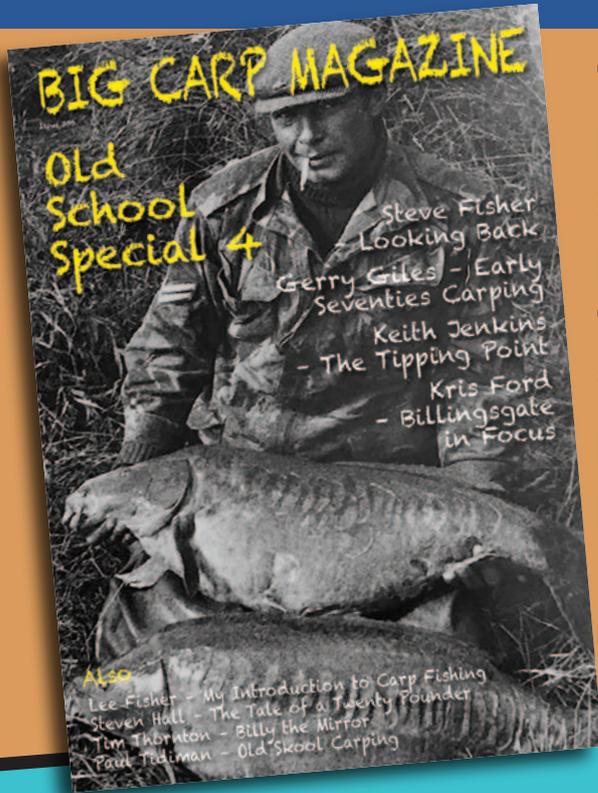


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The Tale of a Twenty Pounder by Steve Hall
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The Tipping Point by Keith Jenkins
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Top 10 Day Ticket Carp Fisheries

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4	OAK LAKES FISHERY
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4	SHIMANO
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6	NORMARK
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10	OKUMA

Top 10 French Holiday Destinations

1	IKTUS
2	CRETE LAKES
3	VAUMIGNY
4	MAUREPAIRE
5	LAKE HERITAGE
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8	DREAM LAKES
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Top 10 Carp Shops

1	POINDESTRES
2	JOHNSON ROSS
3	YATELEY ANGLING CENTRE
4	THE TACKLE BOX
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2	SAVAY
3	YATELEY
4	WRAYSBURY
5	FOX POOL
6	HORSESHOE
7	CASSIEN
8	LINCH HILL
9	ROACH PIT
10	JOHNSONS RAILWAY



As voted by Big Carp readers!

BIG CARP MAGAZINE

Issue 309

Old School Special 4

Steve Fisher
- Looking Back

Gerry Giles - Early
Seventies Carping

Keith Jenkins
- The Tipping Point

Kris Ford
- Billingsgate
in Focus

Also

Lee Fisher - My Introduction to Carp Fishing
Steven Hall - The Tale of a Twenty Pounder
Tim Thornton - Billy the Mirror
Paul Tidiman - Old Skool Carping

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CONTENTS

Old School Special No. 4

At last, our long awaited 'Old School Special No 4' is finished and Free for your entertainment. And if I may say so one of the best we have ever put together. After seeing some fantastic old shots from the likes of Gerry Giles, Paul Tidiman and Kris Ford, I contacted these guys directly hoping they would relay some of their tales from the early days, hats off to them as they all delivered.

What's particularly nice to me is that these are just ordinary guys, not the well-know anglers of that era that we usually hear about. A massive thank you from these lads for taking the time to send in their contributions. Not only these but I was also contacted by a host of others, including my old buddy Keith Jenkins who wrote for Big Carp for many years.

These too had a tale or two to tell about how it used to be, in the good old days. So, I ended up with enough material for not one mag but three.

A fantastic Old School journal which includes, Steve Fisher Looking Back, Gerry Giles Early Seventies Carping, Keith Jenkins The Tipping Point, Kris Ford Billingsgate in Focus, Lee Fisher My Introduction to Carp Fishing, Steven Hall The Tale of a Twenty Pounder, Tim Thornton Billy the Mirror and Paul Tidiman Old Skool Carping. Absolute gold dust!

Next month, another old favourite returns, a 'Minters' special edition. Big, black and scaly, all true English thoroughbreds, just the sort of carp that Big Carp readers love! I will see you then.

Add to these loads of carpy humour, all the latest tackle reviews and carpy news and competitions.

I hope you have been enjoying our two free monthly carp magazines, Big Carp and Free Line, see them both here - www.freelinemagazine.com

Now I need your help! Filling two magazines each month means I need twice as many articles, some people say they want to write, but never do. If you have had a successful winter or previous season, we would love to hear your tale. There are no picture or word limits. Simply email your article to info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk.

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Have a great Spring friends, catch a monster and send us the story – be part of the UK's fantastic carp angling history!

Rob Maxlin

PS We are doing some great ADVERTISING deals to help everyone through the pandemic, drop me a line at info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk if you would like to see the deals and our media information pack.

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May 2022

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Front Cover
Gerry Giles.



News & Reviews

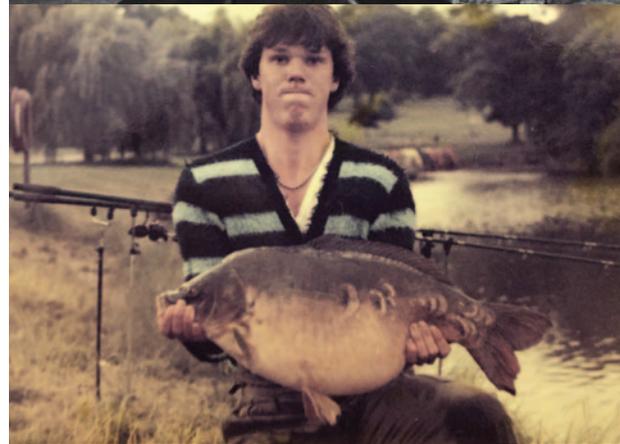
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What's happening, where and when in the carp scene

Angling takes a stand for Ukraine

In common with many other sports, angling has moved to expel Russian and Belarusian teams from all international competitions in response to the invasion of Ukraine and indiscriminate killing of civilians. The decision was taken this week by the Confédération Internationale de la Pêche Sportive (CIPS) – the body that oversees competitive international angling.

In a letter to the Russian and Belarusian fishing federations, CIPS President Prof. Ugo Matteoli said:

“The CIPS has taken the decision to accomplishing the International Olympic Committee recommendations and to follow the ideal of many other International Sports Federations to temporarily ban the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes, National teams and Clubs in any CIPS/FIPS International Championships.”

The Angling Trust, as the national governing body for England, had argued for such move in solidarity with both the people of Ukraine and Ukrainian anglers who regularly compete in international competitions.

Dean Luker, interim Head of Competitions at the Angling Trust, wrote to the officers of CIPS setting out a clear position. He said the Angling Trust:



“1. Formally requests that CIPS, along with all relevant FIPS organisations, should ban all Russian teams and individual anglers from competing in all CIPS/FIPS events with immediate effect.

2. Advises CIPS/FIPS that England will not enter a team in any CIPS/FIPS event where Russian teams / individuals are allowed to enter and / or participate.

The Angling Trust takes this position without hostility towards the Russian people, individuals, anglers or teams. We do so to express our solidarity with the people of Ukraine and our opposition to the invasion by Russia of a sovereign, independent, nation. Our position will be upheld

until the end of hostilities by Russia and withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukrainian territory.”

This afternoon all CIPS members were requested to “refrain from sending any national teams, athletes, clubs to any possible sport fishing events taking place in Russia or Belarus. At the same time, the organisers of CIPS/FIPS international championships are requested not to accept the participation of Russian or Belarusian teams, athletes, clubs in the above-mentioned events.”

The Angling Trust CEO Jamie Cook welcomed the decision saying:

“It’s good to see the international sporting community taking a stand against the Russian invasion of Ukraine and brutal bombing and shelling of innocent civilians.

From Football to Hockey, from Rugby to Judo, the sports governing bodies are making it clear that any participation by Russia in international events and competitions cannot be allowed to go ahead while their troops are invading a sovereign nation and indiscriminately killing its people.

Angling has its part to play and I welcome the decision of CIPS to exclude Russian and Belarusian teams as a gesture of solidarity with our fellow anglers in Ukraine.” ■



Anglers for Ukraine – Appeal gets off to a flying start

In response to the worsening humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, following the brutal attacks on civilians by Russian forces, the Angling Trust has set up a fundraising initiative for those in the British angling community who wish to help.

Anglers for Ukraine was launched at The Big One fishing show in Farnborough this weekend with anglers contributing to a bucket collection. One generous exhibitor, fishing brand and retailer OUTLAW PRO, donated all takings from their stand, totalling around £10,000, to the appeal giving it a flying start. The company will be doing the same at the Essex Carp Show on 26-27th March.

Carp legend and TV personality Ali Hamidi came to offer his support and top Ukrainian angler Serhii Vasylychshyn has expressed gratitude on behalf of his fellow countrymen.

UK-based Serhii Vasylychshyn, from the Ukrainian Sport Fishing Federation, said:

“It means a great deal to us Ukrainians to know that our fellow anglers in the UK are helping us in this time of great need. Our country is at war following a vicious and unprovoked invasion that is killing innocent civilians and destroying our towns and cities. The Ukrainian people are bravely resisting but they need every assistance possible.”

Ian Smith, Managing Director from OUTLAW PRO, said:

“The heartbreaking scenes that we are seeing coming from Ukraine are unimaginable in modern day society. It seems that speaking to so many people this last week that the invasion has affected countless people in the UK personally with friends and family that are living in that part of the world.

“It’s at times like this we have to do whatever we can to try and ease the suffering of those directly affected by this tragedy. We started our efforts to raise money at the The Big One show at Farnborough but we will continue to raise money in one form or another for as long as the conflict continues. It’s just the right thing to do.”

All monies collected will be given directly to the British Red Cross Ukrainian Crisis Appeal to which the Government has pledged to match fund up to £20 million. An online donation route has been established via a special Just Giving page here.

Last week, the Angling Trust supported the decision taken by the Confédération Internationale de la Pêche Sportive (CIPS) – the body that oversees competitive international angling - to exclude Russia and



Belarus from all international competitions in solidarity with both the people of Ukraine and Ukrainian anglers who regularly compete in international competitions.

Martin Salter, Head of Policy at the Angling Trust, added:

“The scenes on our TV screens are almost too much to bear with over 1.5 million people bombed or driven out of their homes. The scale of human suffering is appalling and will only get worse. Sporting boycotts, including the recent ban on Russian and Belarusian angling teams, along with

economic sanctions and direct military aid, all have a part to play in trying to bring this bloody conflict to an end. However, we are pleased to be able to offer a direct route for the angling community to play its part in helping to raise funds for much needed medical supplies, food and shelter for those innocent and terrified civilians who are literally running for their lives.”

Other fundraising initiatives planned by Angling Trust staff and members of the Voluntary Bailiff Service (VBS) include the sale of 1,000 special lapel pins branded with the “Anglers for Ukraine” logo. They are aiming to raise at least £5,000 by asking for donations of £5. Other initiatives by angling clubs and the tackle trade that donate to the appeal can be publicised through the Angling Trust.

Anglers are being urged to donate whatever they can by visiting the Just Giving page or through local fundraising initiatives. ■

Prestigious award presented to Fisheries Enforcement Officer for 'outstanding support' of volunteer bailiffs

The Angling Trust has awarded a prestigious Certificate of Excellence award to Martynas Pranaitis, a Fisheries Enforcement Officer with the Environment Agency.

Martynas received the award from Mark Owen, the Angling Trust's Head of Freshwater, for "outstanding work supporting and promoting Voluntary Bailiff Phase 2 in the Kent, South London and East Sussex area."

Lithuanian-speaking Martynas has worked closely with the Angling Trust's Building Bridges project for a number of years and became one of the first Phase 2 warranted volunteer bailiffs before landing what he described as a "dream job" as Fisheries Enforcement Officer three years ago.

Stuart Crookshank, a Phase 2 warranted volunteer bailiff, praised Martynas for his commitment throughout the pandemic.

"Over the last two years, which were exceptionally busy with the large numbers of anglers taking the opportunity to fish during the pandemic, Martynas provided invaluable support and assistance," said Stuart.

"We maintained regular patrols throughout the pandemic, visiting commercial fisheries large and small, club waters and rivers. During this period, I issued over 150 offence report forms and carried out nearly 2,000 rod licence checks. This would not have been possible without Martynas's dedication."

David Wilkins, Regional Enforcement Support Manager for the South East, said: "I have worked with Martynas as both a volunteer bailiff at Phase 2 and in his Building Bridges role, as well as his current role with the Environment Agency. Martynas's enthusiasm and support of the Voluntary Bailiff Service's Phase 2 project in the Kent, South London and East Sussex area has been essential to the success of the project within the region.

This shows the value of the Phase 2 project and how well it can work with the appropriate support. Well done, Martynas and thanks."

Also on the day two newly warranted volunteer bailiffs were presented with their official warrants by Dave Webb, Environment Agency Area Fisheries Team Leader. The recipients were Bogdan Pascaru and Peter Bowis-Davis, both experienced members of the Voluntary Bailiff Service.

Dave commented: "Over several years Martynas has made an out-



Martynas Pranaitis with his award.

standing contribution to the Voluntary Bailiff Service within Kent, South London and East Sussex, in both developing ways of working and supporting individual volunteer bailiffs."

Nino Brancato, the Angling Trust's National Enforcement Support Manager, said: "I'm very proud to see the Environment Agency's Kent, South London and East Sussex team supporting our voluntary bailiffs and helping them to progress to war-

ranted volunteers.

The Environment Agency needs to promote and support this across the whole of England to bring the angling community on board and make them part of the long-term solution in creating a visible presence and deterrence to the small minority that choose not to follow the rules."

VBS Phase 2 is currently in a pilot phase across four Environment Agency Areas. ■

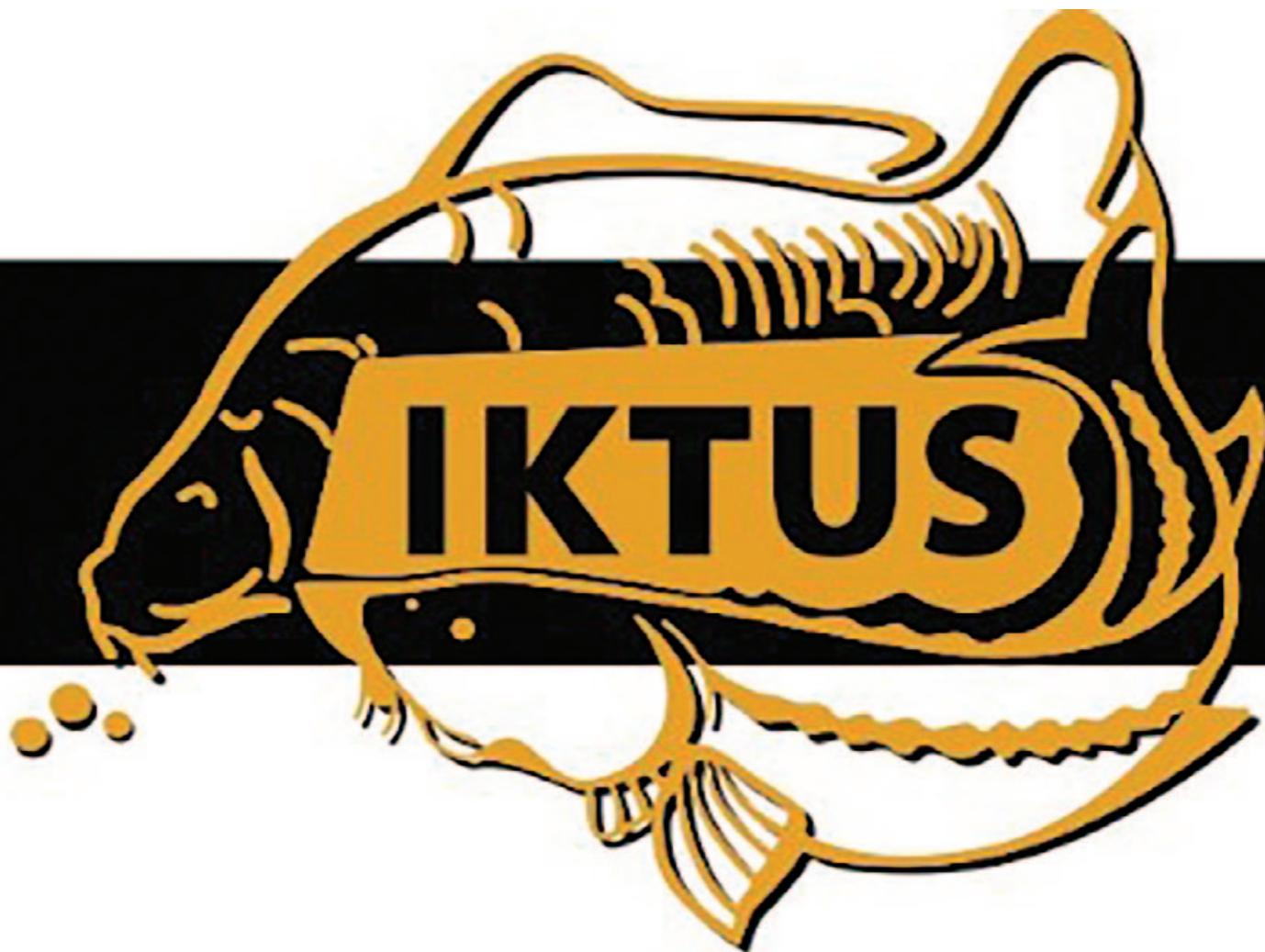


Martynas Pranaitis receives his award from Mark Owen, Angling Trust's Head of Freshwater, watched by David Wilkins (left), Regional Enforcement Support Manager for the South East, and Dave Webb, Environment Agency Area Fisheries Team Leader.



Dave Webb, Environment Agency Area Fisheries Team Leader, with two newly warranted volunteer bailiffs, Bogdan Pascaru and Peter Bowis-Davis.





FISHING RESORT



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Coarse fisheries receive vital boost as 600,000 fish are stocked across England

The Environment Agency's fish farm at Calverton near Nottingham, has achieved another record-breaking year, restocking rivers, lakes and ponds across England.

Funded by income from the sale of rod licences, and aimed at restoring or creating new fisheries, the EA's fish restocking programme has produced a record 627,495 fish this year. As a result of the successful breeding programme, Environment Agency staff at Calverton have been on their travels stocking an impressive 433,938 of those fish into rivers and 193,557 into ponds and lakes.

The work at Calverton is essential in boosting fish stocks and giving nature a helping hand in rivers and lakes throughout England. Some are for fisheries that have suffered from pollution incidents or are recovering from poor environmental quality, and some introductions are focused where natural reproduction is low.

Restocking also takes place to support the development of new fisheries in areas where there are a shortage of angling opportunities as part of wider efforts to improve angling services.

Many of England's industrialised rivers have seen improved water quality over the last 30 years and restocking from Calverton has played a vital part.

By accelerating the restoration of natural fish stocks, wider river restoration has taken place in rivers such as the Great Ouse to encourage stronger, more resilient fisheries that do not rely on stocking in the long term.

Alan Henshaw, Farm Manager at the Environment Agency's National Coarse Fish Farm, said:

"I am delighted that we've set a new record for the number of fish produced. The team have worked extremely hard this year to ensure that our work, benefits fisheries,



Restocking figures

Species breakdown:

Barbel	139,662
Bream	64,035
Chub	39,286
Dace	64,800
Roach	101,221
Crucian carp	34,349
Tench	74,108
Rudd	20,534
Grayling	89,500
Total	627,495

Regional breakdown:

Anglian	184,461
Midlands	99,548
N.East	134,150
N.West	75,600
S.East	115,550
S.West	18,186
Total	627,495

River and Stillwater split:

River	433,938
Stillwater	193,557

ecosystems and anglers across England.

"As anglers and industry become increasingly concerned with issues regarding pollution, waste, and water quality, it is great that rod licence income is being directed towards efforts to improve fish stocks in England's beautiful rivers, lakes and

ponds and where possible, to create new fisheries."

Heidi Stone, Fisheries Partnerships Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

"I am delighted that rod licence income from anglers across the country has enabled Calverton Fish Farm to have another record-breaking year for fish restocking.

"I am proud of the hard work that has been delivered by Environment Agency staff at Calverton which plays an important part in our wider efforts to deliver sustainable fisheries and increase opportunities for our anglers".

"This is just one example of how rod licence income is reinvested directly back into our environment and angling services."

Species stocked include: barbel, bream, chub, dace, roach, crucian carp, tench, rudd and grayling. Of the 433,938 fish stocked in rivers, 139,662 were barbel and 101,221 were roach – some of our most popular species with anglers. Fish were stocked across the country with the highest numbers seen in East Anglia and the North East. ■



Help fight pollution - buy a supporters pack for just £4.99

Through our Anglers Against Pollution campaign, the Angling Trust has been leading the fight to highlight the plight of our rivers and coastal waters, and demand action to end pollution.

You can show your support for the campaign by buying an Anglers Against Pollution Supporters Pack, which includes an enamel badge, and waterproof tackle box and car stickers. They cost just £4.99 with all profits directly going to support the campaign. Available at participating tackle shops or online.



**Environment
Agency**

The Environment Agency (EA) has released new fishing licence images designed by British Fish and Wildlife Artist, David Miller.

Ahead of the start of this year's fishing season, David has designed new and unique images of three of the nation's most beloved species: the grayling; perch; and salmon. All new paper licences purchased on gov.uk will now include these images.

Two of the species, the grayling and the perch, are regarded to be the 'beauty and the beast' of fishing. While the grayling is the 'lady of the stream' on every anglers' bucket list, the perch is the underwater predator that is a favourite first catch for most anglers. The grayling is depicted on the trout and coarse 2 rod licence, whilst the perch is depicted on the trout and coarse 3 rod licence.

This year, the Environment Agency is continuing the popular A Licence to Chill campaign for a second year running, aiming to welcome more people into the angling community and showcase the wide variety of benefits that fishing can provide. Fishing is not only an opportunity to get outside, but allows anglers to exercise, socialise, relax and unwind. Many anglers have found this benefits their mental health and as a result has led to new anglers taking up the sport.

Kevin Austin, Deputy Director Agriculture, Fisheries and the Natural Environment at the Environment Agency said:

"We are thrilled with the images that David has created for our fishing licences this year. The new licence images capture the beauty of our much-loved salmon, grayling and perch and I hope this encourages our anglers and aspiring anglers, to get outside and go fishing

"All of the income we receive from fishing licence sales is re-invested into vital work to protect and restore fish habitats across the country, and to ensure that we are able to provide anglers with the best possible experiences, services, and facilities".

The Environment Agency reinvests rod licence income directly back into vital work to benefit anglers and the natural environment. This includes projects to protect and improve fish

New fishing licences unveiled by the Environment Agency



stocks, tackle illegal fishing, and improve facilities and services for anglers. Last week, the EA announced that through the use of rod licence income, Calverton Fish Farm restocked a record-breaking 600,000 fish into rivers, lakes and ponds across England. This restocking has provided an essential boost to

fish stocks recovering from pollution incidents or poor environmental quality.

In order to fish legally and responsibly, anglers must purchase a rod licence which are easy to buy online. Annual licences start from only £30, whilst juniors go free and a one-day licence is available from £6. ■

Legal action confirmed for appalling River Lugg damage

The Angling Trust and Fish Legal welcome the decision by Natural England and the Environment Agency to launch legal action against a landowner for damage to a protected area of the River Lugg in Herefordshire. The landowner carried out unauthorised work along a 1.5km section of the River Lugg in December 2020. The charges brought against the landowner also relate to further alleged damaging work done in December 2021.

Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns at the Angling Trust, said, "We've had to wait for over two years for the Environment Agency and Natural England to take this decision to prosecute the landowner. This can't come soon enough. The damage done was devastating to some of the most important wildlife habitats we have, including spawning grounds for salmon and other fish.

We hope both the EA and NE will be calling for the strongest possible sentence if a successful prosecution is secured. Landowners have to know they cannot simply destroy our rivers with impunity.

However, this is only big news because it is a protected site, and because so little prosecution and enforcement action takes place. Our rivers suffer abuse and damage every day. We know the EA does not respond to the majority of incidents reported to it, and of those it does respond to, prosecutes even less. We call on the EA to do more to prosecute these abusers of our rivers, not only at protected sites but wherever such wonton vandalism takes place."

The announcement of from Natural England and the Environment Agency comes on the day the Angling Trust published its report, 'Riparian Habitat Destruction' highlighting a series of examples, including the River Lugg, of unacceptable and unnecessary habitat destruction along the banks of no fewer than nine English rivers. This is in direct contravention of both the Agency's own guidance and national government policy on the environment.

Justin Neal, Solicitor at Fish Legal, said, "We have a number of cases of environmental vandalism on our books where farmers and other landowners have canalised and dug out riverbeds and banks under the misapprehension that this would



improve drainage and avoid flooding of fields or improve access for machinery and vehicles.

There are also cases where landowners have dumped rubbish next to rivers in large quantities which has prevented access and caused environmental damage. In nearly all of these cases, there is evidence that the EA has either ignored reports or underreported the significance of the environmental harm caused to the river. In some of these, the EA has put it down to a neighbour dispute.

The problem with that is that it

leaves vulnerable clubs and riparians to have to fight the destruction themselves.

We are therefore pleased to see that in this case on the Lugg, the EA is pressing forwards with a prosecution under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act. Let's hope that the EA and NE secure a prosecution with a big fine for this appalling act of vandalism."

If you care about protecting our rivers, please JOIN the Angling Trust & Fish Legal and support our work to protect our fragile water environment. ■

The Norfolk Angling Fair and Indoor Tackle Car Boot Sunday 15th May Easton College Norwich

On Sunday the 15th May Easton College positioned just off the A47 in Norwich will host "The Norfolk Angling Fair and Indoor Tackle Car Boot". This is an opportunity for Angling Enthusiasts from all Angling Disciplines to get together. It's an opportunity for local clubs and syndicates to promote their memberships for the forthcoming season. Traders to display their products. Bait companies to convince people to stock up for the season ahead or for any organisation that wants to promote the great work that you do angling wise in the area.

There will also be an indoor angling car boot for people to sell or exchange their unwanted fishing tackle.

Tables are very sensibly priced at just £5 per table (tables between 5 and 6ft) multiple tables are welcome.

Refreshments will also be available. To express your interest in having a table at the event please email colin.brzeczek@ccn.ac.uk before 15th March 2022. ■

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Welcome to your Members Newsletter

Welcome to the latest issue of the Angling Trust Members Newsletter. With the heart breaking news coming out of Ukraine, the Angling Trust welcomes the move to ban Russian and Belarusian anglers from international competitions in line with other sports and sanctions. Our prayers are with everyone caught up in this war. This week we launched our annual Online Auction with over 150 lots already pledged and more being added daily. Please support it by either donating a lot or bidding - all funds raised help us fight for fishing, fish and the environment. There's also news of the Great British Spring Clean which our Anglers Against Litter campaign is supporting, a great members' offer from Farlows and Sportfish, and the launch of our We Fish As One campaign. Tight lines! John Cheyne, Marketing, Communications & Membership Manager.

