also two membership waters Wyre and Bantons which boast carp currently up to 39lbs however the largest recorded weight was the mighty Paw Print at 42lbs 1oz. Non-members can fish these waters but there are strict times and rules that apply. There is also a mixed coarse water Fox's lake – this is an excellent runs water that produces carp up to 18lbs, Roach to 3lbs, Bream up to 10lbs & Perch up to 8lbs.



The Lakes were created from former poor agricultural land after extraction of sand and gravel by Tarmac Road stone Ltd. The first fish were introduced in 1984 (Mirror carp weighing up to 1.5 lbs) and they have thrived in the lakes, growing and breeding in a spectacular manner. The lakes are stocked annually in October/November with 3-5lbs mirrors and commons – then they are grown throughout the different lakes until they reach maturity. However, this November we introduced 70 new mirrors and commons into S2 between 12lbs & 15lbs so we are hoping for great results



The estate also boasts a 4 star Campsite as well as a recreational centre with bar, restaurant and function room. This year a large on site tackle shop was completed offering bait and terminal tackle. On site there is also a laundry room and a modern toilet & shower block. The Fisherman's Restaurant serves food and there is also a takeaway service with food delivered to your swim! The bar & function room is the perfect for match meets and presentations and an excellent location for any type of event from weddings to birthday celebrations. All throughout the year there are various events held each week, from Karaoke /discos to themed nights and live entertainment. The estate is open 7 days a week and is closed on Christmas Day and Boxing Day annually. Restaurant / café opening times may vary.

Nigel Brazier's first visit to France

My First visit to France went well eventually after a hard few days when finally got my head around the place had 6 carp 23lb,25lb,26lb,28lb,39lb then this one was a PB mirror 39lb12oz all caught using Natures baits alpha and bloodworm boilie complimented by both freebies jk anglings soft flow leader and euro hooks basic knot less knot with hook aligners rods sonic sk4 xtr 12ft 3.25 tc line diawa censors new hyperline 18lb



Will Edwards

After finishing college I decided to hit a lake hard that I had been fishing on and off for a couple years. Within the space of 4 months I must of done at least half of that on the bank catching numerous amounts of fish. Everything started to fall into place, I noticed this when I was catching when no one else was using legacy baits tester baits. Putting in all that time I was hoping one of my targets would turn up. One Friday I decided to go down the lake with a couple of mates for a social. It was a hot day with high pressures so not the best conditions. Within the space of an hour the conditions had changed to low pressure and cloudy. Then after that the conditions turned back to being hot. It was this hour change which my bite fell to fishing to a fallen tree. Once I got the fish in the net I knew it was one of my targets. The mulberry common at @32lb, a fish I had been after for 3 years. Absolute buzz!

3 weeks later I was asked to do a yearly charity match with a couple of mates down at cokings farm Dorset. After a couple laps of the lake we drew swim choices out of a hat. I never have much luck with draws, coming out second to last I got a large piece of open water to fish. The first 24hours were silent for myself and it wasn't looking great with a couple fish getting caught but no numerous captures so I knew that one good size fish could put me in 1st place. The second night I had a take on my baited area but unfortunately lost it. After waiting up with a couple mates watching the water we saw a lot of fish topping over my spots so I was feeling confident. Waking up the next morning without a bite scratching my head to what I had done wrong I had a take on my right hand rod. The fish fought heavy and deep staying low in the water column. Once netted I knew it was a decent size fish to put me in 1st place. After weighing the fish went 37lb smashing my pb a further 5lb. Couldn't believe it! Still buzzing writing this article now

Tight lines. Will.





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