Going to The Big One! Pop along to Angling Trust stand

The Big One Shows are back for 2022 - Farnborough on March 5th-6th and Stoneleigh on April 2nd-3rd. The Angling Trust will have a stand at both events - make sure you pop along to say hello! We've got some great show specials - including Anglers Against Pollution badge packs and mugs, and membership offers - and some surprise visitors over the weekend with our CEO Jamie Cook on Farnborough's main stage on Saturday. There will be hundreds of retailers and exhibitors at the shows with plenty of opportunities for visitors to pick up tackle and bait at bargain prices!



Angling takes a stand for Ukraine

The Angling Trust welcomes the decision to expel Russian and Belarusian teams from all international angling competitions in response to the invasion of Ukraine and indiscriminate killing of civilians. The decision was taken this week by the Confédération Internationale de la Pêche Sportive (CIPS) – the body that oversees competitive international angling.

Jamie Cook, Angling Trust CEO, said: "From football to hockey, from rugby to judo, the sports governing bodies are making it clear that any participation by Russia in international events and competitions cannot be allowed to go ahead while their troops are invading a sovereign nation and indiscriminately killing its people."

Look out for the launch of "Anglers for Ukraine" in the next few days. We will be donating all funds collected to the British Red Cross Ukrainian Crisis Appeal to provide humanitarian assistance to those caught up in the conflict.

Members discounts: Get 10% off at Farlows and Sportfish!



Here's a great offer for Angling Trust members from leading game and fly-fishing specialists Farlows and Sportfish. All Angling Trust members are entitled to a 10% discount online, in-store and via telephone mail order at both Farlows and Sportfish. Just follow instructions on our Members Discounts pages.

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'Truly inclusive fishing' as We Fish As One launches



The Angling Trust has launched its We Fish As One community outreach campaign with seven key pilot sites being of focus in 2022 to provide 'truly inclusive fishing experiences for all', tackling barriers linked to representation and improve the numbers of anglers from all background and reel in new fans.

Capitalising on the recent boom we've seen since the pandemic, the We Fish As One campaign will promote the sport's community building opportunities, mental health benefits and consistently strong safeguarding record. We believe that fishing has a unique and timely offering to build on success while addressing key insights that speak of ongoing barriers to inclusivity.

Three weeks to go to the Great British Spring Clean!

- 1** Pledge to 'Take 5' pieces of litter home with you after you have been fishing
- 2** Organise or participate in a litter pick and tell us about it. Use the hashtag #anglersagainstlitter
- 3** Recycle your old fishing line through Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme

The Angling Trust's Anglers Against Litter campaign has pledged its support for the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean, running from the 25th March – 10th April. It presents a great opportunity for the angling community to showcase their support in tackling litter. There are many ways that anglers can get involved:

Pledge to 'Take 5' pieces of litter home with you after you have been fishing

Organise, or participate in a litter pick and tell us about it. Use the hashtag #anglersagainstlitter

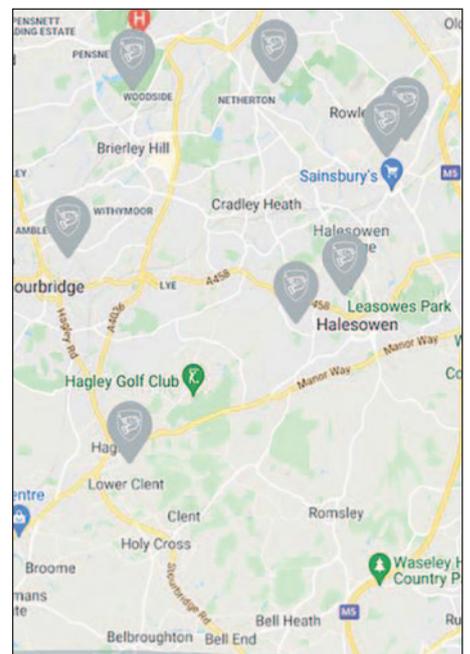
Recycle your old fishing line and spools through the Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme

Award for volunteer support



Congratulations to Martynas Pranaitis, a Fisheries Enforcement Officer with the Environment Agency, who has just received the Angling Trust's prestigious Certificate of Excellence award for "outstanding work" supporting and promoting volunteer bailiffs in the Kent, South London and East Sussex area.

All your fishing info on one map!



Looking for somewhere to go fishing? The Angling Trust Find Fishing Info map features hundreds of venues for you to explore, including how to get there and permit details. You can also search for information on clubs, tackle shops and coaches - and if you are planning to fish a river you can check on the latest river level. There's also a facility to submit a new entry or amend an existing listing.

FISH LEGAL UPDATE: Costa Beck, North Yorkshire



Fish Legal has sent a judicial review pre-action letter to the Environment Agency for failing to review permits held by Yorkshire Water, one private fish farm and the Environment Agency’s own fish farm on Costa Beck in North Yorkshire. Representing its member angling club – the Pickering Fishery Association – Fish Legal is arguing that the Environment Agency’s continuing failure to review the permits as we enter the final six-year ‘cycle’ of the Water Framework Directive’s river basin management plans is unlawful. In 2020, untreated storm sewage from Yorkshire Water’s Pickering works discharged into the beck on 108 separate occasions for a total of over 260 hours. Silt from the two fish farms near the spring source has smothered the riverbed and prevents trout and grayling from reproducing.

Coarse and Game competition calendars available to download



Dates for Angling Trust Coarse and Game competitions in 2022, including qualifiers, are available on the Angling Trust website.

Vacancy: Environmental Officer

The Angling Trust is seeking an Environmental Projects Officer to join the Environment team on a one-year fixed term contract, starting in April.

Not a Fish Legal member? Find out more...

 <h2>Angling Trust Coar</h2>		
Date	Event	Venue
18 June 2022	RiverFest Qualifier	River Calder, Mirfield
19 June 2022	AT & CRT Canal Pairs Qualifier	Coventry
19 June 2022	RiverFest Qualifier	River Trent, Newark
22 June 2022	FishOMania Qualifier	Heronbrook Fisheries
25 June 2022	AT & CRT Canal Pairs Qualifier	Shropshire Union, Sheddon
25 June 2022	FIPSeD Coarse Angling Europe	Portugal (25th-26th June 2
25 June 2022	FishOMania Qualifier	Moorlands Farm
25 June 2022	Youth and Junior National Championship	Westwood Lakes
25 June 2022	RiverFest Qualifier	River Severn, Bewdley
29 June 2022	AT & CRT Boddington Classic Qualifier	Boddington Reservoir
29 June 2022	FishOMania Qualifier	Lindholme Lakes
02 July 2022	RiverFest Qualifier	River Weaver, Northwich
02 July 2022	RiverFest Qualifier	River Trent, Caythorpe

If your club is not a member of Fish Legal and would like more information on how Fish Legal can benefit your club, contact Nick Simmonds, Membership Manager on 01568 620447 or nick.simmonds@anglingtrust.net

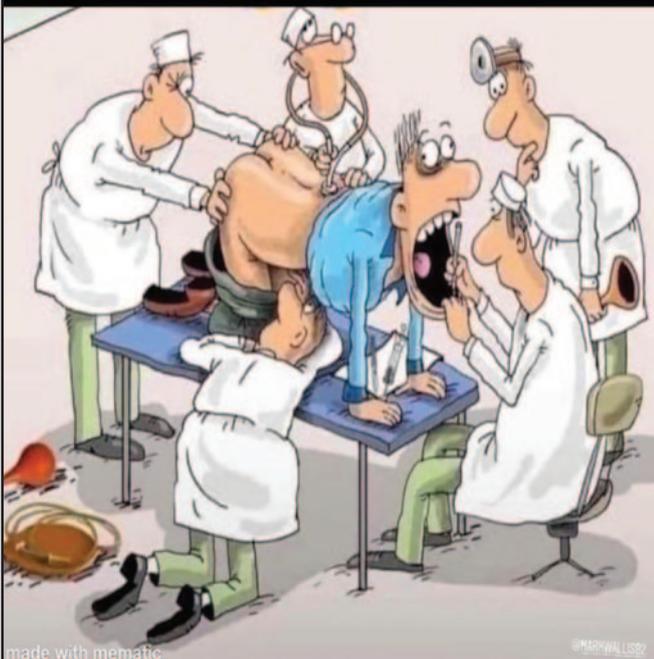
Kaden McCarthy – Dynamite Baits catch report



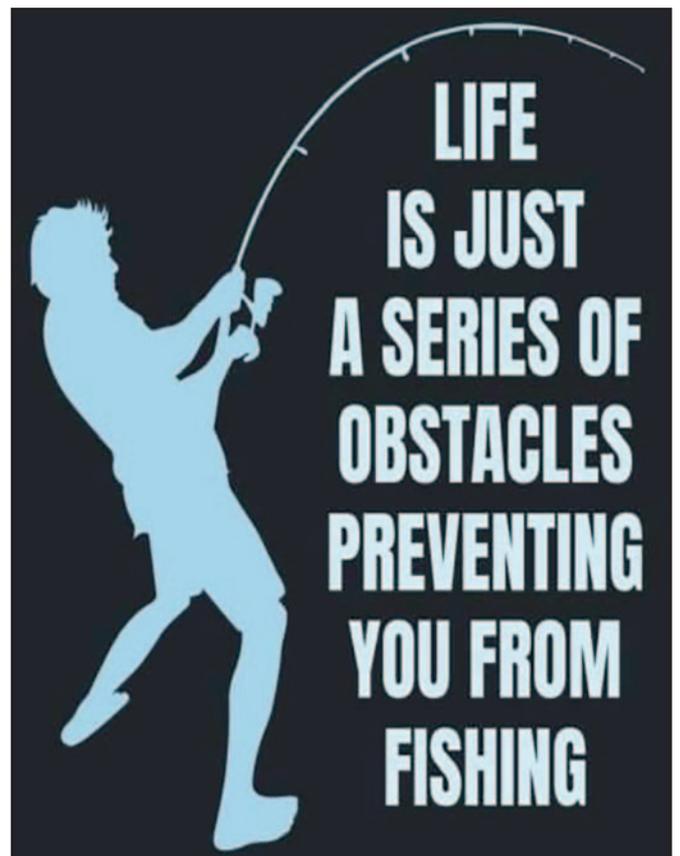
First session out since I had my gear robbed, I headed to Bluebell Lakes. I started the session with eight spombs of crushed monster tiger nut and 12mm whole and corn. Fished over the top as always is hit'n'run pop-ups, it wasn't long till I had my first bite, I ended the session with seven fish nuggets going 26lb 10oz.

Carp Humour

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Our monthly reviews on products currently on the market

In this issue:

- Nite Watches
- Klean Kanteen
- New Direction Tackle



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Check out our hottest watches of the month:



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HAWK | 300TT100GREEN
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ALPHA | Z200T100BLUE
£400.00

Klean Kanteen – Insulated TKPro 25oz (750ml)



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- 16oz (0.5L): 7.3oz cup (216ml)
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ND TACKLE SMART BITE INDICATOR SYSTEM

It shows that the ND bite indicator system is smart with the wide range of connection options it has to the accessory devices. It is fully compatible with our latest wireless standard and can interact with the bivvy light pro, the H9pro headlamp, the H10 headlamp, the smartband B9, the air light sounder and the TH9s theft alarm. For example, it can automatically switch on the headlamps and the bivvy light in the event of a bite. Anyone who has experienced this once does not want anything else. ■



Air light sounder



Bivvy light pro



H9 Head torch



Anti theft alarm



H10 Head torch



K9s Battery pack



K9s Bite alarm



N1 Bite alarm



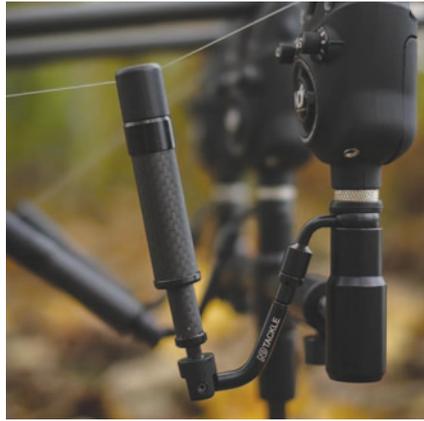
S9 Bite alarm



Smart band



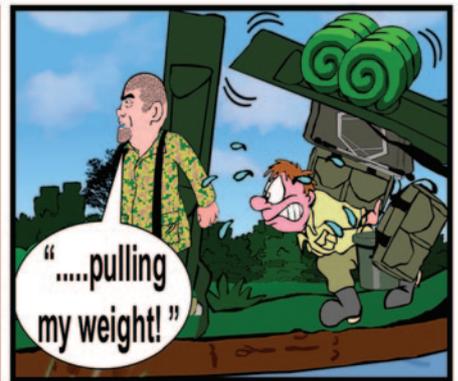
Smart watch



Spring T10



UV Reative Rubber Set for H10



PAUL RODRIGUEZ

WIN A HOLIDAY FOR TWO

Our good friends Steve and Sandy Bond have put up a fantastic competition prize in Big Carp to celebrate Big Carp's 250th issue. Here's your chance to win a Holiday for two including food at Lake Bossard.

And it could not be simpler to enter... All, you have to do is go to the BOSSARD Facebook page...

- 1 You must like the Bossard page.
- 2 You must like and share this competition.
- 3 And just write "Done" in the comments.



Closing date is
1st June 2022.

Good luck!



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The Tale of a Twenty Pounder

(My first) by Steven Hall

The year is 1982 and the angler is a much younger me. I arrived at Longford Lake in Chipstead at 4.30 in the morning in my newly acquired, for £70, Ford Cortina. Longford is about 80 acres in size and very reluctant to give up any of its 40 or so Carp, however, being filled with the enthusiasm of youth, I set off on the half mile walk to the end of the North bank.

I was carrying my 45-inch canvass

broly a Woolworths camp bed and assorted paraphernalia needed for a 24 hour session. It ended up being done in stages of about 200 yards followed by a 5-minute break to get my breath back! Finally, at about 6 am I was high up on the north bank looking for signs of carp. After about an hour I spotted some dark shapes where the lake shallows up ready to depart via the river Darent on its way to Dunton Green.

I set up in my chosen pitch (the nearest one to the fish) and started

wading (barefoot) along the bank until I found a bed of Swan Mussels. I gathered about 20 and put them in my bucket before returning to my swim. I shelled the Mussels and cut a few into chunks for ground bait and put a whole mussel on each size 4 hook.

This was before I had been shown the hair rig, which I first saw later that year. I fished running ledgers on 9lb Sylcast Bronze line. I cast both rods (Kevlar Whiskers with Cardinal 55s) to the area I had seen the carp then mixed some ground bait containing white and brown breadcrumb and put the chopped mussels in it before catapulting 4 big balls to the area. For about an hour I was plagued by bleeps on my Optonics and the bob-bins creeping up the needles.

Finally, I worked out that there was a strong undertow from the rapidly shallowing water gathering pace as it flowed into the river, so I resorted to "foaming up" and this cured the problem. Nothing happened and by lunch time, so I decided to walk to the Bricklayers Arms pub (it is still there) and had a ploughmans and a pint.

I loved these simpler times; you could leave your gear, and nobody would even think of stealing it. Back at my pitch I recast with fresh bait and settled down to read, I remember the Book was by Wilbur Smith and was called *Hungry as the Sea*. It is strange how memory works, I remember this day and this book so well but forget so many other things.

At about 4pm I had a steady take on my left-hand rod and struck into a slow-moving fish. It fought like crazy and let me a merry dance before I finally netted it. It looked huge and was certainly a Personal Best.

I went down the bank and found another angler and asked him to come and witness the weighing and take a photo. It was my only fish that day but at over 20lb it was very special. Tight Lines Everyone. ■



First 20lb, 1982.

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UK first class = £2.70

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Looking Back – Old Skool

By Steve Fisher



Looking a bit old in this picture. I used to go round the lakes at night scaring all the other anglers – 1977 Dartford.



My fishing tackle back in the seventies – Del Romang Conversion Herons.

I think myself very fortunate to have started carp fishing in the 1970s. Everything was so new and unknown. But one thing that hasn't changed is to challenge and outwit these wary carp. The difference is that today there are companies helping you with different rigs etc. There are also a lot of commercial runs water fisheries available that are great places to start carp fishing. I used to take my son Charlie to Elphicks, where he had a great time learning how to look after the fish properly.

I have already mentioned in previous articles how I first started carp fishing on the 7 July 1977. I started fishing Dartford lakes, Brooklands around 1968 getting lifts down to the lakes with adult company as I was only 8 years old. I used to love (and still do) fishing, music and bird watching, and later on I bred and flew birds of prey. I loved taking them down to Dartford and flying them across the lakes. These included buzzards, eagle owls and Harris hawks. The ducks didn't know what to make of them!

In the early 70s I caught a lot of tench and my favourite swim was underneath the willow tree at the corner of the centre path and A2 bank. I did dabble in carp fishing in the mid-70s and caught a couple on partly boiled potatoes that were the size of cricket balls with a large hook stuck inside the spud. I had a small 10ft cane rod and when you cast it out it was like a depth charge going off! To this day I never knew how a carp got such a large potato in its mouth. In 1977 when I concentrated solely on fishing for these mysterious and elusive carp, I had a few 20s which back then was a massive fish. Once the word had got around that you had a big fish on the bank, everyone would run around to see it and crowds used to gather. There was not much in the way of tackle or bait in the shops. It was all experimental, making your

own rigs and bait up – really fun times looking back. At the time everyone fished rigs as sensitive as possible. Some of us used silver bobbins that we got from the bins in the factory in Powder Mill Lane. They were used in lampshades.

My girlfriend (now wife of 30 years) Dawn worked in the West End and after work she would bring dinner down to me. Apart from that I only saw her at weekends as I was always fishing down Dartford. The tables have turned now as I do most of the cooking at home – as long as I have a glass of Jameson and Alexa playing. My first ever car was a Hillman Imp which I had in 1977. My mates had motor bikes so a lot of the times we all went fishing in my car. I always remember one time we all decided to fish South Ockenden lakes in Essex. There were six of us all in my car with tackle and every time we went over a bump the car bottomed out. I could hardly change gear for all bodies and tackle LOL.

There was some lovely old iconic fish in Kent in the 70s and 80s with "She" from Faversham School pool being one of the biggest. In Brooklands, it was Greg and Rose. Around 1978-79, apart from fishing, I was going to a lot of concerts with friends, gigs like AC/DC and Motorhead. When we came out of the Motorhead concerts, we were all deaf for about a week. Anyone reading this who have seen them will know what I am talking about. I loved the bridge swim as there was a tree in the water both sides and when the fish moved through the bridge it was a good holding spot and you could bag up during the night. I fished there for five days a week for most of the year leaving the weekends free as it was bumper to bumper with anglers. I had to go home once a week to sign on which was inconvenient. I did manage to change my signing on place to just outside the lakes (the dole place is a car showroom now on Princes Road). I thought that was very kind of them LOL. I did try to get the postman to bring my cheque to the lakes, but they wouldn't stretch to that!

Another time I was fishing with my friend for life, Danny Stanton. We were fishing the bars swim (opposite the slaughter house in the Texas car park). There were a lot of fish showing when "Dicky Chad" – Richard Cald-



Small mirror from the Bridge Swim, Dartford. Showing my old Hillman Imp and all the rubbish that got collected from the lakes in 1977.



19lb common, Bridge Swim, Dartford 1978.



One of the biggest fish in Kent from the seventies and eighties. Martin Woodhams with 'She' from Faversham School Pool – 30lb 8oz.



Me with a small carp form the outlet, 1978.

well appeared. Dick was and still is a great angling friend. He had seen the fish and asked if he could fish the swim too. "Not a problem" I replied, so he set his rods up on top of the bank. If you can imagine, me and Dan were in the swim and he was 15 foot above us, with his lines going over the top of our heads! Just wish I had pictures of it. Photo film was expensive back then and when you are on the dole too, so we kept the films for photographing fish only – we all blanked that day.

When I got my cheque from the dole, the first thing I bought was bait which mainly came from the health food shops. What money was left over (which wasn't much) I used for food. There used to be a drinks, crisps, Mars, maggots boy come around with his wheel barrow at Brooklands. I ate mainly from his barrow – not the maggots though! As long as you were fishing, everything else was secondary.

It is amazing looking back at my old pictures, I can still remember the details about a particular catch, but struggle to remember what I did yesterday half the time! Going by what I read in the old skool groups, most anglers are the same. I have so many memories, I would need to write a book to include them all. One memory that comes to mind while writing this article was in 1978. I just turned up on the Sunday night, I walked across the bridge and bumped into Dick. I asked him where he reckoned on fishing. He said the back point from the centre path. In the morning I had two lovely fish – 17 lbs and 22 lbs – in my old post office sacks waiting to be photographed. Also in that year me and Danny Stanton heard rumours of carp being caught on the Thames by Battersea Bridge, at Lotts Road. On the first occasion we went there, we saw all this hot water gushing out into the Thames which came from the factories. It was called Chelsea Creek. The steam was coming off the water and we realised this must be a real hot spot for all fish. We walked up to the corner with our gear where the creek met the main river. We came across a man called Phil, who had a massive bucket of eels which he had just caught. He told me he gave up his day job because he was making so much money from eel fishing once a night. We then bumped in the secu-

BIG CARP TOP TEN

Carp Fisheries





Playing the fish in 'The 10 Swim' 1979, Dartford.

rity guard "Sid". He wasn't very happy about us fishing, but after a lot of grovelling, he let us fish. There was quite a drop from the corner of the wall down to the river and with only small leads, we flicked our baits out just on the edge of the hot water flow outlet, about a rod length out. I was using quite a lot of sweetcorn on the hook and threaded it up the line. My first bite came from a small carp that shot out to the main current and as it did my rod arched over. I remember thinking what a bigger fish would have been like in the main current. Dan had a small carp and we had a few tench as well. We used a drop net to land the fish. The security guard wouldn't let us fish the second time we visited so we had to try another route. Up the other end of Lotts Road, a few hundred yards past the factory was a small park where we climbed over a gated area about 10/15 foot high with all our gear. We walked through the park to the river's edge and climbed over the wall down a steep ladder and on to the muddy



Danny Stanton with a lovely 26lb 9oz carp, 1981 Dartford. Back Point Swim on the island.



The iconic 'Greg' from Dartford – 28lb 3oz, June 1986.

Thames bank. We walked along to where the hot water outlet was and by then we were waist high in thick mud and our gear was wrecked. We tried fishing but abandoned the trip after a while. I didn't go back again, but Dan did with another friend of ours "Big Gal". They took a boat with them and went across from the opposite side of the river. They anchored up on the mouth of the creek and the tide started to really push through. It lifted the anchor so they tied the boat to the ladder which went up the side of the wall. The tide was so strong it started to smash the boat against the side of the wall! They had to stop fishing and went back to the other side of the river. They then dragged the boat on to the mud and reversed their car down to tow it out – the car got stuck and the tide was coming in rapidly. Luckily for them someone saw what was happening and roped them out just in time. Lotts Road is a large housing complex now with gyms etc. I carried out pest and bird control there a few years, which bought back memories of the dramas we had back then.



Just after the storms of October 1987. Showing the devastation it caused on the island at Dartford Brooklands – 17lb 6oz.



23lb 4oz mirror.



26lb – over 20 years ago!

The History of Carp Fishing in Oxfordshire

Paul Harris and Geoff Adams

Carp fishing has a very rich history. In the early days of it becoming popular, Kent and the Colne Valley were the hot beds of our fledgling pastime and of course there was the legendary Redmire Pool.

Into the new Millennium and one area above all others exploded onto the scene, this was of course Oxfordshire. The quality of the stock of carp in this county was incredible but where did these beautiful scaly beasts come from? When did the Leney's get stocked? What were the origins of the famous Linch Hill fish and what of the history of the now infamous Linear Fisheries? Over the course of the pages of this book all will be revealed as Paul and Geoff have put together the facts of how these lakes were stocked and also banded together many successful local anglers, some of which have never published any of their catches, who tell their fishing tales on these stunning lakes.

With more than 300 pictures of some of this country's finest ever carp and several full page maps, this huge volume tells the story of Oxfordshire's carp fishing history whilst still leaving a little bit of mystery for your imagination!

Included within the pages of this book is the foreword written by local legendary angler and former tackle dealer Joe Taylor. We have chapters from Paul Kitchin on the legendary Vauxhall Lake. David Brian Williams tells us the story of the lakes in the City of Oxford itself! Chris Robinson has written an incredible chapter on two of Dorchester's lakes. Orchid and The Lagoon. The history told in Chris' chapter on these lakes is just incredible and wait until you see the pictures!

Next door to The Lagoon is Dorchester's Alliance Club Lake and Joe Forrester tells his story of the incredible scaly carp that inhabited this lake and how he outwitted them.

We have a real coup in the fact that brilliant all-round Oxford angler John Everard agreed to be interviewed and he has an incredible amount of historical information to share, as has Gerald Stratford who is also included in this informative chapter.

No book about Oxfordshire's carp fishing history would be complete without the story of Oxford's first forty and what a story it is. Richard 'Paddy' Paradine has never written or published any of his catches before and we have his interview here for you of his historic catch which was kept under the radar for so long.

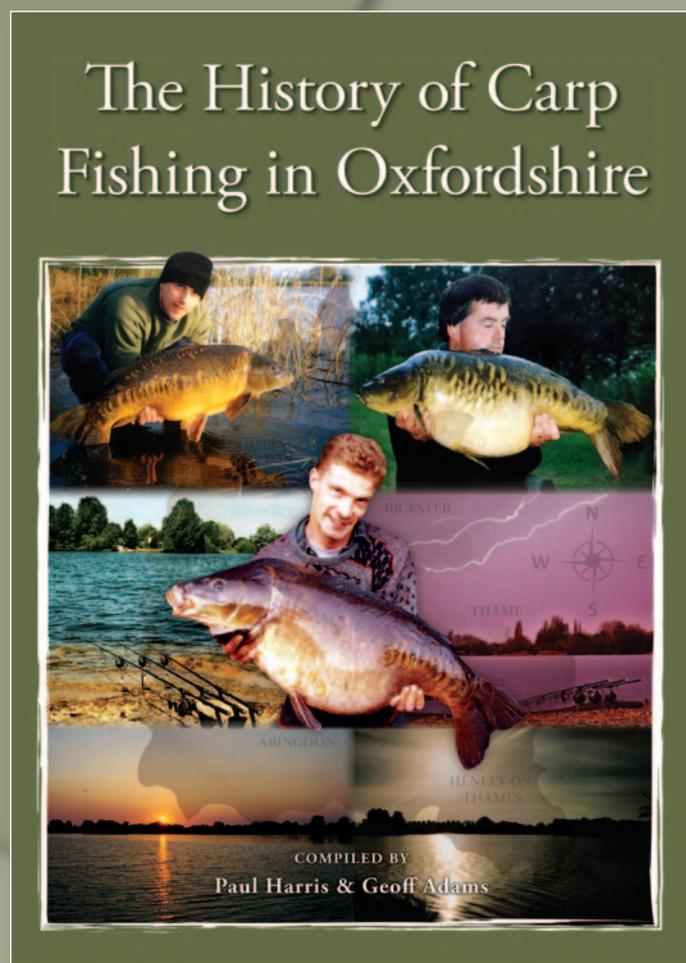
Nick Stansfield is a brilliant young Oxford carper who doesn't shout about his catches. We have two incredible chapters from him from two of the county's most iconic lakes, The Leisure Park and The Big S! Josh Chatfield has written a fantastic chapter which really gives you an insight into how fishing on The Leisure Park was back in the day when the Leney's were still about and culminates with his capture of The Big Leney at its biggest ever weight, the iconic 'Paddy's Fish'.

We have brilliant chapters on Newlands from Ginger Robinson and Milton Pools from Stuart Rothwell. Danny Aplin has written about his time on Linch Hill which will just blow you away! His pictures alone are worth purchasing this book.

Nick Franklin has written a lovely chapter on one of Oxfordshire's little known lakes and his account really hits home that carp fishing isn't always about the numbers game. Sometimes it's just you fishing for the unknown! There are superb chapters on Manor Farm from Paul Hathaway and St Johns from Stewart Roper.

If that wasn't enough Paul and Geoff have wrote chapters themselves which cover the stocking history of lakes, how the gravel company ARC played such a big part in the early stockings of Oxford's lakes, the early days of Linch Hill and Linear Fisheries and facts and stories regarding Oxford's other lakes, some very off the radar!

If you like your history, you like carp fishing and love stories of beautiful scaly carp, there is only one book to purchase this year. Here it is...



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A V A I L A B L E N O W



Mercers Park, Redhill.



Mercers Park, Redhill. 35lb 8oz over 20 years ago!



The fish I called 'Pasta', Mercers Park, Redhill. 30lb 1oz 20 years ago!

At the beginning of the 1980s, it was the start of the New Romantics era for music – I love this music. Me and my friends were still going to plenty of gigs, but in 1980 Bon Scott the lead singer of AC/DC died so I didn't every go to see them again. I had seen them around ten times in the 1970s.

In October 1987 we had the big storms that devastated the country – and Dartford was no exception. On the island, it had taken down most of the trees. I had never seen so much devastation. Though I managed to catch quite a few fish from the island that year, being able to get your baits in areas you couldn't before because of the trees.

I started to fish for barbel at Adams Mill and the Bristol Avon, though I still fished Dartford on a regular basis. I took my hawks with me and Bob Church called me the Bird Man of Adams Mill.

I stopped fishing Adams Mill when the otters devastated the river. I went



'Pam' my Harris Hawk that I flew down the lakes and Adams Mill on the Great Ouse. Bob Church called me 'The Birdman of Adams Mill'. I had her for 28 years 'til she passed away.



Flying my buzzard at Dartford with Sea Scouts in the background.

on to fish Mercers in Redhill, Surrey in the early 1990s and had some nice fish from there. The most memorable one was 30 lb on a freelined piece of pasta. The previous evening, we had pasta for dinner and there was a lot

left over so I threw it all in the margins of a sandy platter and when I looked in the morning, there were all these tails waving at me. I crept to the edge and dropped a piece of pasta in front of the biggest and caught it –

naturally I named it “Pasta”.

I have so many other memories of my fishing back then – the things we got up to, ghostly tales and UFOs! I will leave these for another time.

I am still in touch with a lot of the



My son Charlie at a young age at Elphicks. Commercial fisheries are a great place to start up fishing.



Chelsea Creek showing where the hot water outlet was, with the main Thames in the background.

old anglers, mostly thanks to Face-Book and the old Skool Carp Group.

You could never imagine back then what the country would be like today with Coronavirus. I mainly fish Sutton and Devon Road now which isn't easy as most anglers will tell you. A

friend of mine, Brett White, said you are just waiting for the fish to throw you a bone – and I make him right.

Enjoy your fishing and stay safe.

Just after writing this article, I heard the very sad news that our friend and brother angler Brett White

has passed away after a long battle with cancer. He will be sorely missed by everyone that knew him.

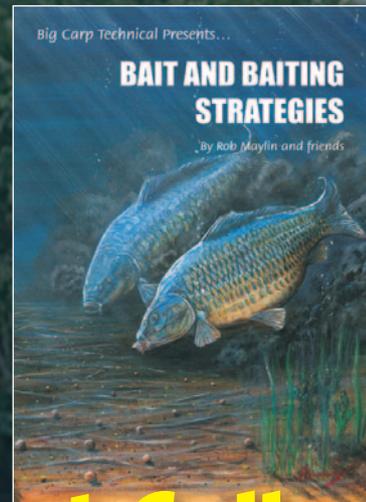
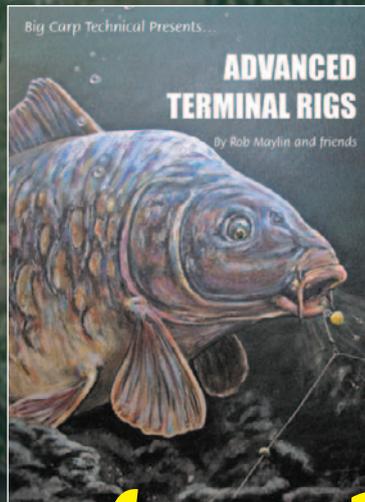
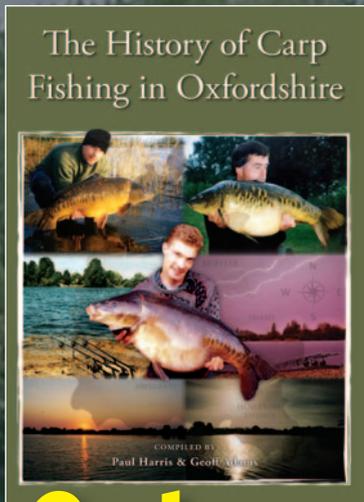
He was a fantastic angler and friend, and our condolences and love go out to his family. RIP Brother Brett XXX.. ■



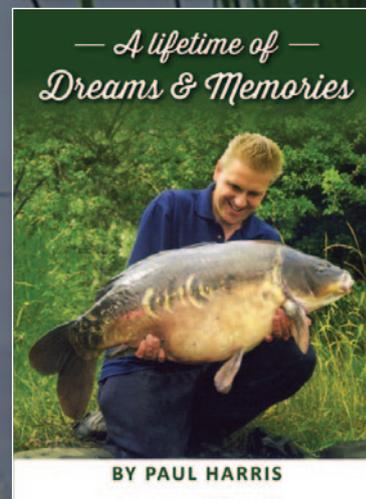
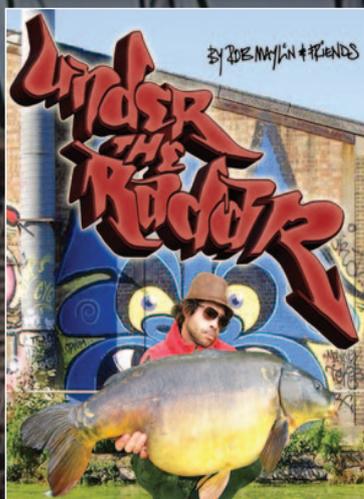
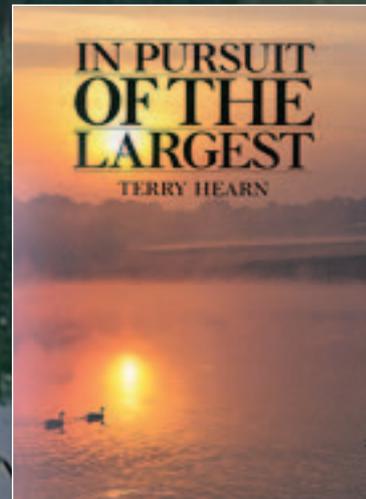
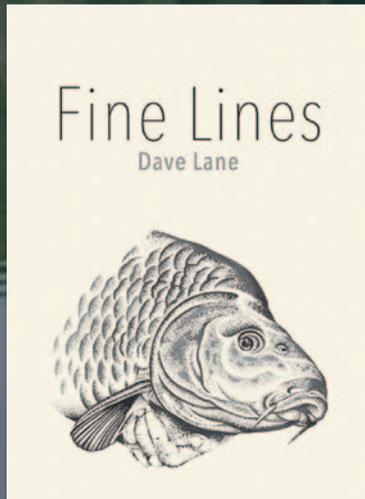
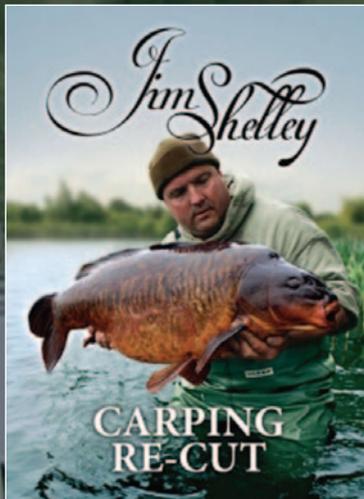
Brett White.



SPRING INT

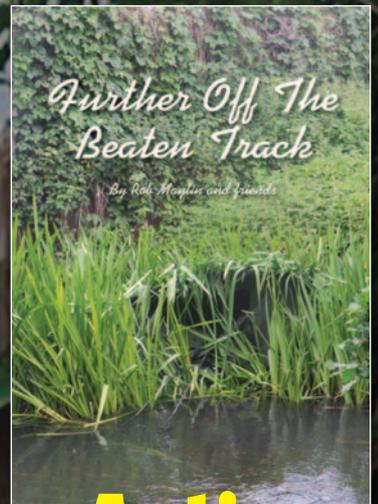
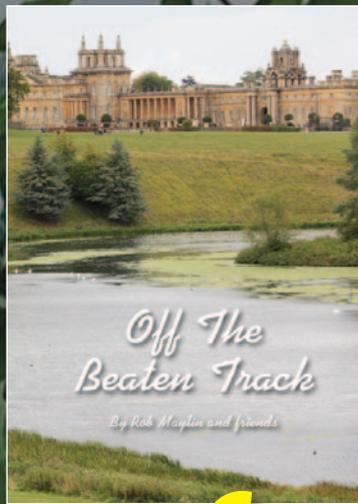
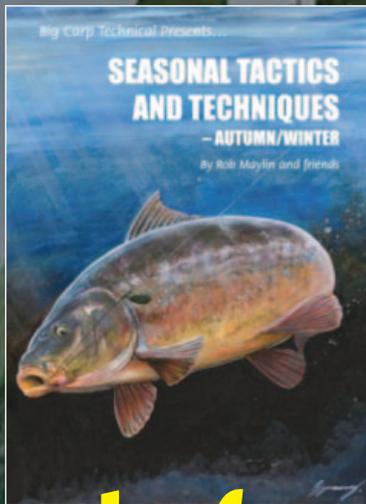
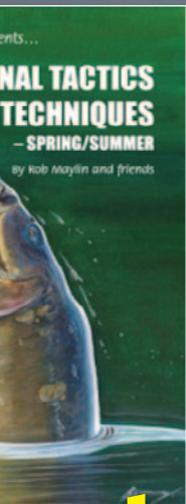


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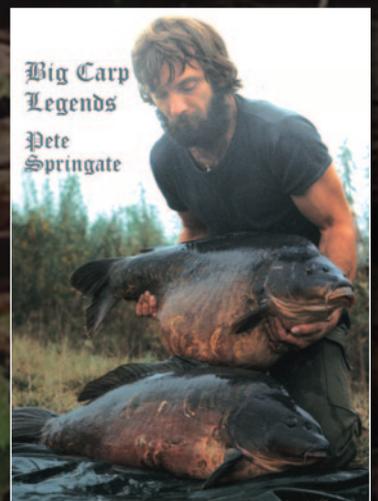
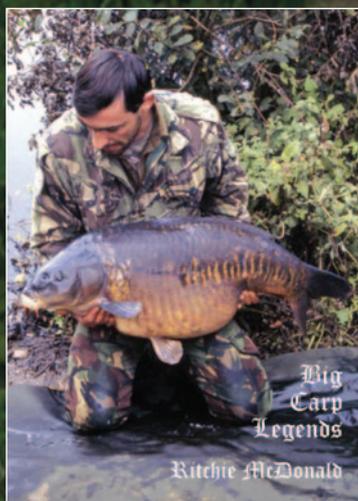
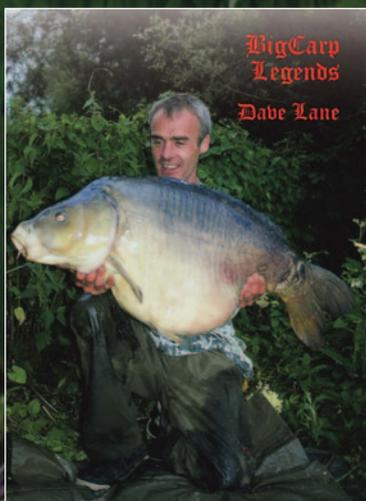
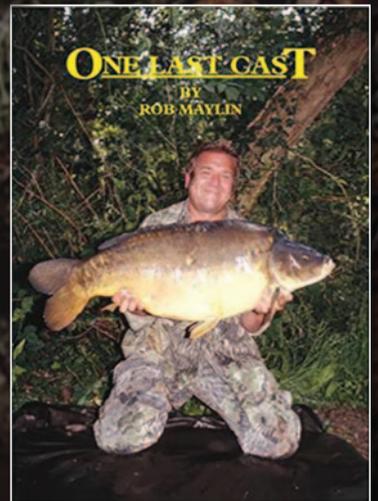
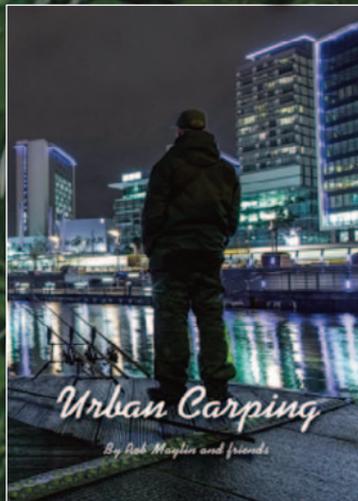
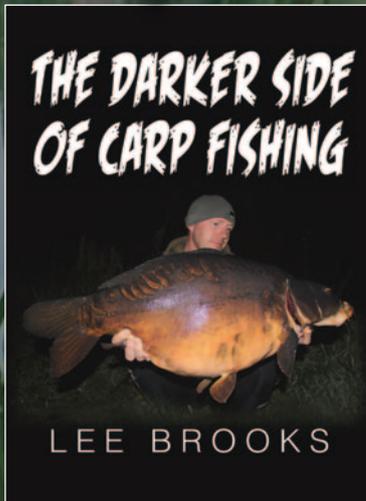


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Old Skool Carping

By Paul Tidiman



On June 16th 1976, I was fishing South Weald. I was 14 and I saw two carp caught that year. It became a season ticket only water from 1976. I begged my parents for the £15 for the ticket, but in 1976 £15 was a lot of money for us. However, the begging worked, all I needed now was the day off school so more begging was required. I had a bit of a drama in the morning, as the police wondered why I was waiting on a corner with my gear, anyway my friend's father turned up and explained we were going fishing and the police smiled and went on their way.

Our rods were from Woolworths, a 'Game Spinner' in brown and a light sea rod in blue with Shakespeare Reels, bait was sausage meat. About 11am the line started to fly off the spool and I was in! I can still see it now, even though its over 40 years ago. I got the fish under control and it was soon ready for the net. Steve Howe landed it for me and his father took the picture on a Yashica 35mm camera. The bailiff, Paul Connell arrived and he was so pleased for me. The fish weighed 19lb. I was so happy, one of the best days in my life.

Starting out carp fishing at South Weald was very difficult. My pals and I were advised to try another place that was not that far from home, Lake Meadows. This was 1978. We caught the train there from Brentwood, usually with a few friends. We usually did the night as you never knew what was going to happen in them days. We caught some better size carp here. The picture is of a 20lb 12oz and was my third over 20.

No brolly for us in the summer, just a bedchair with two covers and a layer of foam in between. I got the foam from Romford market. Blanks were now from Simpsons of Turnford, that I made myself, I only had two BJ buzzers at the time. Some sort of homemade paste bait based on Casilan was moulded around the hook.

Hair by Alan John, furry jumper from Unit 1, not sure about me boat though.





I sold all my gear a couple of times in between 1980 and 1982 as there was too much going on in my life to waste time sitting around a lake. Anyway, I got this lot together over a weekend and I'm back at it.



That rucksack in this shot probably cost more than all the other gear. It was a Karrimor Annapurna. Food for the session was a box of Jaffa Cakes and a flask of coffee.



Now I was back big time, very keen and South Weald was the venue again in August 1983. All I'm hearing is Harrow this, Harrow that, yeah I'd like to join, can I have the address? Yeah here you go. Three applications later, including one from 'Princes Risborough'. I was doomed from the start, firstly working at a printers on shift I could fish five days a week. Second, I was in a three litre Capri Ghia and on the M25 wouldn't take long to get there. I didn't worry about money then. Anyway it doesn't matter now, Not even the offer of a 'Guest Ticket' in 1985. I wouldn't want to go there anyway on principle. Oh, the fish were from South Weald not Harrow because I couldn't get in. ■

Oak Lakes Fisheries

www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk



Here's a selection of some of Oak Lakes' cracking carp



Catch report from Grant Stewart "Hi guys this is a cat I got on early hours of Wednesday morning weighed in at 120 lbs just thought I'd send you a few pics for the page thanks for a great 5 days Every minute of a few tench bream and a carp on the main lake as well.

Want to catch winter carp. Also, the catfish are biting. Also want a nice weekend morning breakfast. Get booked on at Oak Lakes Fisheries. Call 07702 384027 for bookings or call 07771 896964 for general enquiries.

Want to catch quality mirror and common carp, including specimen crucian carp? Whilst waiting for a carp, why not have a float rod or quiver tip out - good tench, roach, rudd, perch, bream all feeding. Want to catch big Catfish in the summer and big Pike in the winter. Beautiful setting, 2 car parks, toilets block, bait/tackle shop, cafe on weekend mornings and deliveries from local takeaways. All this and more is to be found at Oak Lakes Fisheries Southminster.

Lake Prices

Day ticket lake - Oak Lake - £10 a day and £20 for 24 hours.

Predator Lake - Prices are the same as the day ticket lake for pike during the winter - £20 a day and £30 for 24 hours for catfish in the summer.

Match Lake - £6 for one rod and £10 for two rods.

Early Seventies Carping

By Gerry Giles



In the early seventies I had been very fortunate to meet Mr Fred Wilton when he came down to fish Longfield Lake in Staines and I got on like a house on fire with him. He invited me and my lovely fishing partner Brian McKewen RIP down for a weekends fishing to one of the Kent waters he had been baiting with his high protein boilies he had invented.

Well sods law, I did very well that night and the next day catching a couple of the lakes big fish and we were then invited to come in on 'THE' bait! mainly because we were fishing much harder waters and Fred wanted to get results on the harder waters. I was also a member of Farnham Angling, since the 60's and as Leisure sports Longfield lake was getting busy, Brian and I decided we would give Cut Mill Pond a good old go (it was there I met and became friends a top bloke with blooming great big winkle picker shoes, fishing with his black eyed peas RIP Vic Gillings)

So twice a week I would go round to Brian's house, and we would roll and boil bait. I would then drive over to Cut mill and bait the lake! This would be around midnight to 01.00am!

in those early days if the bait wasn't eaten after about 4 days they would go rotten and float to the surface and I would have to go round with a long-handled landing net scoop them up and bin them.

I then thought "hang on? we can use this to our advantage !!!" so I asked Brian if he could make up a kind of branding iron? we just need something to press an X into half the boillies and so we did that I then divided the lake into 2 halves baited half with X marked and half plain the 4 day later I counted the amounts of each as I was narrow-

ing down then halving the area again to find where the fish were feeding 4 weeks later I had a really good idea what part of the lake the baits were being eaten.

I had great success catching well every session, mainly at night, but in the daytime in the summer heat the fish were all in the centre of the lake on to back out of the water, and if you managed to get a bit of crust or floater cake to them it was eaten straight away but sadly this was nigh on impossible due to the large duck and Seagull population.

That frustrated the hell out of me lol UNTIL!!!!!!! I sat thinking there MUST be an answer? suddenly I had



Old School Early Seventies Carping

a lightbulb moment!

IF? I was under the water looking up to a very bright blue sky and something was floating on the surface SURELY? it would look black ?? so I said Brian we need an edible human grade BLACK food dye; well, we got some and I made 2 large floater cakes that came out jet black

So over to Cut Mill, did the night, next day around mid-day the fish were all in the centre on top and I had cut up a bag of large cubes that were heavy enough to pult to the centre I fired out half a dozen cubes and the ducks and Seagulls just totally ignored them as they did not recognize it as a food source.

A few mins late the carp eat the lot without any messing , the only way I could cast that far was with an Arlesey Bomb 8, inches of line, ana

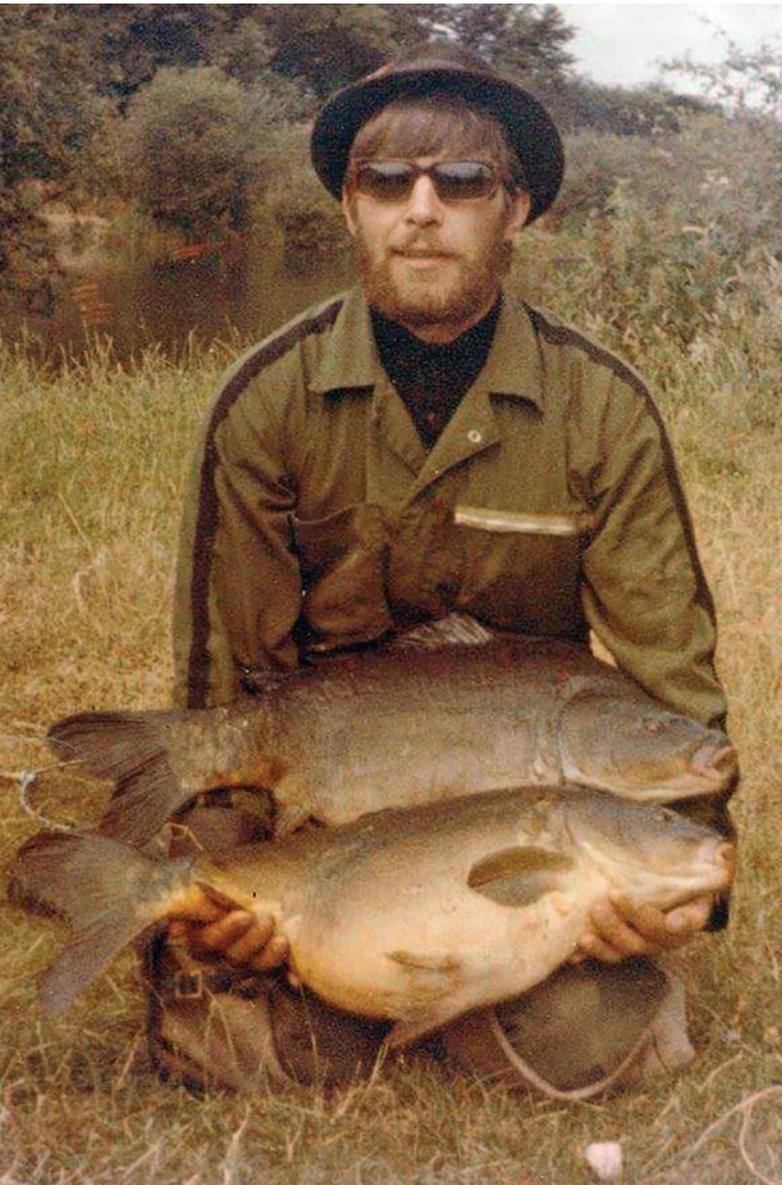
swivel stopped with a ledger stop and wacked it in to the centre, then fed the line out till it popped up well to say it worked was an understatement could only use one rod as it was five casts ,five fish after putting these 5 back I had used all my film and caught quite a few more as you can see from the picture ,in those days we used to use a GPO large weave hessian sack later Brian and I made the first industrial nylon carp sacks with punched holes but that's another story lol

Fishing Cut Mill Pond Farnham with my old 70's AJ BULL of Guilford canvas bivvy well proofed with Mesowax never ever leaked think this was 1974/5 had it till 1989 then gave it away I had added another door opposite the one I had as the other big lake I was fishing had a habit of

the wind changing direction in the week stays so just shut one and zipped opened the other one easy

Or if it was boiling hot opened them both made the nu brolly pole less by sawing a bit off the stub and moving the brass screw bit up once it was opened and the cross canes on all the brolly ribs, I could unscrew the centre pole with not much to bang your bonce on. I remember my mate took this picture with my old Zenit E camera RIP Vic Gillings such a lovely bloke we used to spend hours at night drinking hot tea or coffee just chatting and laughing

A great memory back in the day all on my GPO Hessian sacks lol part of a day's fishing, all off the top with the hordes of ducks and Seagulls ignoring my anchored floater I experimented with 5 casts five fish it was insane. ■



Carpy Humour



Well, I had a good think about it and decided it was the right thing to do. Don't really care about the £350. So, this is Nika and Yana, they come to us next week from Ukraine. Just glad I could help really. Hopefully they like rolling bait and spodding!

Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack Competition

A massive thumbs up to our great friend Terry Dempsey for providing an awesome NEW monthly competition

And it could not be easier to win this fantastic **Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack** which contains **5kg of 18mm Nutcracker Boilies** (RRP £37.50) and a tub of **Nutcracker Pop-ups** (RRP £6.49), perfect for an early season session.

To win simply go to the Urban Baits Facebook page and 'LIKE' it. THAT'S IT! – Terry himself will pick a winner at random.

Closing date is 1st June, 2022

– SO GET LIKING!



The Tipping Point

By Keith Jenkins

It all started somewhere, this carp fishing lark. For all of us. That point in time when we went from fisherman to carp fisherman. From maggot bashing for bleak, and roach, and suicidal perch to... power, adrenalin, joy disaster!

Carp!

For me, that point coincided with our move from South London to Crawley in Sussex in 1981. Prior to that my fishing had been limited to ponds on Tooting Bec and Mitcham commons, the Thames at Hampton Court and Canbury Gardens, and the occasional trip to a couple of farm ponds in Kent. A few carp had splashed their way

into my inadequate landing net, but nothing to ignite any flames. Then, in the early eighties, a confluence of events were to determine my future angling exploits.

Within a few, summery months the combination of meeting an angling cousin-in-law I didn't realise I had, a visit to a friendly tackle shop and the discovery of 'carp lakes' within a mile or so of my new home changed my fishing forever.

Keith (my new cousin-in-law) introduced me to the manic wildies at the Ballast Pit and then, within a few months, we were moving on from there to the Silt Lake in Tilgate Park, as advised by Mick in Jack Frost's Tackle. There we encountered slightly

larger mirrors and commons, and when I 'smashed' my PB one October night with a fish of 6.10 I realised it was time to move onto the big lake at Tilgate – Campbell's.

The transition from 2 or 3 acre ponds to the 17 acres of Campbell's was daunting, to say the least, and on one of our initial close season recce's around the lake I can remember feeling completely out of my depth. Standing on the dam wall, looking down the length of the lake, I could barely see the other end (or so it seemed) and I began to think that I'd really bitten off more than I could chew.

Everything was so new in this carp fishing game. Bigger rods and landing



Campbell's looking across to the rhodies.



The Jungle.

nets; heavier line; bite alarms; The Hair Rig! Not only did I have to contend with a huge, new lake, but I also had to come to terms with a whole new way of fishing – surely it would be easier to take up nuclear physics!

My first few sessions were unremarkable, and I could feel the depths closing in on me, but then I found myself in The Jungle and everything changed.

Campbell's was named after Donald Campbell, whose family lived close by, and it was where he did preliminary tests on Bluebird, in a bid to break his own World Water Speed Record, which ultimately ended in tragedy. Because of this affiliation with watercraft, the lake was used as much by water folk as anglers, but the combination was not always a friendly one, especially when an out-of-control canoeist sliced haphazardly through your lines, with barely an acknowledgement. Fortunately, all was not lost, and a floating boom was

installed across the lake at the far end, beyond which was an acre or so of lilies, shallows, a couple of small islands...and tranquility.

There were only a couple of fishable swims down there, and they were obviously very popular, so my first couple of sessions on the lake were in amongst the rhododendrons along the east bank. The swims were fine but, faced with 16 acres of weedy, busy water, I was struggling. One sunny afternoon I wound in and trudged off despondently down to the pads. There was nowhere to fish, so I mooched around for bit, watching the pads in front of one angler knocking and swaying. On the way out the path was flanked with more rhodies and I decided to battle through the jungle of branches and leaves to see what lay beyond.

Within 10 yards I'd left the outside world behind and was surrounded by shade and calm and birdsong. Then the lake appeared in front of me, and

everything changed.

Ten yards to my right the boom divided the lake into those that boat and those that don't. 30 yards in front was the main island, and to its right the lilies spread from its margins to the boom. It was like a slice of heaven, and it was all mine.

There was obviously no swim – nowhere to cast, to put a sunlounger or a broly. But, where's there's a will...With some careful pruning I fashioned a gap in the rhodies, flattened down some of the undergrowth and there it was – The Jungle swim.

The sunlounger would have to be balanced carefully on some roots, and waders would be required to cast, as I had to get a couple of yards out into the lake to avoid the overhead branches. But that was fine because, out there in front was carp country.

The following weekend I put the plan into action. Precarious was a word that sprang to mind but, with barely a drop of water intruding into



First double



14lb from under the boom.

my waders, I soon had two baits out there. I balanced bits and pieces around the swim, just above water, and then sat back to await events. After an hour or so, Keith scabbled through the undergrowth and laughed heartily at my set up. We had a cuppa and talked rubbish for a bit, then he was off.

He couldn't have been gone for more than a couple of minutes when one of the rods was almost wrenched into the lake. On grabbing it I was also pulled forward and saw the pads folding and flapping as a carp tried desperately to gain further cover. At that moment, Keith appeared in the swim 100 yards opposite and did a double take, before turning on his heels and ran back the way he'd come.

I don't remember much of the fight, just that fight it was, but as Keith arrived, sweating and gasping, in the swim the battle was almost done, and in pretty short order he'd netted the carp. I clambered back onto the rhodie raft, uncaring about my waders filling up with lake, and we both peered down into the net upon my prize. It looked huge! When the scales spun round to 10.04 I thought my heart would stop!

A double figure carp; I was on the road. A week later I landed a fish just two ounces lighter, but my joy was a bit less ecstatic. Without realising it I had become a specimen hunter, craving a fish larger than the previous one. Fortunately, I didn't have to wait too long, and after losing three carp in quick succession, all succumbing to the chains that held the boom in place, later that afternoon I managed to guide a better fish away from those cruel snags and was soon peering down on a much better fish. At 14.04 not only was it almost a mid-double but it was also a beautiful looking linear, the like of which the lake would soon become famed for.

Fishing in the Jungle was a real bitter/sweet affair. Most of the time you were almost guaranteed to hook a carp or two, but the losses generally outweighed the successes. The main reason were those chains that anchored the boom, and in the time that I fished there I lost more than I landed. Nowadays we would all think seriously about fishing such a swim, but back then inability, naivete and most certainly greed clouded such

CARPING RE-CUT

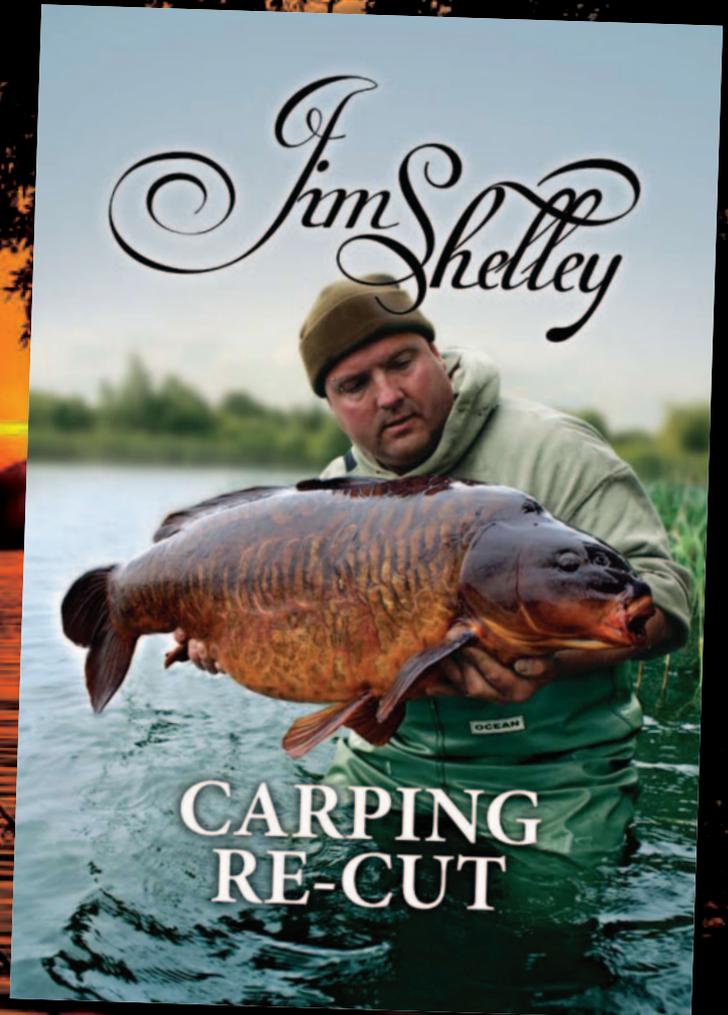
Jim Shelley

Jim Shelley is the UK's most prolific hunter of big carp. He is a carp fishing force of nature and no carp can withstand his pursuit for long. He has carved out a career in carp fishing with an iron will and perspiration, and this book is the physical embodiment of that drive. Every single word is testament to the fact that Jim won't ever give up. He taught himself to write so that he could genuinely say that he'd written this huge book unaided. That is just what he has done too.

Inside you'll find the truth... the whole truth. Nothing has been airbrushed and at times Carping Re-Cut can make for uncomfortable reading. It's gritty, it deals with difficult situations that Jim found himself on and off the bank. Let's not forget, throughout a portion of this book, Jim's wife Jane battled with cancer and if the strain took its toll, then Jim has written about the consequences, and left nothing out! Carping Re-Cut tells the story of a man driven to catch the biggest and best carp out there. There are colourful and touching moments along the way and of course, there are the fish! This book holds beautiful images of many of the fish that captured the hearts of carp men throughout the last decade or so. Eventually, Jim worked out how to catch them all, and the way that he did it is laid bare here for you to read.

So, join Jim on a journey that starts in 'bandit country' near Heathrow, passes east through Cambridgeshire and Norfolk before swinging back via Royal Berkshire, and plunging deep into the jungle that is the mysterious Colnemere, as Jim searches for the ultimate prize, the Black Mirror. One thing's for sure, it won't be dull!

At last the long awaited second book from carp fishing's No.1 angler is available direct from Bountyhunter Publications. Carping Re-Cut is the follow up to Jim's highly successful first book Carping Un Cut and is a mammoth size publication containing over 400 beautiful colour plates, exclusive stories and an incredible amount of huge carp from waters far and wide. Jim always was a great carp angler but over the past few seasons he has evolved



into the ultimate catching machine. Water after water, target after target and record after record have fallen to this sometimes controversial angler, nevertheless no one can deny his ability and no carp is uncatchable once Jim sets his mind to it. Jim's first book was a great read and it's sometimes hard for an author to match the quality of his first book, however this is not the case with Carping Re-Cut. This book is a revelation and no carp angler of any ability, age or status should miss out on what is definitely the book of the decade from the world's greatest carp angler.

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judgements.

It wasn't always doom and gloom, and a few months later I had one of those 'red-letter days', hooking five and landing three, the largest just a few ounces lighter than my PB.

The real red-letter day of that season came right at the end, the final weekend of the season (I'm sure I don't need to remind you guys about The Close Season). One Saturday in early March, me and my mate Porky decided to make the most of the pleasant spring sunshine, so took a couple of rods down to Campbell's to wile away a few hours. We set up halfway down the lake, in amongst the rhodies, and just chewed the fat, not really expecting any action.

By mid-afternoon that expectation was being fulfilled so I wound in and went for a stroll down to the pads. Standing in the main pads swim, with the island and the Jungle off to my right, I could see no real signs of any vegetation, just the odd leafless stalk dimpling the surface. Then a bubble popped to the surface, and another, twenty odd yards out amongst the lily stems. Fish? Another couple of bubbles popped up, ten yards to the left. Fish!

In very short order I was back with the rods and Porky, and within an hour or so we'd hooked three carp, both of us landing small commons and Porky losing a better fish down the snaggy channel to the left. Wow! Carp, in about three feet of water, in March – who'd have thought it?

The following weekend was the end of the season and it so happened that I'd already booked the Friday off work – what could go wrong? On Thursday night, what went wrong was a severe case of Delhi-belly, and I spent most of it to and from the loo. This was not a good thing, with the prospect of a half mile walk from the car to the swim, and no sign of a toilet anywhere. Come the morning I had a decision to make – spend the day at home, trotting between lounge and toilet, or go to the lake, trotting between rods and bushes. There could be only one winner.

As it happened, the night time movements seemed to have seen the worse of it over, and I made it to the swim with no serious problems. There was nobody there, obviously. I mean, who would be stupid enough to fish the pads at that time of the year?



Jungle mirror



End of season – 16lb 14oz.



End of season – 9lb 8oz.

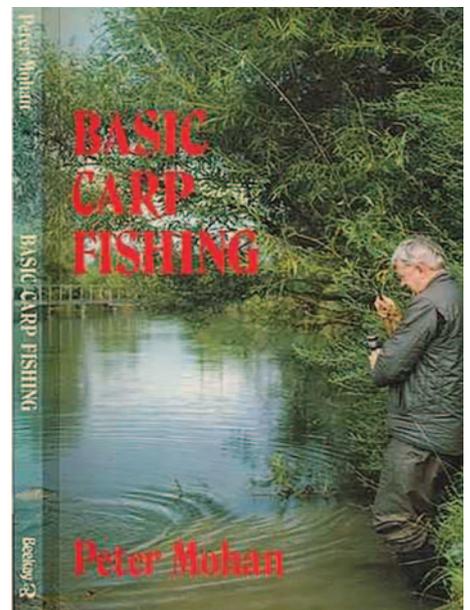


End of season – 12lb 12oz.

There was no initial sign of fish so I put a couple of baits in amongst the lily stems, close to where we'd caught the previous week, then just sat back and waited. Well, not exactly 'sat', more like sat up a tree peering out across the flat calm surface, in search of bubbles. By mid-afternoon there were no signs and I wondered if I was the stupid one, electing to fish the pads at this time of year. Then, from below my perch, I heard a squawking sound and, at the same time, saw a big vortex out near my bait. Events happened in quick succession – reel buzzing, line hissing, water splashing, angler dropping from a tree like a ripe coconut!

Considering the previous few seconds of mayhem, once I had the fish hooked everything was relatively calm, the fish no doubt just having woken from its winter slumbers. As it wallowed towards the net I could suddenly feel the previous night's problem raising its head, as it were. This was quite a decent fish and I was very scared of losing it...but I didn't, and into the net slid a very large, scaley, end of season carp.

It weighed 16.14 and I was jumping up and down like a manic Jack-in-the-box! I think I persuaded a passing dog walker to take some photos (which turned out better than previous attempts from members of the public), then slid the fish back. It was an hour or so before dark so, following a plan I'd already devised, I moved the gear a hundred yards or so back up



Basic Carp Fishing.



Laney!

the lake and set up in the Point for the last night of the season. I wasn't bothered whether I caught anything else – what a way to end my first season on the big lake!

Within an hour of casting out, and just before dusk, I'd caught two more carp – 12lb and 9lb – and that put the cherry on a mighty fine cake. I couldn't wait for the following season.

By the time June 16th came around a few things happened that would change my fishing dramatically – both in the short term and the long term. Firstly, the council and local fishing club decided that the Jungle should be more 'angler friendly' so, in the three months of the close season, they cleaved a path through the rhodies and installed a landing stage in there. Things were never quite the same after that, although I still had success in there.

Secondly, I bought a couple of books that blew the top off the carp angling world – Basic Carp Fishing by Peter Mohan, and Carp Fever. The

revelations in those pages made it feel like I'd been walking through my angling whilst wearing a scarf over my eyes. Now I had 4D vision and x-ray glasses! And one of those revelations were that carp liked tiger nuts. Nah, that can't be right, they don't taste of anything. Oh well, it might be worth a go...

So, over the last month of the close season, me and Keith boiled up some nuts and sprinkled them around the pads and along the rhodie covered margins. The reaction of the fish in the pads was mind blowing and I couldn't wait for the start of the season.

The Jungle was my first choice, but I knew that would be the same for a few people so, as a contingency plan, I fashioned a 'secret swim' in the dense rhodies to the left of the Point swim. Even if someone was fishing in the Point, they wouldn't have seen me, and so it was there that I set up on the morning of the 15th; the overhanging rhodies an umbrella to the

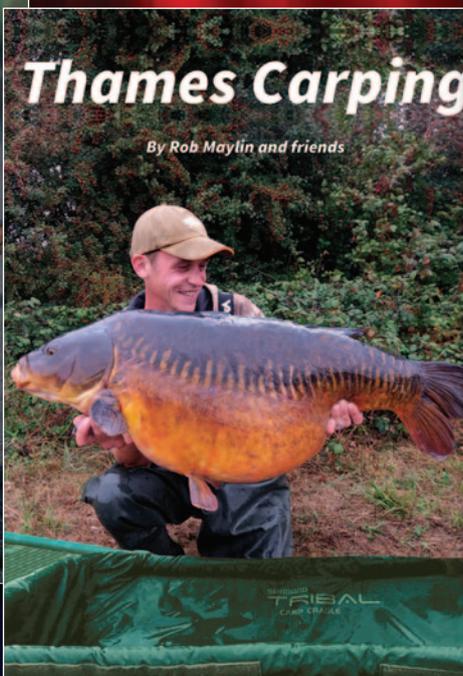
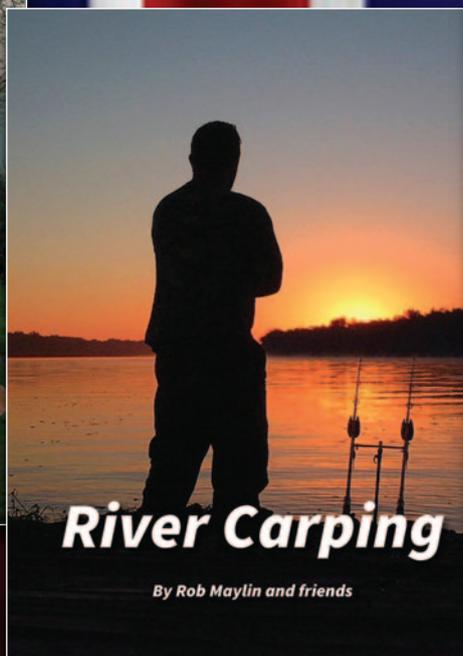
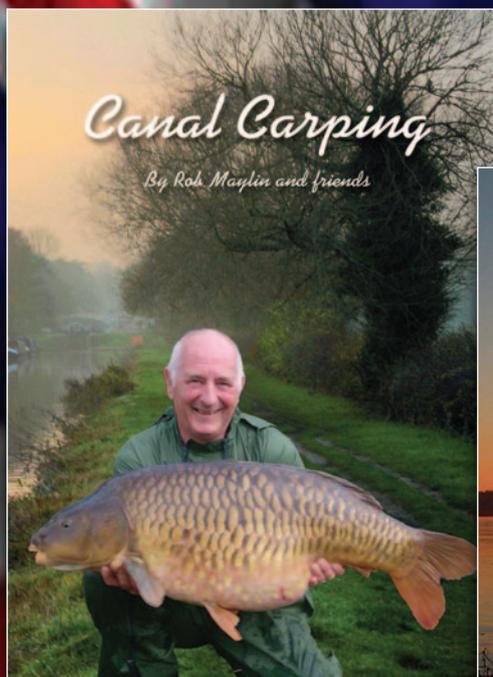
tiger nut scattered margins.

The third event that occurred before the start of that season was of little consequence initially, but would, ultimately, change everything for me. I took a walk, around midday, and happened upon a guy set up in the swim opposite The Jungle. The pads were no more than ten yards distant and were being agitated quite aggressively from below. I had a quick chat with the guy, mentioning the carp activity, and he smiled and picked up a bag of dog biscuits, then took a handful and 'pulted them out, which induced even more activity in the pads. Suddenly there was a hiss of line and an explosion of pads, and the guy jumped forward and picked up a rod I hadn't even noticed. The rod bent, the water foamed, and in short order a small common was engulfed in the net.

We both smiled, then I saw the Parkie driving round in his jeep, so pointed that out to the poacher. 'Cheers, mate,' he said, as he slid the

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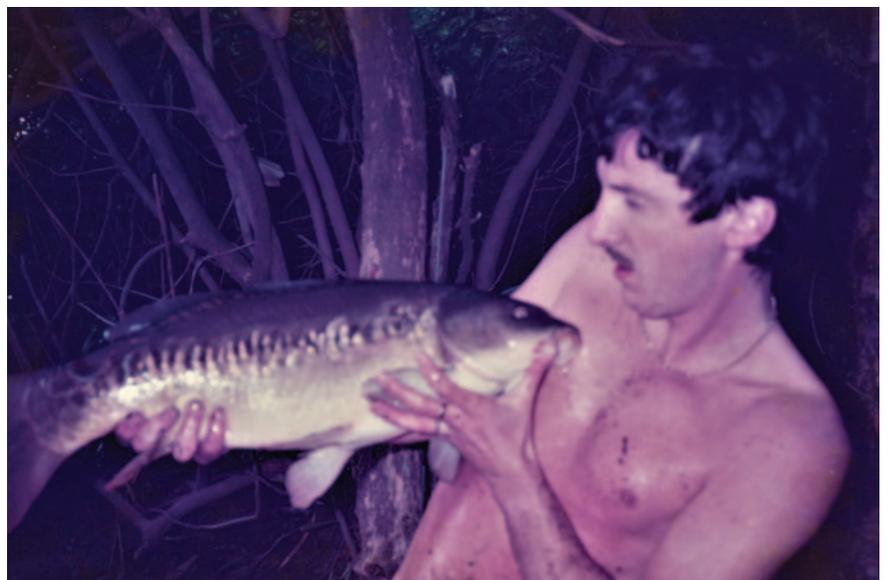


fish back and quickly broke down the rod. 'M' name's Dave!

And so it began

I returned to my swim and, within an hour, had poached my own, 11lb carp – on tiger nuts. The nuts proved a wonderful little edge over the next month or so, and I spent a few evenings float fishing the rhodie shrouded margins of the Point and the adjacent bay, invariably landing at least one carp before dusk.

On the occasions I managed to get into the Jungle I always had action, probably due to the previous introduction of the tigers, and on one memorable session I managed to land five out of seven fish hooked, including a beautiful linear of 16lb. We didn't



Float fished tiger nuts.

realise at the time (why would we?) but these fish we were fishing for were very special, and it transpired that there had been at least a couple of introductions of Leney's into the lake in the previous few decades. These fish had been stocked into other local ponds and, as was the way back then, had been 'rehomed' into the larger expanse of Campbell's. In classic Leney style, these fish never achieved huge weights but were very long lived and stunning looking beasts.

By the end of that season, Dave and I had fished together a few times and had decided, for the next season, to move on to pastures new. So, the following season, our adventures began at Pippingford Park and would take us to some of the best lakes in the land, with some of the best anglers. But that all started at Tilgate, and it's nice to look back at the people - before and after me - that became such good anglers and friends on those rhodie-lined banks.

Very happy days. ■



Leney's 16lb Jungle.



Leney's 9lb.



Leney's 16lb Lawn.

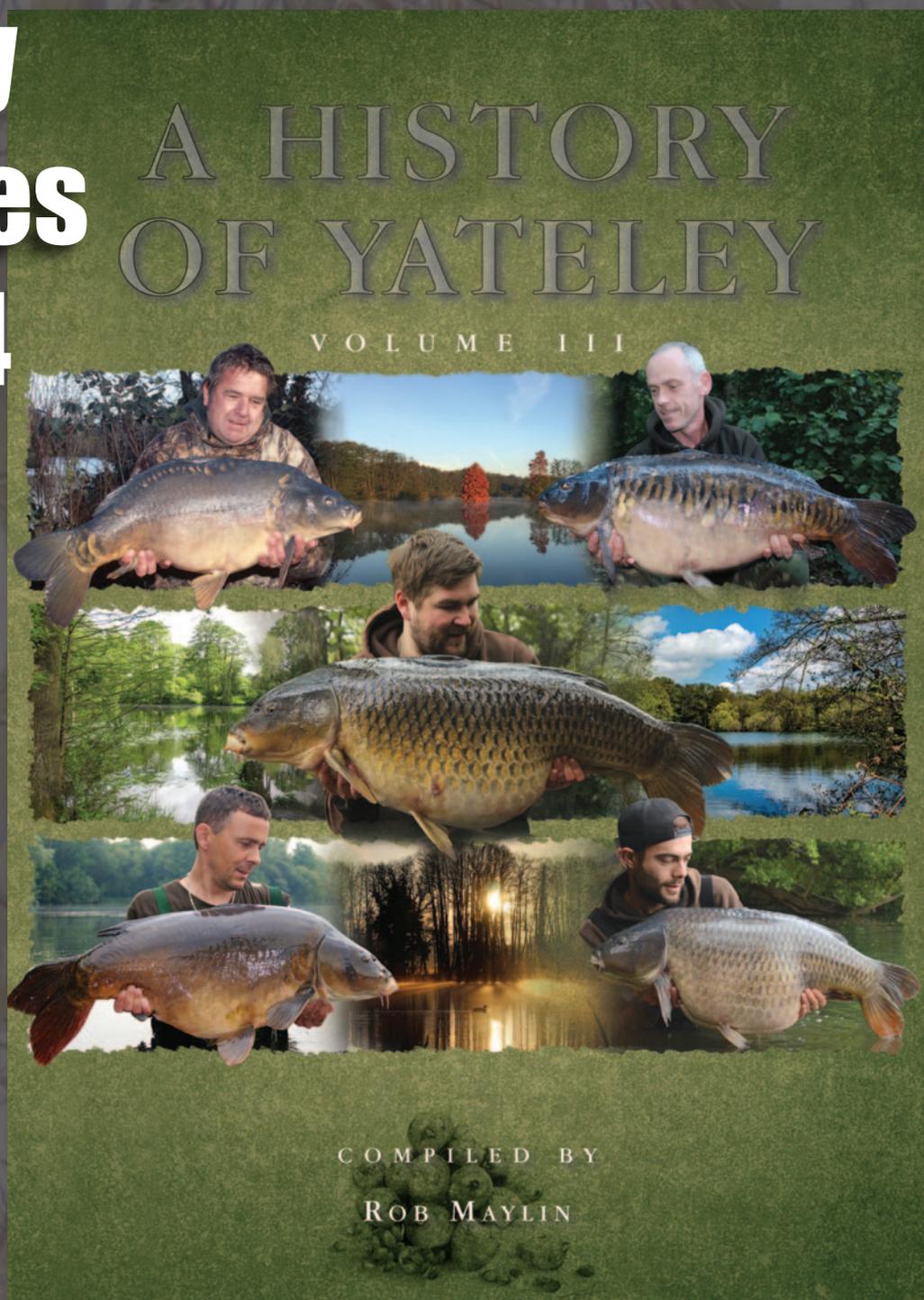
Yateley Volumes 3 and 4

In the time since the Cemex sell-off, Yateley has had a new lease of life. Although those legendary carp like Basil, Heather and their buddies are now long gone, the new stock has grown and returned Yateley to its former glory. Likewise, its banks may not now be trodden by the likes of Terry Hearn and me, but the anglers that fish Yateley now are just as passionate about the Yateley carp as we were 20 years ago.

Every lake has come on leaps and bounds in this time: The North boasts commons up to 54lb with a handful approaching 50. The Car Park too has numerous good forties. The Split Lake is a real eye-opener with a good head of big fish up to 47lb! You would never have dreamed it. The Pad Lake, South Lake and even the diddy little Horseshoe and Pump House all contain big fish. The Pad has numerous forty-plus.

Over the other side of the road there is a similar story: multiple forties in the Match, some beasts now in the Copse and The Nursery holding fish to 47lb and maybe bigger, as its anglers keep very secret squirrel about what goes on over there. The Nursery is certainly Yateley's secret jewel in the crown.

Hence the reason for this book... It's been six



years since the first two volumes, and the changes are phenomenal, the fish huge, and only living five minutes from the complex, I felt duty bound to record the history further on these lakes, the UK's true heritage waters. The format remains much the same: the page numbers continue through the volumes. Maybe in another ten years, there will be more history to record, even perhaps a Yateley British record... who knows? Now wouldn't that be something?

I have also decided to include the Yateley lakes on the edge of the old Cemex complex, these being Little Moulsham, Mill Lane, Swan Valley and Sandhurst. Each contain their own

treasures including a couple of fifties!

Because of the sheer size of this project and to do justice to all the lakes there will once again be two volumes.

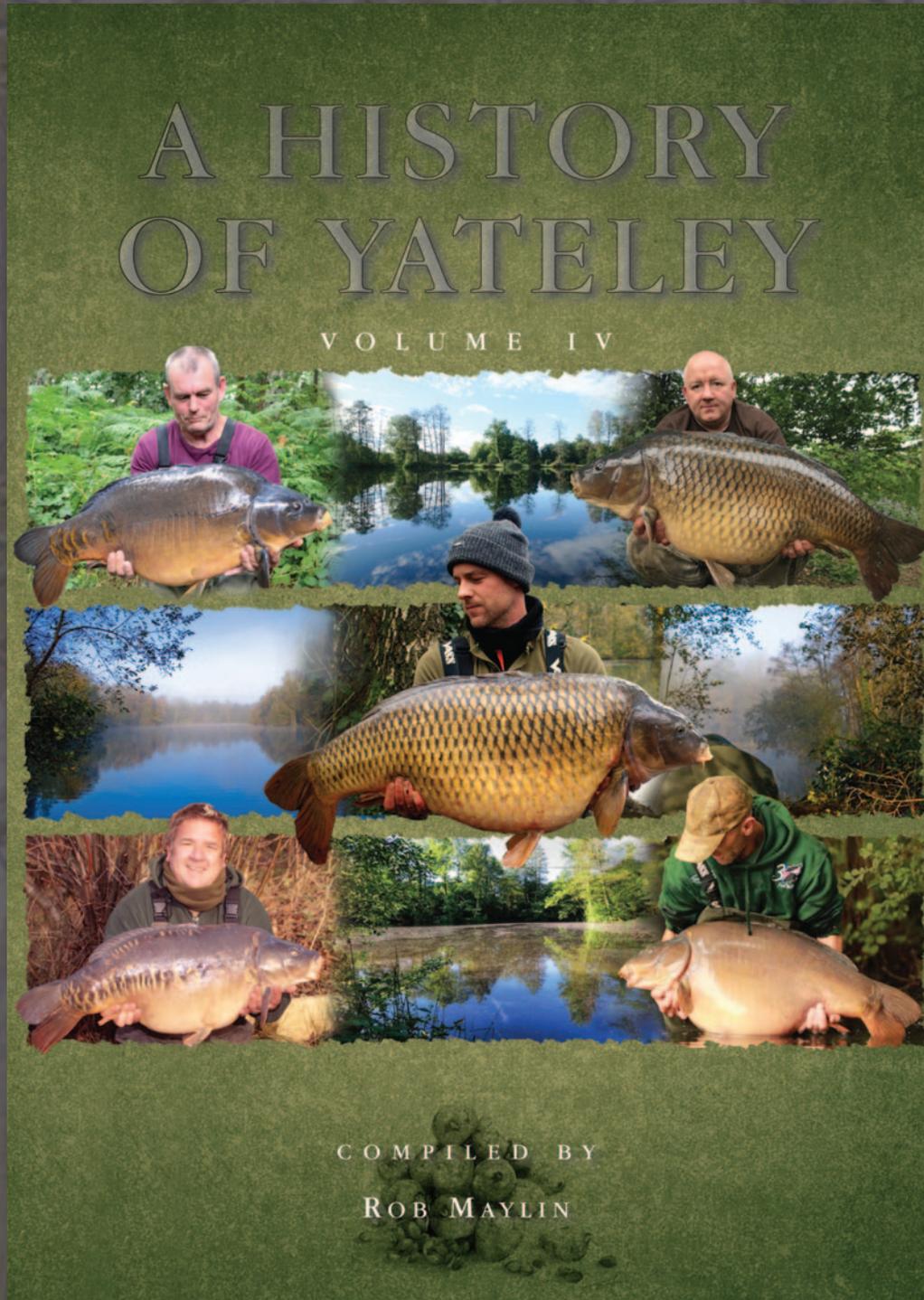
Volume 3 contains chapters on the North Lake, The Split Lake, Horseshoe and Pumhouse. The Pads Lake, Car Park, Moulsham and Mill Lane.

Volume 4 contains the chapters on The South Lake, Match Lake, Copse Lake, Nursery Lake, Sandhurst and Swan Valley.

There are some great introductory pieces from Martin Gardener, owner of Yateley West Fisheries and Ian Gray, Honorary Secretary of Farnham Angling Society, the owners of Yateley East, plus a chapter featuring the famous

Stoney and Friends MacMillan bashes each year. There are stock lists with photos of as many of the new residents as it was possible to get and chapters from the guys who fish there at present – ordinary guys with some great tales to tell of their captures on each of the lakes.

All this is combined with fantastic colour photography throughout, some amazing paintings of each lake and a host of special drawings commissioned for these volumes. These volumes are as much if not more of a work of art as the predecessors. The first two volumes were amazing and received worldwide praise... but dare I say, in my opinion, these two volumes could be even better? A massive thanks to all concerned, and long may Yateley continue! Long live the king of English carp fishing history!



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'Billy' the Mirror, Church Pool, Patshull

An Old Skool Tale by Tim Thornton

We have to go back some thirty-six years to start our story. To a time when imaginations dreamt of huge carp and mythical captures. Fuelled by tales from the Colne Valley and the Meres up north of thirty pounds plus carp and larger.

I was just a lad in my teens who was lucky enough to live a few miles from a beautiful old estate lake designed by Capability Brown for a Lord. The place was Patshull Park which comprised of the Great Lake, Church Pool and Lady Barbara's Pool all set in the grounds of a great hall.

In the summer of 1976 drought swept the country and a little bog was in danger of drying up and its

stock of carp being lost. As a result, some forward-thinking anglers rescued a large number of carp, and they were placed in the Great Lake. There they thrived in the twenty-six-acre estate lake. Some were later transferred in the late seventies to the Church Pool.

The now famous Church Pool was born. They went on to become some great looking large predominantly common carp and the lake was fished by some famous anglers over the years. But this little story is about a mirror carp named 'Billy'.

I'd been having a few carp out here and there setting little traps on the small cleaned off gravel spots around the edges of the lake. I figured this was a good way to trip up the larger and more wary residents of the lake. Carp were caught from open water, but the margins offered a better chance in my opinion, and it was perfect for a particle presentation which seemed to be the best method at the time.

The lake was plagued by small bootlace eels, so boilies weren't really a viable option at times, coupled with wary carp made fishing hard at times. The lake was mainly an after dark or early morning water as is often the case with pressured carp. Believe me, these were pressured carp and some of the best carp anglers in the midlands and other areas were fishing for them. I learnt a lot from local legend the late John Freeman who was an amazing angler.

One particular weekend I decided to fish from the wooden platforms which ran up the left-hand side of the lake from the swans nest pads swim to the end board by the big willow tree at the end of the reeds. The platforms had been created originally for fly fishers when the water was a trout



fishery in the late 70s then they were adapted in the early 80s when the lake originally opened as a day ticket. It contained a few carp then.

I'd been baiting a few spots with hemp and tigers. But these spots weren't the usual spots. I'd noticed a lot of the carp were feeding really close to the reeded borders of the lake which ran behind the platforms a lot of the time. I'd figured this was a relative safe zone and not fished for obvious reasons as the spots were surrounded by boards. There was one such spot that was fishable though, and that was a spot situated to the right of the entry landing stage as you walk onto the boards and between the boards and the swans nest pads swim. The area was choked with weed, but the carp were clearly visiting it a lot given the number of small cleaned off patches of gravel hidden by the ever-moving weed.

I set up camp on one of the platforms which meant securing a Wavelock Nubrolly to the boards with rope and sleeping under this on my MK1 KM Bed Chair. I then used a Gardener rod pod placed on the other side of the board. Another rod was hidden in the reeds and secured to a rod rest. It was this rod that was going on the small gravel spot between the boards and the swans nest pads swim. This meant if I got a run on this rod, I'd quickly put on my chesties and wade a short distance in 2ft of water to the rod which would be melting off. That was the plan anyway.

I set up the rig on this rod. Two large balanced tigers using cork inserts on a light line hair rig. Size 6 Drennan super specialist hook, to a 6-inch 11lb Sylcast Sorrel hook length and 2 oz fixed lead. The line was 11lb straight through. I waded out to a small gravel patch in the weed some 6ft in front of the weeds and 2ft wide and deep. Placed the rig on the gravel which balanced perfectly and sprinkled a handful of tigers and a couple of pints of hemp. Then covered it in weed and led the line back to the rod in the reeds covering the line in gravel as I went.



The rod was a home built North Western SS5 with an FPS reel seat and fuji rings. Mitchell 300 reel fished with the clutch loosened baitrunner style. Bite indication was a Les Bamford converted Optonic. The whole lot was strapped to rod rests, so it wasn't going anywhere. I prepared for the night ahead.

I'd done a couple of nights in the week from memory so was feeling a little tired. The night was clear with a moon and as I dozed off, I was thinking about carp and captures. I woke about 2am and as I was lying on the bedchair on the boards noticed ripples from the nearby spot near the reeds. To this day I cannot remember if I then dreamed it or whether in the moonlight of a clear still night, I saw a feeding carps tail breaking the surface as it fed on the baited spot. I drifted off back to sleep.

At around 2.30am the converted Optonic burst into life on a one toner. I quickly put on my Ocean waders and waded out to the rod which was melting off. I sorted my rod out and then a very slow weed choked battle ensued. Losing and gaining an inch at a time. After what seemed an eternity

the carp which had run straight through the pads was on the surface in front of me and I was up to chest height in my waders.

I pushed my North Western 42" net under the massive clump of boiling water and weed and netted the lot. I really wasn't sure if I'd got the carp until I pulled away all the weed in the torch light. When I did, I saw a large dark big, framed mirror and instantly knew what I had caught. My mind still doubted it, but all doubts were quickly diminishing as I tried lifting the net. Its weight confirmed it in my mind. I waded back to the bank with my catch.

I weighed her at 29lb 4oz and confirmed the identity of the carp as 'Billy' the largest carp in the lake at the time.

The carp was sacked for a few hours and photographed with my Zenith 11 SLR 35mm camera on 400 ASA slide film. The photos were taken on the grassy area by the road as was the tradition, surrounded by friends and fellow carp anglers. 'Billy' was the lake record carp for a number of years and a very large carp for the time in 1987. ■

Billingsgate in Focus

By Kris Ford

“Do me another article please and with some Billingsgate shots” said Rob. So here goes.

So why Billingsgate? I can't remember when I first heard the term nor have any clue as to who or which area the term came from. I do have a suspicion that it was perhaps Jim Gibbinson in one of his erudite moments. Billingsgate itself is an historic and huge fish market originating in South-East London. The reference to a “Billingsgate” photo is obvious

but whether due to jealousy, concern for fish welfare or just wry humour is unclear.

It's best to start with explaining how and why. I didn't even have a camera at the beginning, that being 1967 when I started fishing only for carp at the ripe old age of 16. I'd been fishing since the age of 3 but it wasn't until I caught a four pound common from the now iconic Priory Park that I was infected with the carp syndrome.

Back then books were as thin on the ground as honest Politicians, Richard (Dick) Walkers “Stillwater Angling” was bought and digested within a day. A year later “Carp” by Jim Gibbinson was published and devoured with the same tenacity.

Luckily Jim lived in Southend so I managed a few conversations with him which was a great help, he even put me onto another famous Essex carp lake which had anonymously



Chris Ball – off the top no doubt, courtesy Chris Ball.



Dick Gayner – Waveney G lake 1972.



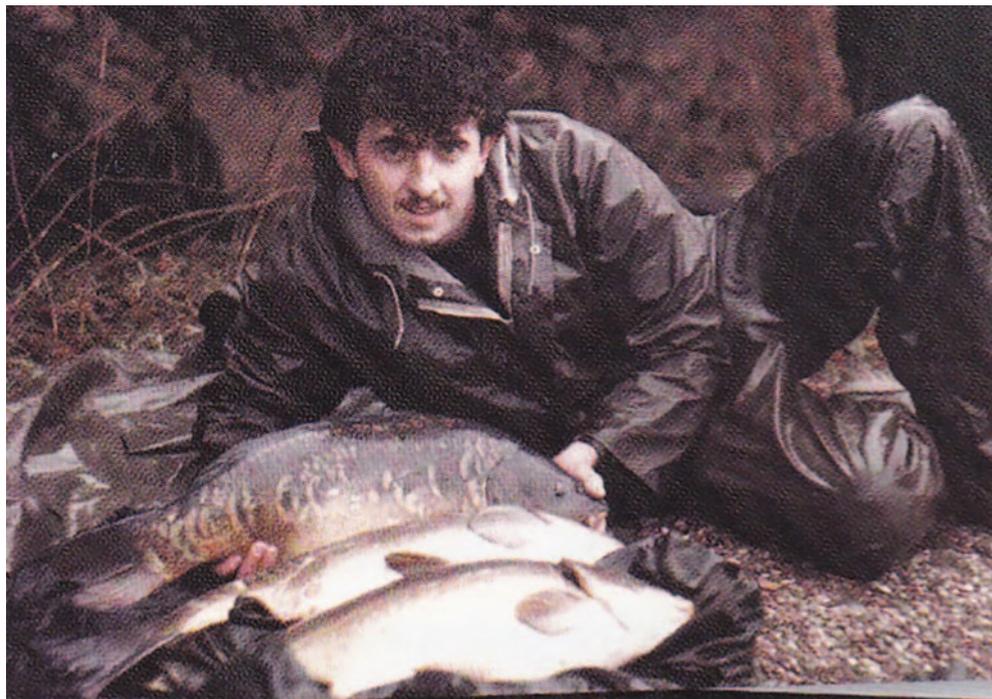
Rod Hutchinson – doing it at Redmire, courtesy Kevin Clifford.



Kevin Clifford, gollowing Hutchy's example, courtesy Kevin Clifford.

featured in his book.

As mentioned countless times by others from the early Old School era your first challenge was to find Carp to fish for. As referenced by Frank Warwick' excellent book "Every Bit of Blue". Although ponds, lakes and reservoirs abounded across the country very few of them actually held carp in stark contrast to 2021 where just about every drop of water has a head of carp and frequently too many fish. The then close season March – June was torture except for the opportunity it gave for exploration. No Interweb or Google in those days, one had to invest in Ordnance Survey (OS) maps 1" to the mile for detail. Every bit of blue on the maps was traced in the real world hours upon hours and hundreds of miles were clocked up each weekend. Who owned or managed each pool, club, land owner, farmer etc. Did it hold carp could they be fished for and at what price, all questions in need of



Frank Warwick – young Frank, courtesy Frank Warwick.



The author in a classic early Instamatic shot.



The author, everything but the kitchen sink in this one.

serious pursuit. Some interesting conversations with owners followed, one in particular sticks in my mind. I had stopped at a larger than average house in Ascot. A knock on the door was met with the home owner answering and joining me on the gravel drive. After a brief introduction I asked about the lake. Somewhat perturbed he asked just how I knew about his lake, I told him it was on the OS map. "On a map!" was his response as if OS had no right to put

it there. I showed him the map and my diary which as a non angler himself he was quite impressed with. This resulted in him giving me permission to roam his grounds and if I wanted to fish whenever I wanted.

So having invested countless hours, thousands of miles and endless dead-ends scouring the countryside in a quest to find carp actually catching them would hopefully not be quite so arduous. I started a scrap book with cuttings from Angling

Times, Anglers Mail and any other publication that mentioned the capture of a carp. It was a monstrous tome A1 size I think and held the very smallest column inches to centre page spreads. I wasn't interested in catching the same fish I just wanted to know where they were. Ultimately I gave the scrap book to the Oracle and Master Historian Chris Ball.

It soon became obvious that a camera was pretty much essential. As catch and release was the way to go

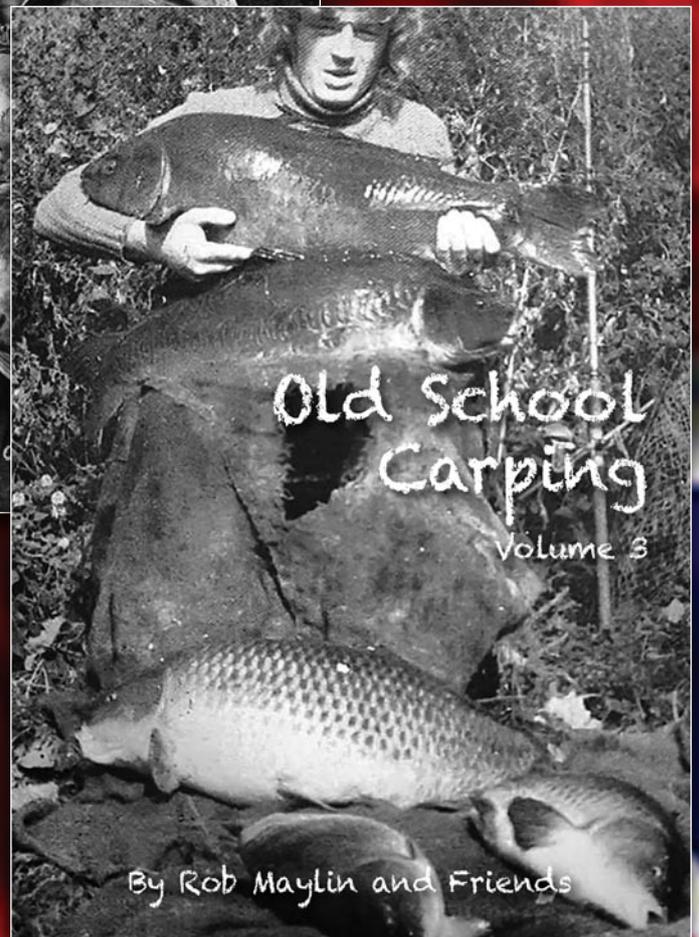
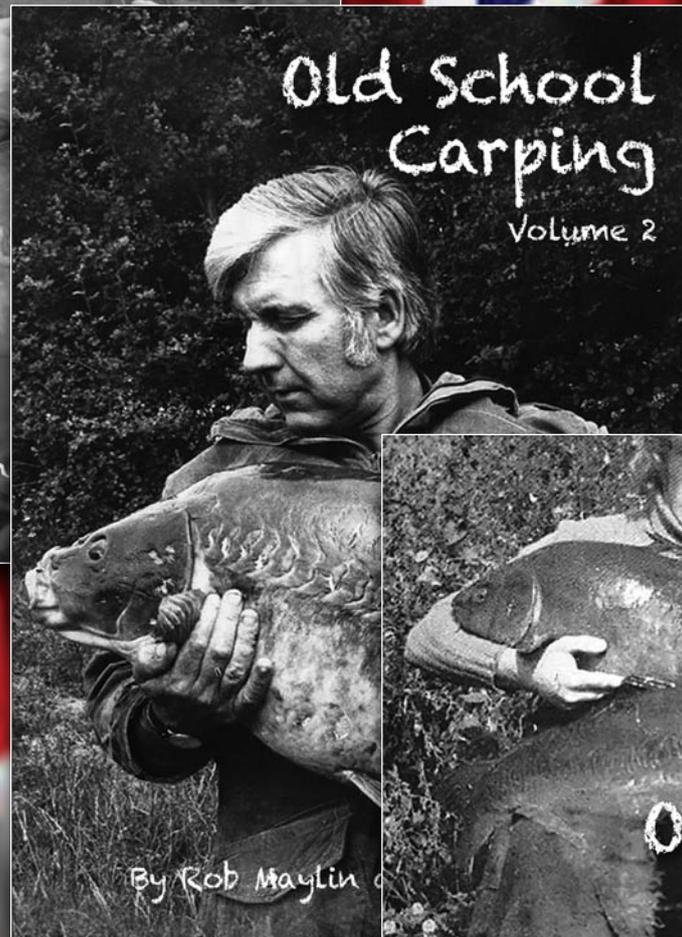
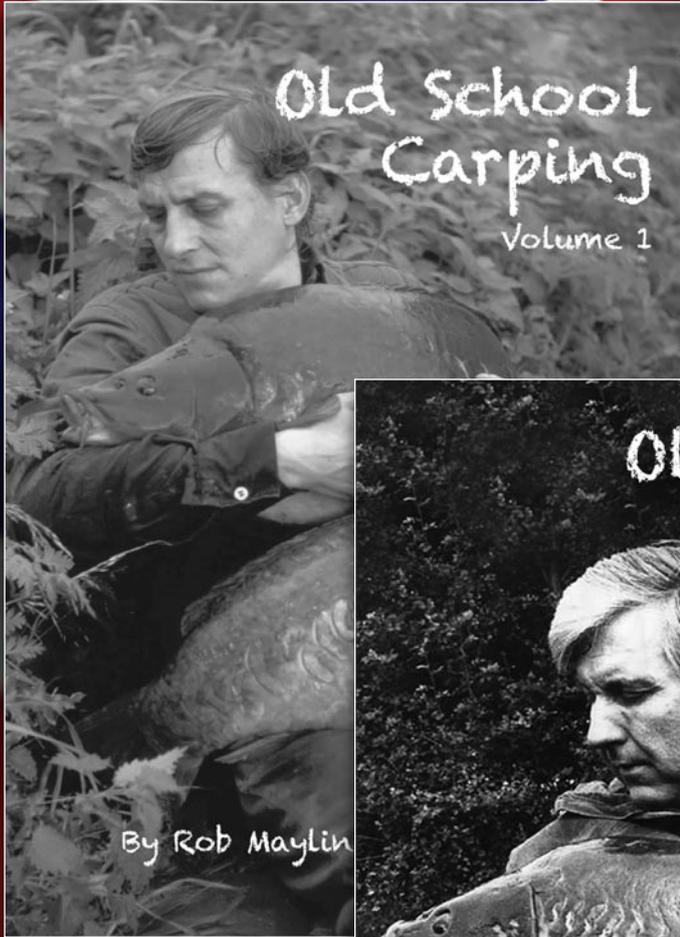


The author, unsure about the photographer.



The author, another set from Jim Gibbinsons tip off.

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The author, this fish strikes a pose for the camera.



The author, Billingsgate from another bit of blue.

and photo's no matter how bad enabled family and friends to get a glimmer of why carp were rapidly becoming one of my obsessions. Having drooled over the Redmirre fish pictures in Dick's book a camera became a must. At this point I knew even less about photography than carp fishing and my first (poor) choice was the ubiquitous Kodak Instamatic. An artists sketch would capture more detail and sharper focus but hey-ho it was better than nothing, just. My father had died when I was 15 and my mother knowing how he also loved fishing found amongst his belongings a 35mm film Ricoh Wide, circa 1950/60'. A very good camera which she gave to me and so I moved up a notch or three in my photographic armoury.

All very well having a good camera but a truly essential requisite was someone holding it who knew how to take a photo. Remember here that these were the days of rolled film with

just 12, 24 or 36 exposures available. With the delay of at least a week in getting the film processed and printed there was little room for multiple shots of the same fish(es). Added to this is the trauma of the camera person not having a clue, only proven when the prints came back. Some people are just miserable buggers I know but that is often the reason why many photo's even today why so many anglers stare apparently in anger at the camera. The mind questioning; is he too far away, is he too close, is it in focus, has he cut my head off, or the fishes head or tail or all five? And so another necessity arose, a tripod and self take photo's.

Sadly the Ricoh didn't survive my apprenticeship of tripod photography when one day the lesson of tripod stability in wind was driven painfully home. Luckily for me it was about this time that I made the acquaintance of Dick Gayner. We met in Going Bros of Southend, that Mecca of all things

fishy and especially at that time Carpy. We talked rod blanks and lots of other stuff amongst which was a suggestion to join the BCSG and a brief lesson in SLR (Single Lens Reflex) cameras and photographic tips about depth of field etcetera. And so I obtained my first SLR a real heavyweight, literally, the Russian Zenith E. A modest but very adequate camera capable of producing some very good photo's. My eternal thanks Dick.

So having explained my evolution in carping photography hopefully the rest will make more sense. I trust that anyone reading this article needs no telling how fraught the capture of a single carp can be let alone a multiple catch. Hours, days, weeks, months and even years before the adrenalin of success puts your heart and lungs into a state of meltdown. Now what do you do? In those far off days there was no commercial interest in "fish care" but we had no interest in harm-

ing our captures. Hessian sacks were the most frequent choice by anglers to keep the fish safe, preferably loose weave so as to allow a flow of water to the fishes gills. These came from various sources but from the early days I chose to make my own from builders hessian. It was perfect, available to buy by the yard, that's nearly a metre, and easily sewn along the edges with very strong twine. As long as you dried them out thoroughly they would last for years. If not they would rot imperceptibly, unnoticed until one day you went to lift a sack out of the water only to find it empty, as happened to a friend of mine.

Wet hessian sacks produce a lovely organic smell and being thick make a very satisfactory unhooking mat. First choice was always thick, long, lush green grass, rarely seen around lakes nowadays, and with a sack on top of that the fish were nurtured. Any wounds would be dressed with Vaseline and if any scales were missing they could be gently slid back into place on the fish' flanks. Any responsible angler would check any sacked fish frequently and keep them sacked for the shortest time possible.

"Billingsgates" with multiple captures weren't always contrived. It is quite common to catch two or even three fish in quick succession which would perhaps necessitate some form of Billingsgate. On red letter days I personally have had little time for unhooking between runs before the next rod was away.

Today I rarely photograph any fish which I guess to be under twenty pounds unless they are of particular interest and then it is only a mat shot. Sadly bad anglers have caused the use of sacks to be more or less outlawed. Irresponsible use recently caused the death of a 30lbs+ fish on a local club water. Sacks are now banned thanks to some fool who shouldn't have been allowed on the bank. This anonymous Noddy was not trying to create a Billingsgate merely waiting for daylight and couldn't be bothered to secure the cord on the sack properly to the bank. Nor the balls to seek help to recover the lost fish and its sack prison. NO photo is ever worth more than the fish. If you're Billy-no-mates or can't be bothered to buy an adapter for a bank stick or whatever then don't fish at night. The same goes for lights,

although sometimes necessary if you are one of those that has to have a lighthouse strapped to your head its probably best that you curl up in the foetal position in the sleep system in your house until morning.

It appears that Rod Hutchinson and I started taking Billingsgates around the same time. I possibly started earlier but of course Rod was doing his bigger and better at Redmire, swine. We certainly weren't the first as the 1914 photograph shows a display truly worthy of the fish market moniker. Given the date they were probably all taken home for food to be shared amongst the neighbourhood. Of course it wasn't until the enlightened attitude of Dick Walker in the 1950' that the concept of catch and release started to be accepted and grow into the fish care that we have today, except in the match fishing fraternity. It is most likely that those of us fortunate to catch more than one or two carp at a time took greater care of all of the fish than some people do with a single fish today. Many enlightened clubs are now insisting that members have an unhooking mat some with minimum dimensions. The big problem with this tokenism is that



The author, the same bit of blue, halcyon days.



The author with a birthday brace

these Sui-Slides as I call them the anglers don't have a clue or care. An inch of foam wrapped in some waterproof fabric just becomes a slide for the fish to slide off and flap about in the gravel. I couldn't begin to count the number of fish I've seen on club lakes with gravel rash on their shoulders and flanks.

I suspect that Billingsgate type photo's are now firmly entombed in the halcyon days of the past. Those of us who had the joy to experience those far off days of quiet bank sides and multiple catches should guard and keep those memories in a safe places of reflection. None of the above musings should be taken or used to deride or scorn the practice, there is no right or wrong it is just the way things were after so much effort. Like all history it is to be learned from just like the switch from killing fish to catch and release following those cringe worthy pictures of 30lbs carp having been gaffed. One thing I can say with certainty is that I know that any and all fish that I've caught and photographed all were returned safely and swam off strongly none the worse for wear. In fact some with spawning scrapes and the like were actually given some appropriate treatment before being released to grow and be captured by others. ■

(Right). ick another member of the Gibbinson dynasty.



The author, night time photo's do work.

My Introduction to Carp Fishing

By Lee Fisher

With a name like Fisher, I guess I was always destined to become a fisherman. Furthermore, my father and grandfather were also fisherman so the die was cast. My earliest memories of going fishing, although not taking part, were when my dad used to take me with him on early morning trips to a local Sussex lake, where he would float fish for Bream and Roach. I had no idea where the lake was, not being able to see over the car dashboard on the half hour journey there, but clearly remember arriving in a small car parking area as it was next to a huge vertical sandstone cliff face. Well, it seemed huge to a small six year old boy at the time. I remember my dad clambering up the sandstone wall, disappearing behind some

bushes and then reappearing right on the top and waving back down, urging me to climb up too, which was completely out of the question being only knee high to a grasshopper at the time. The walk to the lake involved a trek back up the road, over a stile, a quick march across a dew covered field and down a path to an old boathouse. I would watch him casting his float into the dawn mist whilst I would mould his fresh bread bait into little dough balls and eat them. There were a couple of other ponds in the area he used to fish and on one trip I remember wandering off into the field behind the lake to see what I could find. Don't go too far, I remember my dad calling out as I wandered off into the early morning mist. Five minutes later I was hopelessly lost, visibility was only about twenty feet and I had totally lost my bearings. Every direction I went was

just dew soaked grass and no sign of the lake. In the end I had to concede defeat and call to my dad who luckily heard the faint distant pleas from his young son and directed me to safety. Even to this day my dear old dad still likes to remind me of the time I got lost in a field. On another occasion my dad asked me if I would like to go night fishing with him. This seemed like a proper adventure as it involved him sitting it out in darkness whilst I was tucked up in a sleeping bag inside a small tent. This was around 1967 and people rarely fished at night in those days but my dad had read Still Water Angling and said the best time to catch a big fish was at night. He was right because sometime during the night I heard him calling me to bring the torch, so I stumbled out into the darkness to see him battling with a monster on the end of his line. As instructed, I shone the torch on the water beyond the waiting net to see a huge fish wallowing around. Unfortunately, the fish somehow got away just short of the net. I was spellbound, what type of fish was that dad, I excitedly asked. Carp was the rather solemn reply.

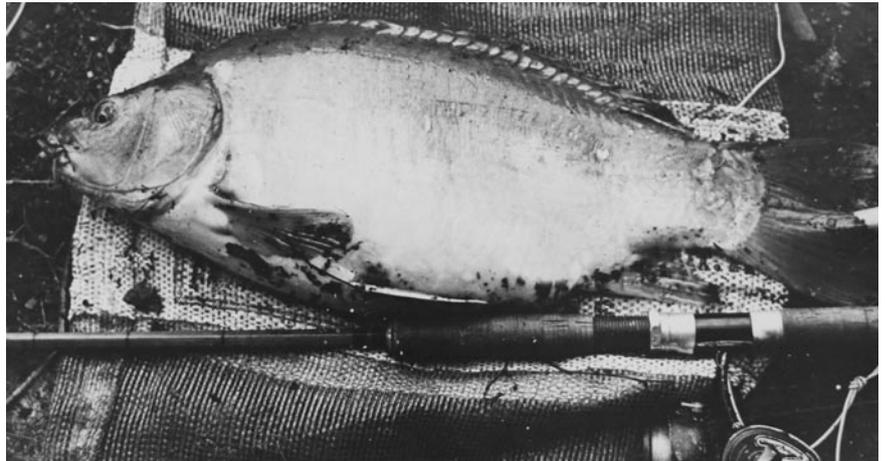
That moment remained etched in my memory and another incident impressed me further still. I was on another of my customary wanders whilst my dad was fishing and spotted a huge fish laying motionless on the lakebed. I crept up for a closer look as it was only a few feet out in shallow water. It was a monster so I excitedly scampered back to my dad to tell him the news, virtually dragging him to the spot. He seemed less excited than me, especially when he looked to where I was pointing and announced 'Its only a log'. No dad it's a big fish, look, look. I exclaimed and after a closer look from a different angle he decided it was a fish but laying there as still as a log. We realised then that the fish was dead so my dad



1966 – First time!

fetched a branch and managed to drag it onto the bank. The fish was indeed huge and one of the original old wild carp. This was the first carp I had ever seen on the bank and I can clearly remember the occasion even today. I never did see my dad land a carp in those early days, although he caught a few over the years including an absolute beast. In fact it could possibly have been a record at the time of capture, let me explain. The record at the time was Dick Walkers 44lb common from Redmire, everybody knew that. What my dad didn't realise was the difference between king carp and the wild carp which inhabited all the Sussex ponds. These 'wildies' rarely reached double figures, a six pounder being a good fish. After years of trying my dad finally landed the lakes big fella after an epic night time battle. It bottomed out his small 14lbs Samson spring balance scales with a heavy thud, a potential record fish at the time.

Around 1973, my dad joined a syndicate lake in deepest Sussex and I kept hearing the stories from his carping exploits and was chomping at the bit for a go at these mythical monsters. I had by then started fishing with my school mates, but living on the south coast near Brighton, I was limited to sea fishing, but it got me started. After constantly badgering my dad, I finally got the chance to go to the syndicate lake. We went just for the evening and I caught my first freshwater fish, a small eel. This was the turning point for me. I fell in love with the place instantly. It was and still is the most beautiful lake I have ever fished and I knew where I wanted to be. A later evening trip resulted in a bream for me and a blank for my dad. He had been fishing mainly weekend sessions with a couple of whole week holidays at the lake. This seemed like proper fishing to me, camping up and spending quality time alongside the water. I was used to heavy sea fishing tackle, big hooks, strong lines, strong tides, all to catch silly little fish. This carp fishing was a whole new game, 3 rods sitting neatly in their rests. Electric bite alarms, a giant umbrella to sleep under all set up in the middle of the



(Top) 1965– First carp – 9lbs.
(Centre) 1976 – 9lb self-take.
(Bottom) 1976 Furnace Dam end.



1976 – First double 15lbs.

most tranquil of surroundings. After badgering my dad to take me to the lake overnight we set a date for early September. This was back in 1975 and with my 14th birthday approaching I was lucky enough to receive some early presents, a large umbrella with plastic sheet sides and a sleeping bag.

My first night session arrived and we set up in adjacent swims about twenty yards apart. I was so excited I couldn't wait to get the two rods cast out and set up the umbrella, something that didn't take too long as I'd been practising in the garden leading up to the trip. The bait was tinned new potatoes, taken out of the tin of

course. I'd been briefed on the set up, a section of biro tube slid up the line, pull line through centre of potato with baiting needle. Tie on hook, put a cube of breadcrumb on bend of hook and slide potato down to rest on crust. Finally slide biro tube down into top of potato to stop line cutting on cast. Proper old school free lining techniques and a far cry from the worm on the hook I'd been used to. My dad assured me that this was the method to catch only carp as nothing else could get such a large bait in its mouth and it seemed sound logic to me. My dad's old gear was now my new gear and I was proud of those cane rods and ancient fixed spool reels. As evening drew in, I watched those silver foil indicators with intent but nothing moved and soon it was time to sleep under the stars.

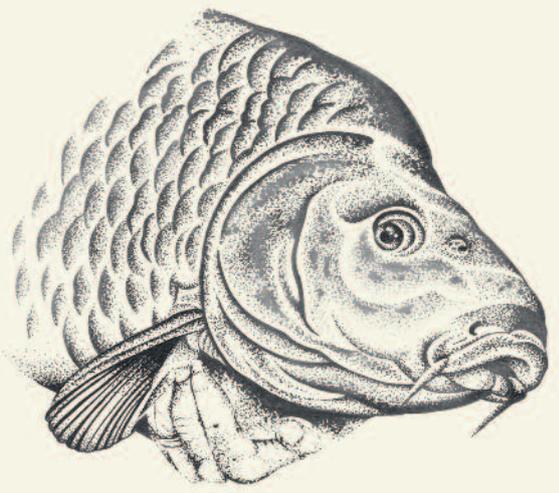
Sometime in the night I heard a commotion from my dad's swim and made my way along the path just in time to see him land a fish. It was a mirror carp of around 5lbs, the first carp I'd seen on the bank, well, live one anyway. To me it looked huge and I couldn't believe it only weighed around 5lbs. My dad would only weigh fish if he thought it would break double figures but on my insistence he did weigh this one. See, 5lbs was his comment as he pointed at the scales. I was gobsmacked, what would one of the fabled doubles look like. The next morning after breakfast my dad nipped off home to do some work but would be back in the evening, leaving me to happily fish on my own for the day.

By lunchtime with no bites coming to the spuds, I reeled in one rod and put on a legered piece of bread-flake. I soon caught several bream before the silver foil smacked up to the rod and the handle on the old Intrepid Elite began to spin backwards at a rate of knots. I picked up the rod and began to 'play' a fish for the first time as I had never caught a fish that had pulled back. It's funny because I'd practised this moment in my head many times but now it was happening it just flowed naturally. When it pulled hard I let it take line under a controlled backwind but always kept an even pressure. I kept calm and all went according to plan and the fish was in the margin before too long. Then I picked up the small, round bamboo landing net and realised it

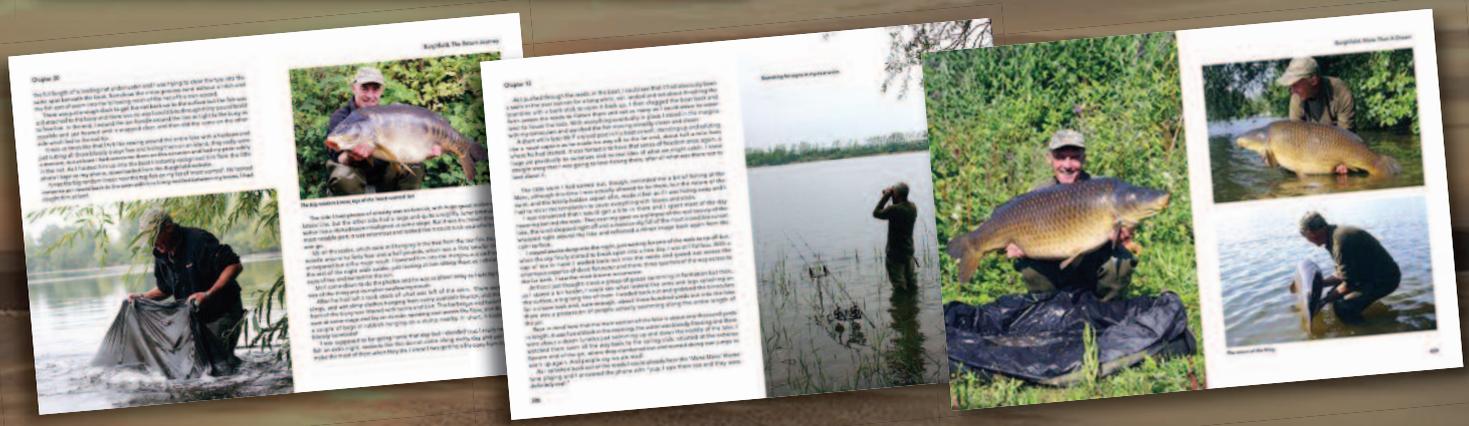
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Fine Lines

Dave Lane



Now available direct from Bountyhunter Publications is a signed copy of Dave Lane's fourth book, Fine Lines. Whether you are an avid fan and following on from Dave's first books or delving into his world for the first time, you are bound to be entertained, amazed and left wanting yet more of his adventures. Together with his faithful hound, Padwar, he has travelled the land in search of monster carp and catalogued his experiences in his own inimitable style, which is peppered with humour, disasters, bizarre occurrences, and, ultimately, success.



Dave's writing style has always focused on painting the entire picture so that you, the reader, can feel as if you are there on the bank beside him at all times, sharing in the experiences every step of the way. The big carp scene is a weird and mysterious place, and although Dave fishes right at the pinnacle of this strange world, he always seems to find time for a bit of fun along the way, so sit back and enjoy the ride. It's a must read for novice and experienced carp anglers alike.

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was going to be a tight fit but managed to scoop it in. It was another mirror carp, just like my dad's but looking much bigger. After unhooking the fish, I carried it along to where my dad had the scales and weigh sling hanging up between two trees. I can't relay how excited I was at this point, the first carp I had ever landed was the biggest fish I had ever seen, I thought I had broken the British record. The fish actually weighed 9lbs and again I couldn't see how something so big could weigh so little. With no other anglers around I wasn't going to get any evidence of this my first one but luckily my dad had left his camera behind so I laid the fish on the sling and did a few ground shots, not knowing if anything would come out. Then I released the fish back to its home and watched it swim away, what a moment, I was a carp angler. Unfortunately I was unable to visit the lake again that year, so I continued with the sea fishing until my next opportunity came along, which just happened to be the start of the new season the following year.

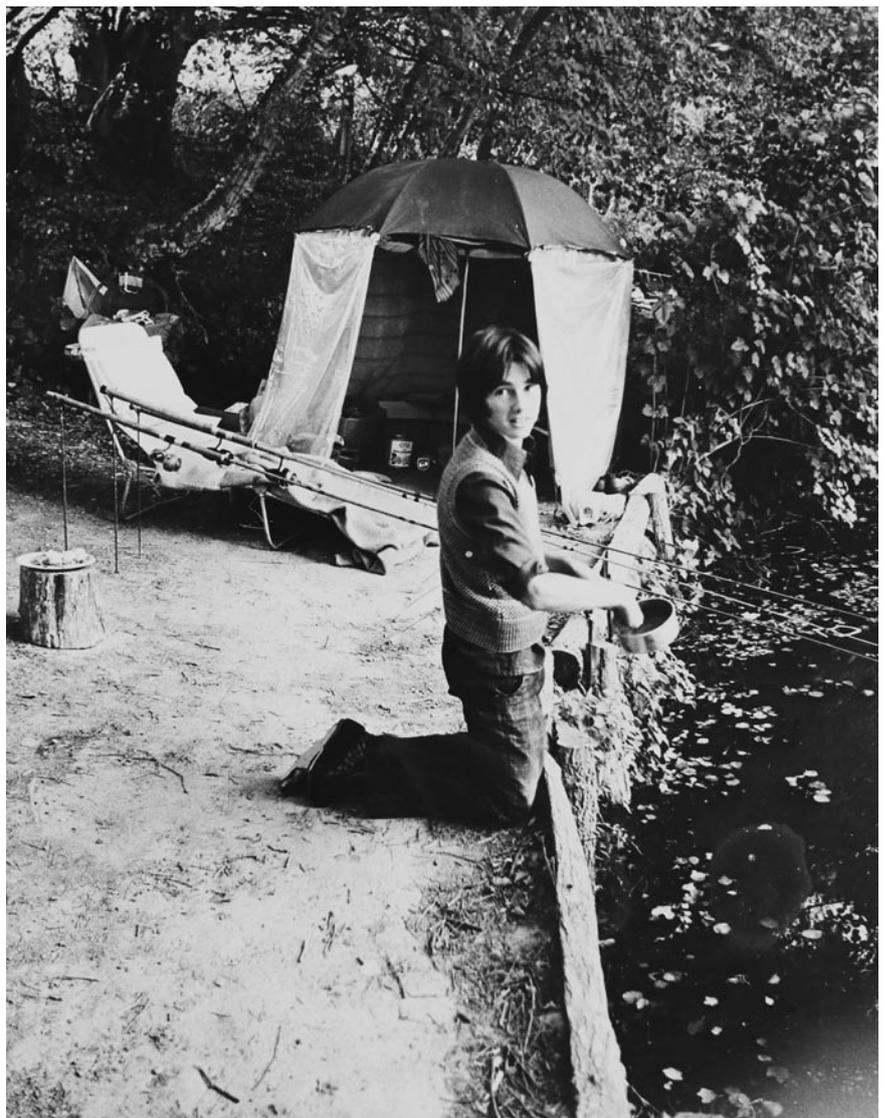
The syndicate had decided to discontinue guest tickets, but luckily my dad had managed to convince the owners to allow me to have a full membership ticket. I had managed to get a job, casual labour in a local factory after school, which allowed me to save money for a much needed cause. I remember going into the tackle shop to purchase some heron bite alarms and my first carp rod. It was a 10 foot bright yellow fibreglass job with a pound and half test curve. Later I was able to match this with the reel of the time, a Mitchell 300. As the summer approached I had a few practice set up sessions in the garden. Up would go the umbrella with the clear plastic sheeting sides. In would go the sun lounge bed chair. The two cane rods and new fibreglass rod with reels were placed on the heron bite alarms and I sat on my old seat tackle box admiring it all. My dad had also told me how wary and sensitive the carp were and in order not to scare them you had to creep around and blend into the surroundings. So out came the tin of matt black paint. Everything got a coat, the bank sticks, the bite alarms, the net handle and arms, the frame of the bed-chair. My dad even painted the white soles of his trainers. A stock of tinned potatoes and sweet-

corn were stored and we were ready to go, I tell you June 16th couldn't come around quick enough.

Two weeks before the start of the season we visited the lake to get the tickets and have a wander around. We were astonished to see two chaps already set up in their bivvies awaiting the 16th. Apparently the previous year all the favourite swims were taken 3 days before the off. This was 1976 and carp fishing was obviously getting very popular at the time. My dad and I had planned to fish the first three days and nights of the new season and had our preferred swims, so with this new information my dad decided it best we get to the lake 4 days before the off so we could get our spots. This was great news for me as it meant a whole week on the bank having previously only done a single night.

The departure day arrived and we loaded the car to the roof and arrived at the lake to find our two favourite swims were free. Once set up we could just sit back and take in the wonderful surroundings for four days. For me it was a proper adventure and shaped the way I would be for the rest of my life. Although I was with my dad, his chosen swim was about 150 yards walk through dense forest and I couldn't see him from my swim, so I was essentially on my own for most of the time. I learnt a lot in those four days, about the carp, and myself. I was feeding the fish at close range with floating crust and would be up at dawn every morning enjoying every moment.

As the glorious 16th approached and the rest of the anglers arrived, there was an air of excitement all around. Midnight arrived, the owner



1976 – Washing up.



1976 – Weedy top end



Furnace, personal best at 17lb.

blew a whistle and everyone cast out, full of hope. I had been feeding crust into darkness and the swirls continued so on the whistle I swung a free-lined cube of crust into the area expecting an immediate take. I had to wait an anxious few minutes before the line tightened and the rod jolted in my hand and as I struck the water exploded in front of me as a fish charged off. Bearing in mind it was the first time I'd hooked a fish in darkness, it went remarkably well and after a powerful and determined battle, I drew the fish over the waiting net. As I hauled the fish onto the bank I remember thinking this is an absolute monster. I rushed off into the darkness to fetch my dad who came around with the scales and camera and we weighed the magnificent fish. It was almost a true leather and weighed 15lbs, a magnificent moment in time for me. After the photographs were taken and my dad had disappeared into the inky blackness, I sat down to reflect. Eventually I gathered my senses and got round to casting out the rods with free-lined potatoes for the night with idea's of getting into bed. Within ten minutes I could hear a strange buzzing noise followed by a whirling sound as I looked out to see one of the reel handles spinning backwards. This fish fought equally well and when landed seemed of equal size. Off I went again to fetch my dad who did a repeat performance and we recorded a mirror of 13lb 8oz. I was completely worn out by then and did think about reeling in the rods for the night in case I caught another one. This was quite an achievement as we'd not heard of two doubles being caught so quickly in succession from the lake before, most of the fish being 5-8lbs. The catch even made the Angling Times and a local paper, I felt like a star. The rest of the trip resulted in a six and seven pounder on sweet corn for me and my dad had several fish to nine pounds.

I was well and truly hooked and couldn't wait to get back but as a 14 year old schoolboy with only a push-bike for transport, I had no way of getting the 27 miles to the lake. So visits were limited to whenever my dad could find the time for a trip, at least I had the sea fishing to keep me occupied. So I carried on with the sea fishing but then my dad asked if I fancied another go for the Carp, did I ever. The

next visit to the lake was a week-ender during August and we fished adjacent swims, my dad in the swim I'd spent the previous trip in with me in a small swim next door. The lake had got quite weedy since our last trip and we brought a pair of waders just incase. During the night my dad caught a fish which when he lifted it out he thought he'd caught the holy grail of carp, a twenty, but it was a five pounder wrapped in masses of weed.

The next morning he nipped off to work for the day and left me to fish on alone. The spuds were still producing the fish but I was keen to try a new bait I'd seen advertised named Hi-Pro, as used by legend of the time Gerry Savage down in deepest Kent. It was basically a powdered yeast mixture which when mixed with lake water, formed a stiff paste. So I mixed up some paste and replaced the free-lined spuds with link legered paste and cast out between the weed beds. I swiftly caught a six pounder followed by an eight pounder both which required me to don the waders to net them. When I had a third screaming run that morning I was getting used to what to expect and soon had the waders on again. This one seemed a bigger fish and when I scooped it in the net along with a mass of weed I could see it was a monster.

The scales revealed a weight of 17lb 12oz, I was gobsmacked. It was another mirror with a large frame and head but quite long and slim. With the absence of my dad I only managed to get a couple of ground shots before I returned it to the water. When my dad returned later that day and I told him the events he said see I told you spuds were the best bait. After revealing the new secret bait I had half a tub less to play with. We fished on but without result.

Earlier in the day a chap had popped in to see me and we had a very interesting conversation about baits. It turned out he was the local guru who had caught some very big fish from various waters on his secret wonder bait. He was obviously impressed with this young lad who was doing alright as he gave me the ingredients and told me how to make his wonder bait. The carp scene was all pretty hush hush in those days and anglers wouldn't tell you anything so



it was refreshing to be told this, not that I knew any different at 14 years of age. This chap did say to not tell anyone and keep it secret but I could tell my dad, just catch a few fish on it first then tell him, was his parting words. So doing as I was told it was off to the health food store with a shopping list. I felt guilty not being able to tell my dad who'd done so much for me over the years and pondered over what to do. Luckily he found the boxes of milk protein and wheat germ in my bedroom so it was off to the health store once again.

The new wonder bait was just that and it caught us a lot of fish over the coming years, along with the Hi-Pro paste. We played around with flavours and one of the best catchers was by adding mint sauce. Nearly fifty years later I still cant eat a roast lamb meal without closing my eyes and sniffing the aroma of the accompanying mint sauce, it takes me back to those early years every time.

Back to 1976 and my next trip of the year was during August, summer holiday time for a schoolboy and was to be a week session. My dad was



only able to fish at the weekend so this meant I would be left alone for five days and nights to fend for myself. Although the rules stated that no juniors were allowed to fish unaccompanied I think everyone had taken to me and turned a blind eye to it. It was a very secure place to be and I had got used to looking after myself and quite enjoyed my own company. My Mum was a bit concerned but I couldn't see the problem and so my dad and I loaded the car to the roof and off we went again. Six trips from the car to the swims later we were ready to go. My dad had decided he wanted to go in his favourite swim up in the weedy shallows, were as I wanted to try the deeper weed free area nearer the dam. All the cooking equipment was left in my swim which meant I was on cooking duty for the whole week, oh how I miss those tinned meals. The week ended up being a dream for me as I was in my element, enjoying every single moment and catching a lot of fish too

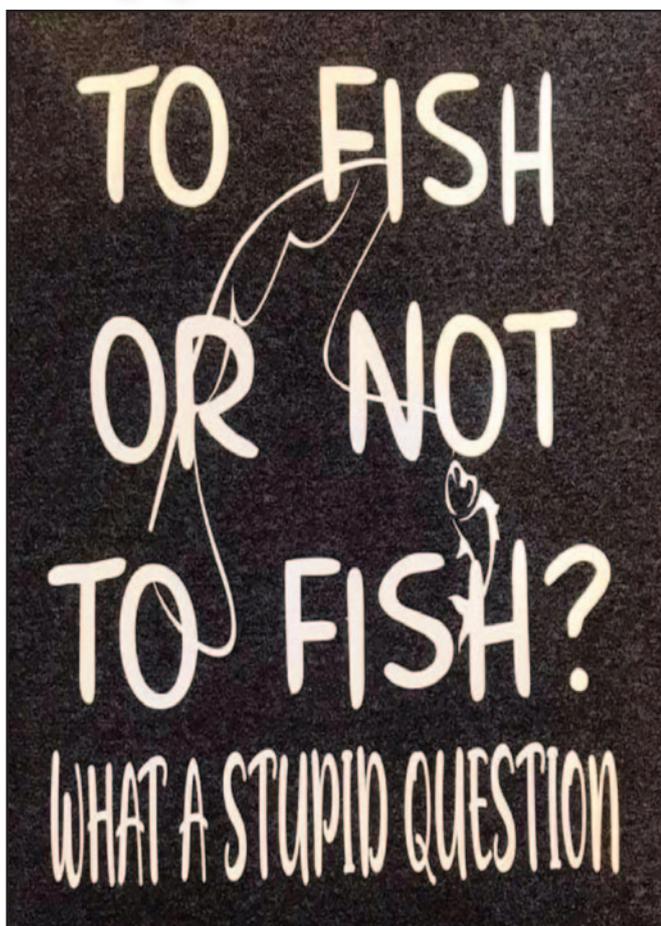
up to 14lbs, pure heaven. When my dad came and picked me up after this week long session I was obviously keen to tell him all the stories of the fish I had caught and the great time I'd had and I could see he was pleased for me but also was wishing he'd been there as well.

Work commitments at the time meant he just couldn't get the free time to fish but he was hatching a plan. He worked 14 hours a day for the next nine days to clear his backlog of work so he could have a weeks break. He told me his intentions and asked if I wanted to have one last crack at the carp as he wouldn't be able to get anymore time off work that year. So we drew up our plans for the final fling of 76.

As it turned out he didn't clear his backlog of work and fished just the weekend and a couple of mid week overnights but still caught a few nice fish from his favourite yew tree swim up in the shallows. I fished the deeper area near the dam again and

had and absolutely brilliant week catching 21 carp which was something of a record for the lake. People were starting to take notice of this little fourteen year old kid who was out-catching everybody and I made lots of new friends so was always safe up there. I was getting so many runs but losing most of them otherwise it could have been twice the amount or more. The method was free-lining with huge balls of the wonder bait which was basically wheat germ and milk protein powder rolled into balls about the size of a chicken egg. I would get screaming runs and either not connect or lose the fish shortly afterwards. I couldn't figure it out at the time but clearly the hook wasn't being struck though the stiff paste and I was just not hooking them. It makes me laugh now but at the time it was all I knew. That was the last trip for me in 1976, it had been a wonderful year and although I'd only made four trips to the lake, it had completely changed my life forever. ■

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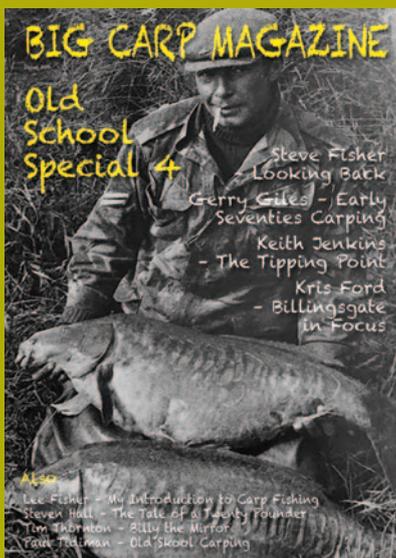
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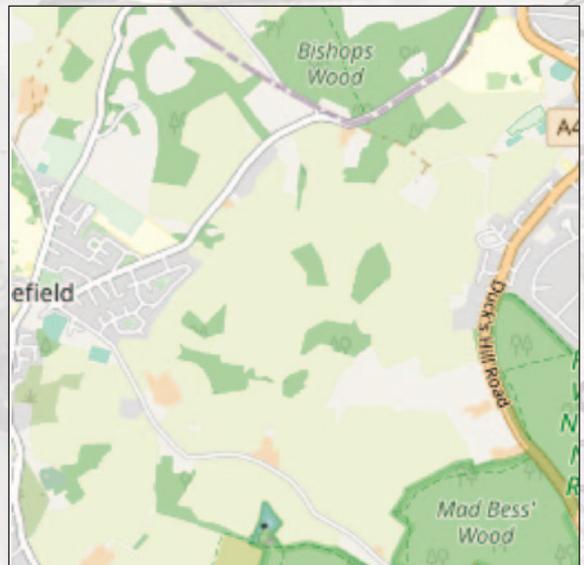
Checked And Found Wanting

Once again, highly qualified, professional quantity surveyor Mr Michael Byng and Lord Tony Berkeley have applied their meticulous scrutiny to the latest high-speed proposals. This time the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) has been checked and found wanting.

A distinct lack of funds (also used by HS2 to excuse their refusal to answer Freedom Of Information requests) means there is no provision for the electrification or upgrades originally expected, impacting a whole host of projects.

However, controversially as ever, Lord Berkeley claims if HS2 Phase 1 and 2A are cancelled, then the budget for IRP of £96 billion would deliver what it says on the tin! This suggestion would enable the true realisation of #LevellingUp, providing better local connectivity, and crucially, the necessary switch from diesel to electric.

But we all know HS2 and their figures, how the record of their conduct before ministers has a tarnished history, and how budgets are never adhered to or maintained!



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CARP CHAT

Carpy News

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Angling Trust's volunteer bailiffs raise £1,081 for Get Hooked On Fishing

The Angling Trust's Voluntary Bailiff Service has raised over £1,000 for Get Hooked On Fishing, an angling charity which supports young people to improve their lives and wellbeing by introducing them to fishing.

A cheque for £1,081 was presented to the charity's CEO Sarah Collins and trustee Keith Arthur at GHOF's headquarters in Northolt, West London, by Nino Brancato, the Trust's Fisheries Enforcement Support Service Manager, and Dave Wilkins, Regional Enforcement Support Manager for the South East region.

The money was raised from the sale of VBS pin badges. The VBS is part of the Fisheries Enforcement Support Service and is funded by the Environment Agency through the National Angling Strategic Services contract.

Dave Wilkins said: "The VBS does a great service to angling enforcement working in partnership with the Environment Agency and Police, so it is fantastic that we can help to put something back into the sport by raising money for Get Hooked On Fish-



ing. The GHOF team do a brilliant job to get people of all ages and backgrounds started in fishing." Nino Brancato said: "I was very proud to present the funds raised by the VBS to Sarah Collins, the CEO of GHOF." Sarah Collins said: "We are delighted by this very kind and generous donation raised by those associated with the Angling Trust's FESS and VBS. This will help us to support even more people across the country to access the benefits of going fishing and

being in 'blue-green' environments. Thank you."

Notes: You need a valid Environment Agency Fishing Licence if you are aged 13 or over and fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England (except the River Tweed), Wales, and the Border Esk and its tributaries in Scotland. Licences cost £30 for up to two rods to fish for coarse & trout, £82 for salmon & sea trout.

Licences for 13 to 16 year olds are free but you still need to get a junior licence. Concessions, short term and three rod coarse licences are also available. Anyone witnessing an illegal fishing incident in progress can report it directly to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. The Fisheries Enforcement Support Service is funded by income from fishing licence sales as part of the Angling Trust's National Angling Strategic Services contract with the Environment Agency.

More information about the Fisheries Enforcement Support Service Get Hooked On Fishing are an angling charity which helps provide positive opportunities for young people and communities through fun and interactive training around the sport of angling. Their work is designed with the help of young people to give the participants more confidence and to demonstrate that there are alternative pathways and better opportunities available to them. Find out more information: Nino Brancato, Angling Trust Regional Enforcement Support Manager

Tel: 07971 677638 Email: Inino.brancato@anglingtrust.net Image: Nino Brancato presents the cheque for £1,081 to Sarah Collins watched by Keith Arthur (left) and Dave Wilkins. ■



Government Water Statement must overhaul 'creaking and leaking' sewage infrastructure

The Government's Strategic Policy Statement (SPS) for water, laid before Parliament today (February 2nd), urges water companies to do more to protect the environment.

But the Angling Trust has expressed concern that the guidance given to the water regulator OFWAT could fall well short of what will be needed to end the scandal of untreated sewage polluting the nation's rivers. The SPS claims to want to see "protecting the environment" placed at the heart of OFWAT's strategic priorities and "urges" water companies "to do more."

"However, it fails to signal the need for the step change required in investment in outdated waste water infrastructure which has resulted in record levels of discharges in untreated sewage from facilities that can no longer meet demand. (400,000 times in 2020 - up from 293,000 in 2019). Simply urging water companies to tackle pollution isn't enough and leaves them far too much room for manoeuvre.

The Angling Trust believes the Government should be demanding that water companies do more to protect the environment and this should become the number one priority for OFWAT over the next five years.

These were the conclusion of the Angling Trust, who along with Salmon & Trout Conservation, set out what was needed in a major report, Time to Fix the Broken Water Sector.

Martin Salter, Head of Policy at the Angling Trust, said: "We were hoping for more than warm words in this water policy statement and a bit of restating the pollution monitoring provisions that are already in the Environment Act.

This is the Government's opportunity not just to will the end of pollution but to actually deliver the means by getting OFWAT to allow much needed investment to flow into England's creaking and leaking waste water infrastructure.

"As our studies have shown, the absurdly low replacement rate of sewerage pipelines is resulting in more discharge of untreated sewage into rivers and coastal areas.

Hardly surprising when pipes, designed for 50 to 100 years of service, are expected to last for 2,000 years.



"He added: "Defra have themselves admitted that water industry investment has not kept pace with the increase in demand and the impacts of climate change.

They said last January that 'climate change has led to increased rainfall and water infrastructure has not kept pace with development growth over decades'. This SPS is a once in a five year opportunity to instruct the industry to put that right.

"Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns at the Angling Trust, said: "If, as Minister Pow has stated, 'water quality is an absolute priority' then we're going to need radical and rapid change in the management and governance of our water sector.

The Government are, at last, beginning to see the connections between sewage pollution, the alarming consequences of agriculture pollution and run-off, the need for sustainable water abstraction, and the need to protect precious and unique habitats, like our chalk streams. This SPS is a chance to drive all these issues forward. It remains to be seen if it is strong enough to do so.

Notes:Key Points from Time to Fix the Broken Water Sector:Failure of OFWAT to take environmental issues seriously in the past. A £10 billion investment funding gap over the last 10 years. The declining condition of rivers and streams due to 400,000 extra sewage spills last year.

England has only one site on a river seeking to achieve 'bathing water status' compared to 32 in Germany,

76 in Poland and 420 in France.

The absurd expectation of a 2,000-year lifetime for sewerage pipes and other infrastructure.

Failure to build any new reservoirs in the southeast despite a 3 million population increase and huge projected growth in house building.

That lack of investment in water supply has seen excessive groundwater abstraction drying up some chalk streams altogether and damaging many other rivers. The impossibility of delivering commitments in the Government's own 25 Year Environment Plan and our legal obligation under the Water Framework Directive.

Failure of both the Government and OFWAT to pay any heed to the promises in the 2011 water white paper or indeed the warnings from the National Infrastructure Commission and the National Audit Office about the pressing need for investment in water and sewerage systems to address the challenges of climate change and population growth.

The prospect of severe drought events causing parts of southern England to run out of water within 20 years. That the consequences of failing to invest in water infrastructure will cost more in the long term – £40 billion versus £21 billion and thousands of jobs.

Time to Fix the Broken Water Sector report Defra blog highlighting infrastructure problems More information: Martin Salter, Angling Trust Head of Policy Tel: 07976 946033. Stuart Singleton-White, Angling Trust Head of Campaigns Tel: 07487 526913. ■

Anglers 'heartbroken' as stretch of River Tone stripped of trees



© Provided by The Guardian Photograph: Dominic Garnett/PA



© Provided by The Guardian River Tone before removal of trees. Photograph: Dominic Garnett/PA

Anglers are “heartbroken” after a 250-metre stretch of the River Tone in Somerset was stripped of trees by the Environment Agency as part of flood management measures.

The semi-wild section of river running through Taunton was a popular spot for anglers and wildlife-lovers, where kingfishers were often spotted. However, the majority of trees were felled last week, leaving the banks of the river as bare earth.

Dominic Garnett, 42, an angling guide and coach, has fished the stretch of the river for the past 20 years and has been visiting it since childhood. “It was a semi-wild stretch of river and they have channelised it,” he told PA. “It is absolutely heart breaking to see the destruction of the places you love – you go there to be with nature and to get away and it’s all just been ripped away.”

The length of the river ran through marshland until the 1990s, when the surrounding land was tarmacked to

make way for housing and a leisure and shopping complex.

Garnett said the area is now prone to flooding. While woodland planting is often used as a flood mitigation strategy, Garnett said representatives of the Environment Agency had told him the trees were felled “because they make the water back up”. “It is like they have taken an old hippie and given him a buzz cut – it is scorched earth tactics.” He pointed out that huge swathes of trees had been cleared only weeks away from nesting season, with river plants dredged out when some species of fish are starting to spawn. “It makes them vulnerable to predators – fish need places to hide,” he said.

Mark Barrow, a film-maker who has specialised in productions about freshwater species in the UK’s rivers and lakes for the past 20 years, tweeted that he was “shocked” to discover the scene on the River Tone. “Complete devastation, courtesy of

the Environment Agency. Scorched earth work the Russian army would be proud of! Those stumps were decades old trees where I used to watch the local kingfisher. Everything is now disappearing.”

A spokeswoman for the Environment Agency said: “Essential work to manage flood risk and protect properties in Bathpool and the upstream town of Taunton is ongoing.

“We always work to minimise any impact to the environment when carrying out work and have measures in place to compensate, such as new tree planting. Flooding and coastal erosion can have terrible consequences for people, businesses and the environment.

It is understood the trees at water level were deemed to be creating a flood risk by catching debris and restricting the flow of water. The area is due to be sown with a wild flower seed mix and replanted with native trees. ■



Gallery: Otherworldly photos of the deep sea (Espresso)



© Provided by The Guardian Dominic Garnett says the trees were cleared weeks before the nesting season. Photograph: Dominic Garnett/PA

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In the five years since our difficult legal battle we have issued a number of important statements. The most significant probably the announcement that we had regained control of the Carp Society. The most difficult, that we had failed in our bid to purchase and maintain control of Langholme Lake in Lincolnshire.

Today, the Carp Society can proudly announce the purchase of the renowned Ashmead Fishery on the Somerset Levels from Mark and Shona Walsingham.

Negotiations have gone on for a while now, with both parties keen to maintain a dignified silence until the deal was completed, which we have successfully achieved. Our dealings with Mark, and his agents at Fenn Wright have been both fair and open, and we are delighted they are now concluded to everyone's satisfaction. The Carp Society can confirm that we will honour the existing bookings made for 2022, (subject to Carp Society membership, to confirm the booking).

We wish to take time to review how we manage the lake in the future, but those who love and regularly fish the lake should not fear that it will change dramatically in character under our management.

We would ask that members accept this statement in the manner that it is offered and wait for further announcements about the future, without contacting our office for information, which will not be forthcoming until we have finalised any arrangements we wish to make. We will contact those with existing bookings for 2022 in due course.

Mark has agreed to write about Ashmead in future editions of our Carp Fisher magazine, which will help



our members get to know the background to this historic fishery, and he will also be interviewed by Miles for Carp Radio in the near future.

The Carp Society, Horseshoe Lake (thank you Mike Kavanagh), Farriers, Little Farriers (Brian Sefton) and now

Ashmead, sounds like good news for our members!

Derek Stritton on behalf of the Society Directors.

Enquiries please contact us 01367 253959 or email sales@thecarpsociety.com. ■

Carp Humour





NEWS

'Trial run' dates following Aire & Calder barge suspension



Following the Canal & River Trust's decision on January 18th to order the suspension of the commercial barge responsible for significant fish deaths on the Aire & Calder Navigation at Knottingley, the Angling Trust has been notified of the dates of a series of trial runs being organised as part of further investigations.

During the trial runs, the barge will operate at progressively lighter loadings so that the Canal & River Trust fisheries officers and colleagues can assess the situation.

These will take place as follows:

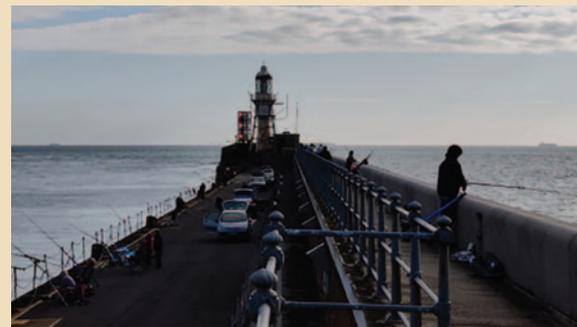
Feb 3: 6ft 7in (1.98m) – loaded (return following day unobserved)

Feb 10: 6ft 2in (1.88m) – loaded

Feb 11: 5ft 6in (1.68m) – this return trip to be observed

Feb 17: 5ft 11in (1.8m) – loaded (return following day unobserved)

Campaign success as fishing returns to Admiralty Pier



The Angling Trust and Dover Sea Angling Association have secured the reopening of the Admiralty Pier for fishing, which had been closed because of Covid restrictions and then security concerns. The Association and the Trust are working closely with the Dover Harbour Board to see its return in early 2022.

Get Fishing Fund now open for applications



Building on the successful launch of the Get Fishing Fund in December 2020, the Environment Agency and the Angling Trust have announced an additional £100,000 investment to encourage more people to give fishing a go for the first time in 2022.

Funded from fishing licence sales, grants of up to £2,500 are available to benefit angling-based projects. The funding can be used to help purchase equipment, fishing tackle and resources to run fishing events and activities to give people the opportunity to get into fishing. The deadline for applications is Friday, 18th March.

Angling Trust and Fish Legal NEWS

Help fight pollution - buy a supporter's pack for just £4.99



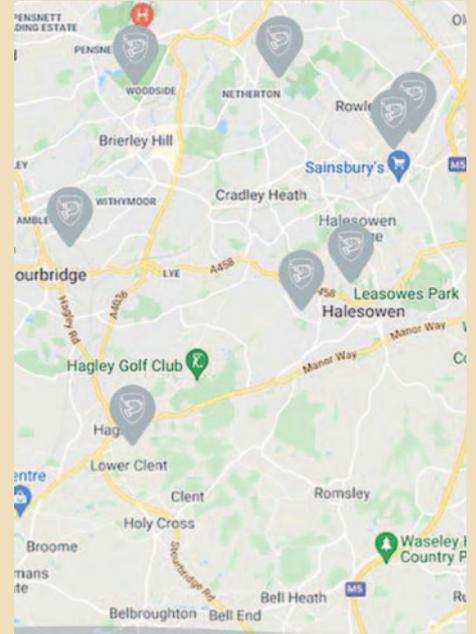
Through our Anglers Against Pollution campaign, the Angling Trust has been leading the fight to highlight the plight of our rivers and coastal waters, and demand action to end pollution.

You can show your support for the campaign by buying an Anglers Against Pollution Supporters Pack, which includes an enamel badge, and waterproof tackle box and car stickers. They cost just £4.99 with all profits directly going to support the campaign. Available at participating tackle shops.

Please support our Online Auction

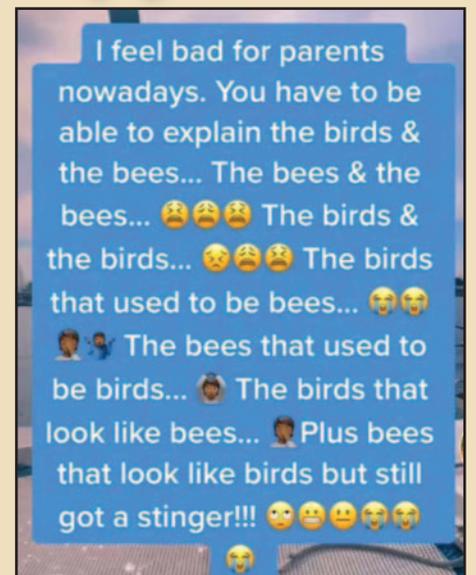
Our Online Auction 2022 raises vital funds to enable the Angling Trust and Fish Legal to fight to protect fish, fishing and the environment. Can you support us by donating an auction lot? Last year, a number of clubs, fisheries and businesses offered tackle, memberships or a day's fishing on stretches of their waters, and we would like to thank them once again for their generous support. If you would like to donate an auction lot please email samantha.frost-jones@anglingtrust.net

All your fishing info on one map!



Looking for somewhere to go fishing? The Angling Trust Find Fishing Info map features hundreds of venues for you to explore, including how to get there and permit details. You can also search for information on clubs, tackle shops and coaches - and if you are planning to fish a river you can check on the latest river level. There's also a facility to submit a new entry or amend an existing listing.

Carpy Humour



LIMITED EDITION • SIGNED AND NUMBERED

Legendary Carp Paintings



- Bazil
- Heather
- The Black Mirror
- The Royal Forty
- The Bishop
- The Burghfield Common
- Jumbo
- Two Tone
- Mary and Mary's Mate



www.bigcarpmagazine.co.uk

Angling Trust and Fish Legal NEWS

Tribute to angling coach Pat Byrne



The Angling Trust was saddened to hear the news that angling coach Pat Byrne had passed away. Through his Wellingborough & District Nene Angling Club, Pat introduced hundreds of youngsters to fishing and was instrumental in growing the club's junior membership. He will be sadly missed by many.

Not a Fish Legal member? Find out more...

If your club is not a member of Fish Legal and would like more information on how Fish Legal can benefit your club, contact Nick Simmonds, Membership Manager on:

01568 620447

or nick.simmonds@anglingtrust.net

FISH LEGAL UPDATE: Maidstone Draft Local Plan



Fish Legal has objected to the Maidstone Draft Local Plan on behalf of member clubs and fisheries because of the inappropriate earmarking of rural land next to the ancient village of Lenham in Kent for 5,000 new homes as part of the Heathlands Garden Settlement. Fish Legal says that the Plan does not properly consider the environmental impact, especially on fish and protected species, and habitats in the River Stour downstream of the site.

Fish Legal has written to Maidstone Borough Council expressing the concerns of its members - Ford Mill Fishery, Upper Stour Syndicate, Stour Fishery Association, Tonford Fishing Club and Canterbury and District Angling Association.

HERE TO HELP: Building Bridges Project team

The Building Bridges Project has been running for 10 years and has made huge progress towards the successful integration of migrant angling communities in England – providing positive education and advice to help anglers understand our angling laws and customs.

At 'grass roots' level, the Building Bridges team assist and support angling clubs and fisheries by translating their rules into different languages and offering free multi-lingual signage and leaflets. The team also work with clubs and fisheries to host angling events that bring together anglers from different countries and cultures, in addition to organising school visits and coaching days – giving many youngsters from diverse backgrounds an introduction to fishing in the UK.

If your club, fishery or angling organisation requires support from the Building Bridges team, please contact Project Manager Janusz Kansik on 07495 433615 or email janusz.kansik@anglingtrust.net



Angling Trust and Fish Legal NEWS

How we can help with predation issues

Otter fences are one of the most costly projects a club could undertake, making it vital they function as intended. Even with regular maintenance, damage and weak points can often be overlooked, resulting in the potential for otters to enter a fenced fishery and threaten valuable stock. In this video, Richard Bamforth, one of two Fisheries Management Advisors at the Angling Trust, explains how we can help clubs and fisheries with predation issues and features the project undertaken by Leeds & District Amalgamated Society of Anglers at its Kippax Park Fishery. They received support from the Angling Improvement Fund which uses Environment Agency fishing licence money to benefit freshwater angling in England.

Members discounts: Get 10% off CC Moore baits!



CC Moore are one of the biggest names in bait. With decades of experience, the brand has become synonymous with quality with established products such as Live System, Odyssey XXX and Northern Specials catching huge number of carp time and time again. Angling Trust members can claim discounts on a range of tackle, bait and other products - including 10% off all CC Moore baits!

Leigh Leavesley: Catch Report Yateley Pads Lake

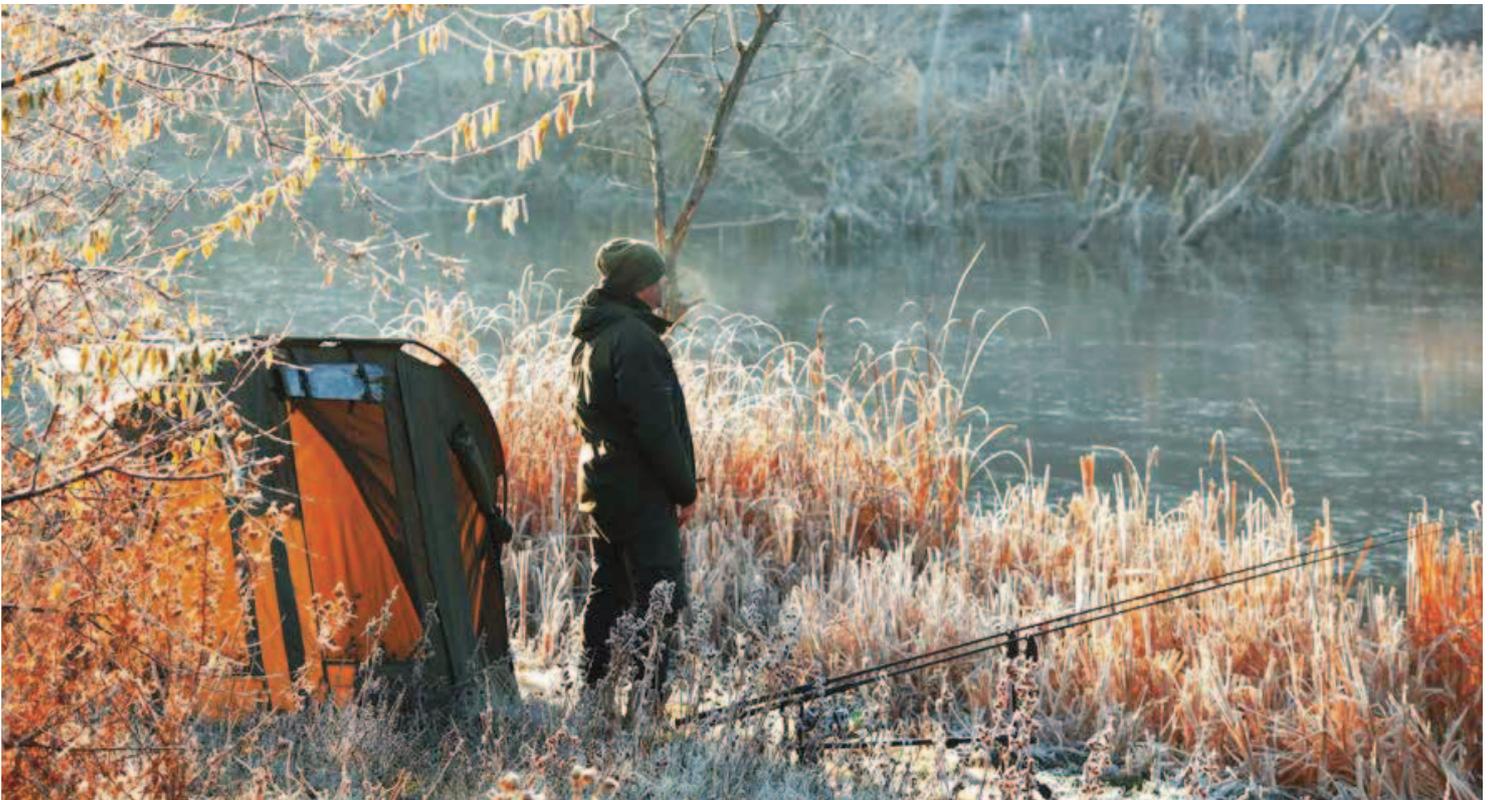


First ever trip to yateley pads lake this week resulted in a 42lbs 4oz mirror 34lbs 3oz mirror 32lbs mirror and 17lbs 8oz mirror link to my YouTube video of the session below and some pictures. Thanks Leigh



ANLRS NEWSLETTER

FEB 2022



HAPPY NEW YEAR

HERE'S TO 2022

Well it's the start of a new year and all of us at the ANLRS hope you all had a great Christmas and 2022 has started well. The year that we have just waved goodbye to, proved to be a great one for the ANLRS with over 11 million meters of line and around 12000 empty spools returned for recycling, the launch of the Recover, Research, Reduce and Recycle project along with the continued sign up of shops and fisheries to expand the availability of line recycling bins around the UK to over 600.

**TOP
2022-23
NO**



**Fine quality fishing tackle
since 1857**

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COMPLETING THE CIRCLE

During the early stages of the scheme seeing an angling related end product made from the line, redundant spools and, more recently, the commercial net debris collected from the coastal bins was a real target. Very quickly Steve Carrie at ReFactory (formerly Reworked) produced the rod stands and racks for us but the desire for something pretty much ever angler can use long term was the goal.

Many of you may not be aware but Steve also owns DNA Baits, who are one of the country's leading boilie manufacturers alongside ReFactory. Due to his amazing drive to make things happen this has now become a reality and the first polarised fishing glasses made from fishing line and commercial nets in the UK will be available in the coming weeks.

Steve teamed up with Waterhaul, a west country-based business, which have a proven record in producing great products from commercial fishing nets to produce these that will be available via the DNA website. Incorporating quality polarised lenses these will be a great addition to any anglers armoury and the team here at the ANLRS will be getting a couple of pairs for sure! They even have "supporting the ANLRS" embossed on the inside arms of the frames.

For every pair sold, DNA will be making a contribution to the ANLRS funding pot.

Carpy Humour



Carpy Humour



POLYPIPE PITCHES IN THEIR SUPPORT

Back in the Autumn of last year a keen angler Adrian Bristow, who happens to be Technical Director of Polypipe Building Products, got in contact to offer the companies support to the scheme. As one of the largest plastic piping solutions manufacturers in the UK they felt that they could offer some practical support to the scheme and help keep the nations waterways and coastlines free from lost or discarded fishing lines. In a fantastic gesture a team of volunteers from the staff there gave up a weekend to create more than 100 plastic pipe bins from Polypipe stock and donated these to the scheme. Not only did they construct the pipe bins they also painstakingly applied the multiple stickers to the bins, so they are ready to be sent out to fisheries and coastal locations.

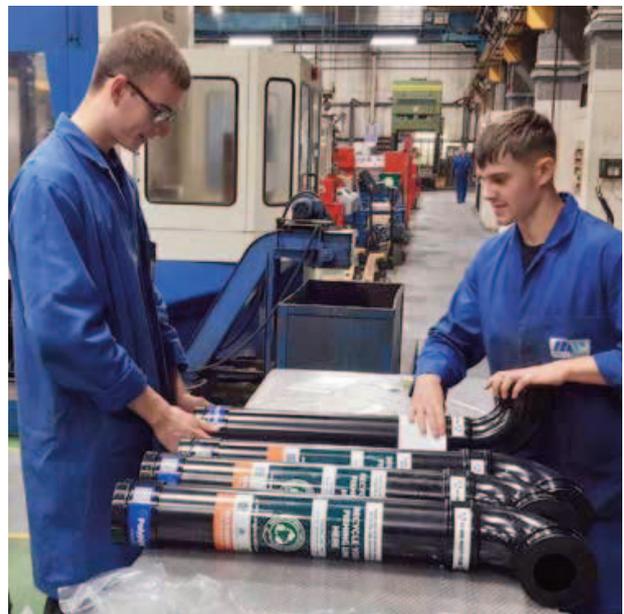
Adrian said “We were very happy to be able to offer some practical help for this worthy cause. At Polypipe we are committed to attaining the very highest standards of sustainability and environmental protection and this donation is a small part of our efforts in the coming year.”

These 110mm diameter bins are now available, at an amazing price cheaper than the parts can be purchased for, via the ANLRS online shop and every single penny from their sale will create funds to allow us to spread the word further, expand projects and assist in developing products from the recycled plastics we collect.

The bins are being offered at the following amazing prices, excluding P&P, and we are offering deals on bundles that would suit fisheries that want to spread them around the site or have multiple car parking areas. Each bin comes supplied with installation instructions and two pipe clip mounts to they can be fixed to wooden posts, fences or brick walls.

1 Bin £25,00
2 Bins £45.00
4 Bins £80.00

A massive thanks to Polypipe for their support and amazing donation. Lets hope that these fly out the door over the coming months, fill with line quickly and that we can see it all being recycled into something useful.





Adam Satchell with a nice fish from Sandhurst called The Armadillo.



Great result, got my winter ticket for Coking Farm, been fishing Oak Lake and caught my PB on the 3rd of January at 42lb 6oz called 'BIGGIE' and then caught him again 27th January. #CCMOORE #KORDAGOOSHERBERT. I Only did a 24 hour it's a very busy day ticket water, I used IQ rig (homemade) and yellow NS1 wafers soaked in Sherbert Goo. Only there for few hours had a double take but lost the first before catching my 42. Also caught a nice fish from Sandhurst called 'The Armadillo' recently.

Adam Satchell.



Getting to my local water just before light and setting up in the deeper area of the lake. A few hours passed without a bite. So, I couldn't sit behind still rods. After getting everything on the barrow I had a wander around the lake. I opted for a shallower and snaggy area. I put in a couple of handfuls of triple M mix from CarpParticlesUK and A small PVA mesh ball of pellets. A Crushed Nutz and Wicked White boilie with a pear drops pop up on a Ronnie Rig managed to trip up this beautiful 20lb 4oz common. Which is also my 1st ever winter 20.

Peter Conn.



After a few weeks off from fishing, I decided it was time to get back down to my syndicate lake. After spending two days in one swim not seeing any carp, I was thinking luck was not on my side this trip so I lapped the lake trying to find some fish. After finding some fish I got all set up and the following day this absolute beauty of a mirror carp graced my net. 35lb 2oz – caught over a bed of C4 boilies, with a Ronnie Rig and Milk One pop-up over the top.

Steve Parker



Winter Common for Timothy Thornton
First session out in 2022. Fishing to a spot I had a few fish off in Autumn using a DNA baits 18mm Bug corker wafter over a bed of 18mm Bug shelf life. 29lb 12oz common in all its winter colours. Taken from a Devon reservoir in Feb.

Peter Conn – Calm before the storm



A good couple of days. Glugged RNT and wicked whites and Nutz from Mad baits. With some boosted pellets from carp particles UK. Pear drops pop up on a Ronnie rig. Fishing in the shallower area of the lake tight to some snags. Managed to trip a few of the local residents up. Biggest going 20lb 2oz.
Peter Conn @Carper_and_son

Dynamite Baits – Tony Kingdon and Alfie Nicholls



Tony Kingdon's first trip of 2022 was a 48 hour session on St Johns where he managed six fish from 21lb to 29lb. All fish falling to a mix of whole and chopped monster tigernut boilies, hemp, corn with a good helping of CSL and baileys lol opti-mex fluoro combi rigs with size 4 razor point wide gape hooks accounting for all the fish with custom pink hook baits. These two are 26 and 29



30lb 10oz for Alfie Nicholls caught on a zig with a size 10 razor point chod hook and 12lb zig master hook link from St Johns.

UFB

Starmer Baits
giving you the edge!
EST. 1976



Ultimate Feed Boilies

All new **PRO NATURAL** ufb boilie



Get a **FREE SAMPLE** of this amazing new bait.

Just click below and follow the instructions on the product page.

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UFB

Starmers Baits
giving you the edge!
EST. 1976

Ultimate Feed Boilies

Our all new PRO NATURAL is a 100% natural air dried boilie designed for any situation or season, releasing its attractants & food trails in summer or winter, even at low temperatures.

This boilie will get to work the second it hits the water and release its food scents up to 72hrs, keeping a strong stable food trail in your swim.

Quality at great prices

15mm / 50g sample	£(free)
15mm & 18mm / 200g	£4.99
15mm & 18mm / 450g	£6.99
15mm & 18mm / 900g	£8.99
15mm & 18mm / 1.9kg	£17.99
15mm & 18mm / 5kg	£38.99
15mm & 18mm / 10kg	£76.99
15mm & 18mm / 15kg	£109.99
15mm & 18mm / 20kg	£149.99
15mm & 18mm / 25kg	£180.00
Glug / 125ml	£9.50
15mm / pop-ups 75g	£5.50

Prices include delivery.

Give yourself an edge this season!



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Colourful Carrying!

Add a splash of colour to your next adventure with Lifeventure's new range of Expedition Duffles. Combining the travel expert's proven design with a range of eye-catching new colours, the bags are not only incredibly durable but also feature a spacious 100L capacity that can easily accommodate all of your travel, walking or camping essentials.

Made from a tough 1,200 denier fabric, the Expedition Duffles can easily cope with the relentless wear and tear that is associated with outdoor life. Additional reinforcement across the bag's base in an ultra-strong, 1,680 denier fabric further increases its practicality and durability when transporting heavy or bulky loads.

Perfect for carrying all types of outdoor gear, the Expedition Duffel has a large main compartment that is secured with high-strength lockable zips. Designed to offer maximum practicality and versatility, the Expedition Duffel has both top and side grab handles for ease of handling together with a detachable shoulder strap that can be stored inside the bag during transit. When not in use, the bag can be folded flat – ideal for maximising space inside a tent or in the car.

The colourful Expedition Duffles are also available in a convenient 120L wheeled version with smooth rolling wheels. The Expedition Wheeled Duffel is equally versatile and can be easily rolled around its wheel-base for compact storage.

To find out more about the new range of Expedition Duffles visit www.lifeventure.co.uk. ■

JUST ADDED

White Dial Alpha Models



OUR TAKE ON THE CLASSIC DIVE WATCH

T100 TRITIUM ILLUMINATION: Tell the time, all the time.

300M WATER RESISTANT: Discover the darkest depths.

10-YEAR BATTERY LIFE: A decade of adventure.

CERAMIC BEZEL INSERT: The very best available.

SAPPHIRE CRYSTAL FACE: Ultra-scratch resistant.

SWISS-MADE MOVEMENT: Accuracy and reliability, always.

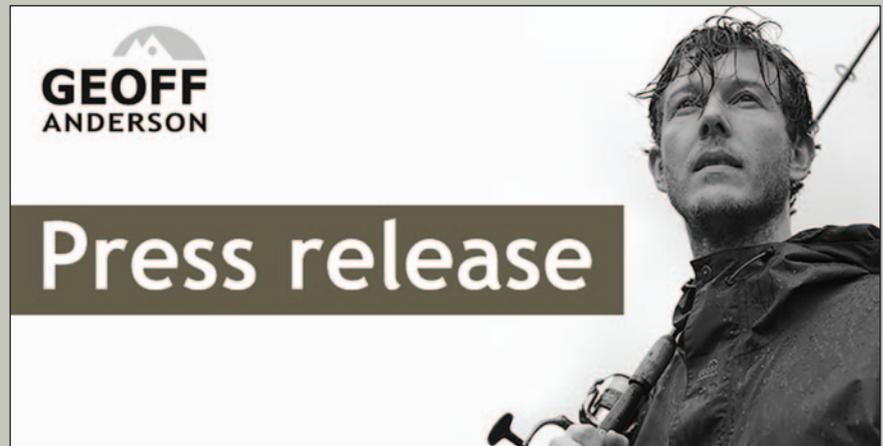
Barbarus Asimi Jacket Asimi – then it's over freezing

Asimi is warm, versatile, waterproof and breathable with an exquisite soft insulation that provides you with great heat preservation. Barbarus can be considered a worthy member of our family consisting of premium waterproof and breathable garments.

Generous length and insulation give maximum weather protection. Insulated, waterproof with a design fine-tuned for the cold and wet landscape. Warm, versatile, waterproof and breathable with an exquisite soft insulation that provides you with great heat preservation.

After 5 years on the market, we can truly say that Barbarus has grown up to become a versatile, waterproof and breathable garment.

Status after 5 years: Barbarus passed the test with a complaint rate of less than 0.5 %. Regardless of the water column pressure, the choice of



materials and construction has proven that nothing works better in real life than Barbarus. Our aimed goal with Barbarus 2 is to combine the "stone-safe" waterproof and breathable construction with a more contemporary and functional design. Thus, Barbarus can be considered a worthy member of our family consisting of premium waterproof and breathable garments.

Generous length and insulation give maximum weather protection.

Insulation:

Man-made 100% polyester insulation. Nicknamed imitation silk cotton. A thicker continuous filament that is lofty, strong and durable.

Warms and stretches, and combined with the shell and lining, supplies outstanding unprecedented air permeability, allowing excess heat to move away from the body.

The filling stay in place so you do not get cold spots.

Our synthetic fill is quick-drying and insulates even if wet (something down struggles to do)

Filling details:

Body - 100gm

Sleeve: 80gm

Pockets:

Two hidden vertical front pockets placed at chest height.

Carefully tuned depth and seam taped for water protection.

The pocket design protect the fish from free-lipped zippers when the fish is held against the jacket during e.g photographing.

Two hidden incline pockets with zippers. Seam taped for water protection.

Zipped Inner pocket

All smart, secure and easy accessible.

Zippers:

YKK® Aluminum alloy zipper takes

advantage of the "lightweight" of aluminum, but they are susceptible to moisture, temperature, humidity, friction, acid, alkaline, etc. Fabrics:

Shell: Barbarus is made from an innovative material providing excellent protection from the elements. A durable and tough polyamid face fabric with superior waterproofing, breathability and heat reflective capabilities.

The fabric allows excess heat and moisture to evaporate without compromising waterproofing, leaving you dry and comfortable throughout the day.

Water column : 10.000 mm. (iso0811) – or as we promise:

Guaranteed waterproof

Lining: Soft micro fleece.

Functionalities:

- 100% wind and waterproof
- Breathable
- Hidden Zips
- Insulated





- YKK® alloy zippers
- Durable
- Taped seams
- Waist adjustment
- Strong pocket lining
- Watertight pocket design
- Zipped inner pocket
- Spacious vertical chest pockets
- Zipped incline pockets
- Hypalon cuff straps with Velcro®
- Hypalon patch for attaching accessories
- Generous length - extra weather protection.
- Øko-tex certified fittings
- Designed in Denmark

Featuring:

Hood with one hand adjustable drawcords. The elasticated adjust system allows you to personalize the fit to exactly your head even if you wear your favorite cap.

The insulated hood extends warmth and protection.

The new wrist/cuff closure includes our latest Hypalon closure with molded and patented Velcro®

The fit has been adjusted to give you an even better experience when using it actively.

Colors and sizes:

Grey.
Small to XXXL -as well as a "JX" which is around 4 sizes above XXXL

Zesto - then it's over freezing

Zesto is specifically designed for demanding outdoor activities in changeable weather. Also ideal as a low friction insulating layer under your fishing jacket.

There is an exceptionally nice comfort even when the jacket gets wet as it does not lose its insulating ability. The jacket is designed to effectively balance heat-versus-weight. Zesto will provide you with great heat preservation.

Who is Geoff Anderson? Geoff Anderson is a small danish company that exclusively designs and produces clothing for anglers – especially for the harsh weather in northern Europe. In the production, special consideration to the environment is taken and all products are certainly



free of toxins. Durability and water proofness have always been keywords in the production.

Today, the clothing is only produced under its own name, but for many years Geoff Anderson has produced clothes for a number of other brands: Vision, Rapala, G. Loomis, Shimano, Zpey, Sierra, Hardy and Greys – the last two in more than ten

Environment:

Barbarus is known for its strong and long lasting design characteristic and the choice of material will make sure it will outlive most other pants. Durability is the most sensible when it comes to limiting the climate impact.

Individual parts are eco-tex certified.

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Geoff Anderson are also in the process of establishing itself in a number of other countries. If you would like to learn more about Geoff Anderson or countries in which we are looking for new dealers, you're of course welcome to contact us. More information Malthe Ryge Petersenmrp@geoffanderson.dk+45 71 991 859. ■

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TKPro

A 100% plastic-free thermal Kanteen

The TKPro is a 100% plastic-free, versatile drink or food flask with an integrated cup, twist & pour cap with unique 360° pour-through design all backed by cutting edge thermal performance.



Sleeping Essentials from Snugpak



Apart from a warm comfortable Snugpak sleeping bag, you'll perhaps need one or more of these useful sleep essential accessories to compliment your camping kit. Snugpak has a great range of Bivvi bags, sleep mats, liners and pillows to enhance your camping experience in the Great Outdoors!

Bivvi Bags

When planning a lightweight trip in the wilderness without the bulk of carrying a tent, a Bivvi Bag is an alternative which can supply adequate protection from the elements. Snugpak's range includes a range of lightweight Bivvi Bags which can be used for wild camping in the summer or used in conjunction with a sleeping system and air mat for venturing out all year round.

The Snugpak Stratosphere (SRP £178) is an easily pitched, classic bivvi shelter with a self-supporting canopy, which allows increased breathability and movement while giving protection from the elements. It features a No-See-Um Mesh Mosquito Net, which can be rolled away when not in use, and a 3/4 length side zip for easy access. There is also a mesh covered vent behind the head area for improved air circulation.

Its lightweight, single skin design is waterproof, breathable and made from a PU coated flysheet with 5000mm hydrostatic head, taped seams, aluminium poles and an 8000mm waterproof PU coated bath-



tub style groundsheet. When packed into its compression sack it weighs only 1.1kg/2.2lbs (including tent stakes) and is ideal to use when both weight and pack size are essential.

Snugpak's Bivvi Bag (SRP £76 - £80) is both waterproof and windproof and the Paratex Dry technical fabric allows trapped moisture to escape from the microclimate, keeping you warm, dry and comfortable. Easily packed away, it can form an essential part of your outdoor kit, with or without a sleeping bag, and is ideal for minimalist camping, bushcraft and emergency survival.

Special Forces Bivvi Bag (£86 -

£90) is the ideal choice for adventure racers, bushcraft and emergency survival. The non-locking 1/2 length front zip allows a quick exit when you have to move fast and when every second counts. With a small volume and exceptional lightweight properties, it can easily be packed away into a race pack.

Used as the bare minimum for lightweight summer races, or used in conjunction with an Adventure Race Sleeping System for harbour areas and longer excursions, all year round, the SF Bivvi Bag can also provide extra protection from the elements in an emergency situation.

Snugpak Bivvi Bags are available in Standard and Extra Large Sizes, which can be used with 4 Season or Expedition (Polar) based sleeping bags as well as the Snugpak AR Sleeping System.

Sleeping Bag Liners

As seasons change you'll need extra warmth from your sleeping bag on overnight camping trips. Snugpak's insulating sleeping bag liner with full length zip can instantly add over a season to your sleeping bag and the lush fleece will create luxurious comfort and warmth for occasional colder nights without the need to invest in a new bag.

The breathable and moisture wicking **Fleece Liner** (SRP £38) is supplied with its own compression sack when not in use, it weighs only 1000g is available in Olive green and packs down to a handy space saving 25cm x 18cm pack size.

Adding the body-hugging **Thermal Insulating Liner** (SRP £27) inside your sleeping bag will significantly improve its thermal qualities. It



Snugpak's Bivvi Bag.



Special Forces Bivvi Bag.



Thermalon Insulating Liner

has an incredibly soft, wool-like finish for a little extra luxury and the clever construction of the fabric ensures that any moisture will be moved away from the body for a comfortable night's sleep. The Thermalon Liner is 165cm long but can be stretched to 210cm in length.

Silk Mix Liner (SRP £51) - Silk is a type of fabric that is naturally associated with luxury but not usually warmth. In fact, silk is a very poor conductor of heat, and consequently will trap warmth within the sleeping bag, making it a very warm option with a touch of luxury. Silk also has another surprising quality that makes this liner a must when you're when



Maxi Mat.

travelling in hotter climates. Its natural heat-managing characteristics keep the body at a comfortable temperature in both extremes of hot and cold. I

For those who love the feel of poly cotton against the skin, the **Poly Cotton Liner** (SRP £18) is a camping favourite. The mummy shape fits inside any sleeping bag and it comes with its own stuff sack for simple and easy storage.

When you need a little extra warmth at night, you can add the **TS1 Insulating Liner** (SRP £42 - £53). The Thermal Suede is instantly warm to the touch and provides a noticeable thermal improvement to the sleeping bag. It also has an incredibly soft finish for a little extra luxury.

The clever construction of the fabric ensures that any moisture will be moved away from the body into the wicking core of the knitted fabric.

Sleeping Mats

To keep your tent protected from the ground and add another layer of insulation and support, a sleeping mat will make all the difference to your comfort at night. Snugpak's Self-Inflating **Maxi Mat** (SRP £63) is a full length self-inflating mat with a valve system that allows you to adjust your desired fill and a handy stuff sack allows you to pack it down small when travelling.

For the seasoned camper or backpacker, the **Travelite Full** (SRP £85) is designed to provide extra comfort whilst minimising weight. The non-slip base ensures stability and to save space, when the sleeping mat is not in



Travelite Midi.



The Snuggy Headrest

use it can be easily deflated and stored. Light, comfortable and compact, this mat is a convenient way to get a good night's sleep when travelling.

Travelite Midi (SRP £70) is a sleeping mat that is designed to provide extra comfort, so you wake up to feel well-rested and refreshed. This self-inflating, non-slip sleeping mat is designed to do just that, while keeping the weight of your kit down to a manageable level and to save space, when the sleeping mat is not in use it can be easily deflated and stored.

The Snuggy Headrest (SRP £8.00) is an extremely lightweight and compact pillow that stuffs into itself for simple storage yet provides excellent support for the head and neck. The pillow is made out of the same materials used to make the Softie sleeping bag range making this little pillow big on comfort and warmth!

The Butterfly Neck Pillow (SRP £24) is self-inflating and specially designed to make sure you have a comfortable night's sleep, equally supporting both sides of the head due to the 'butterfly' shape.

Simply remove the pillow from its stuff sack and it will inflate to a standard size. Air can then be added or removed through the blow-and-lock valve system to reach your preferred inflation and the soft touch 70D material adds a luxury feel to the pillow.

The full range of Snugpak Sleeping Essentials can be found on the website at www.snugpak.com. ■



The Butterfly Neck Pillow.

Geoff Anderson Raptor6

After 20 years on the market and more than 35.000 Raptor-jackets sold we can promise you something unique. Historically, we have had a complaint rate of less than 0.5%. Regardless of the water column pressure, the choice of materials and construction has proven that nothing works better in real life than the way we have designed Raptor.

Raptor is known for its strong and long lasting design characteristic and the choice of material will make sure it will outlive most other jackets. Durability is the most sensible when it comes to limiting the climate impact.

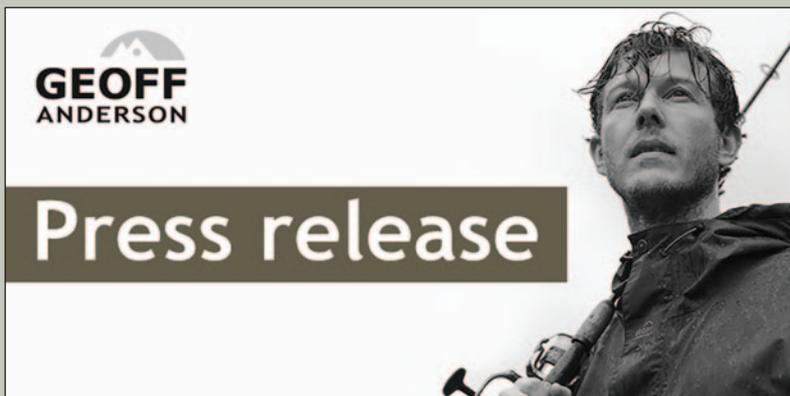
Individual parts are eco-tex certified. With over 35.000 jackets sold we can promise you something very special!

After 20 years on the market and more than 35.000 jackets sold, we can promise you something unique. Historically, we have had a complaint rate of less than 0.5%. Regardless of the water column pressure, the choice of materials and construction has proven that nothing works better in real life than the way we have designed Raptor. It is not without reason that Raptor is named after a predatory dinosaur. A species that developed and perfected its skills, and ended at the top of the food chain as the ultimate hunter.

Similarly, the Raptor jacket's evolution has resulted in a perfection of its features. A jacket design where waterproofness, strength, and mobility are united in a crispness of simplicity. For this reason, the style has always attracted beginners as well as pro guides. In addition to you, we have more than 38,000 other anglers around Europe using the jacket. Ever since we introduced Raptor, we have had no reason to change the basic design. Over the years, all we have been doing is refining.

Since the first edition, we have achieved:

- Lower weight
- New functions



- Increased breathability
- Thinner membrane
- Improved tape technology

Fabric:

100% water, windproof and breathable. A fusion material. The fabric is applied a substance (membrane) which works its way into and becomes an integral part of the material. This technique is by far the most durable for angling in fresh and salt-water.

To protect the membrane, the jacket has a mesh lining, which at the same time improves the micro climate.

Featuring:

Hood with one hand adjustable drawcords. The elasticated adjust system allows you to personalize the fit to exactly your head even if you wear your favourite cap.

The new wrist/cuff closure includes our latest closure with "shark-skin" neoprene lining and moulded Velcro.

Pockets and zippers

Spacious box chest pockets that close tightly and keep rain and splashes out.

Large back pocket. Napoleon pocket (inner pocket) that can be operated without opening the jacket.

On the front there is a small attachment loop that can be used for eg.our WizTools.

The Heavy centre front zipper is protected by a double overfold with velcro and stainless buttons.

Functionalities:

- 100% guaranteed waterproof-Breathable
- More than 35.000 jackets sold
- Less than 0,5% returns
- YKK® zippers
- Durable saltwater design
- Taped seams
- Elasticated waist. Adjustable
- Strong pocket lining
- Watertight pocket design

- Zipped napoleon inner pocket
 - Spacious back pocket
 - New cuff straps design with Velcro®
 - Webbing loop for attaching accessories
 - Øko-tex certified fittings
 - Designed in Denmark
- Changes from previous model:**
- Improved Water repellency
 - Improved wrist design
 - Accessory loop added left and right chest
 - Extended lifespan Color and sizes:
 - Green
 - Small to XXXL - as well as a "JX" which is around 4 sizes above XXXL

Environment:

Raptor is known for its strong and long lasting design characteristic and the choice of material will make sure it will outlive most other jackets. Durability is the most sensible when it comes to limiting the climate impact. Individual parts are eco-tex certified. ■



WizWool - then it's over freezing

Long lasting, stretchy and soft technical Merino blend. The best of both natural and synthetic yarn. Hard wearing, no nonsense to wear for any kind of cold weather.

Keep you warm. WizWool Roar, Ulf and Njal includes a strong and thereby a long lasting design characteristic and the choice of material will make sure it will outlive similar "merino only" styles. Durability is the most sensible when it comes to limit-

ing the climate impact.

Who is Geoff Anderson?

Geoff Anderson is a small danish company that exclusively designs and produces clothing for anglers - especially for the harsh weather in northern Europe.

In the production, special consideration to the environment is taken and all products are certainly free of toxins. Durability and water proofness has always been keywords in the production.

Today, the clothing are only produced under its own name, but for many years Geoff Anderson has produced clothes for a number of other brands: Vision, Rapala, G. Loomis, Shimano, Zpey, Scierra, Hardy and Greys - the last two in more than ten years.



Geoff Anderson are also in the process of establishing itself in a number of other countries.

If you would like to learn more about Geoff Anderson or countries in which we are looking for new dealers, you're of course welcome to contact us.

More information Malthe Ryge Petersen mrp@geoffanderson.dk, +45 71 991 859. ■

WIN A HOLIDAY FOR TWO

Our good friends Steve and Sandy Bond have put up a fantastic competition prize in Big Carp to celebrate Big Carp's 250th issue. Here's your chance to win a Holiday for two including food at Lake Bossard.

And it could not be simpler to enter... All, you have to do is go to the BOSSARD Facebook page...

- 1 You must like the Bossard page.
- 2 You must like and share this competition.
- 3 And just write "Done" in the comments.



Closing date is
1st June 2022.

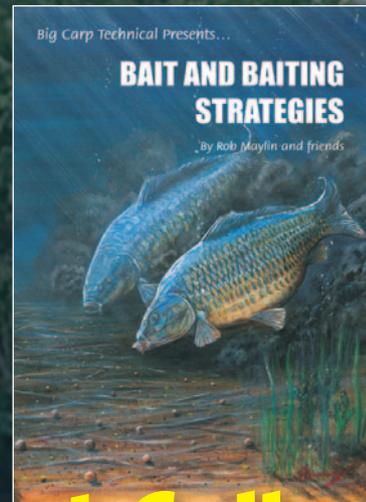
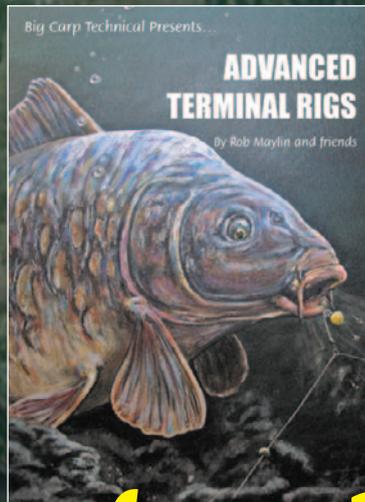
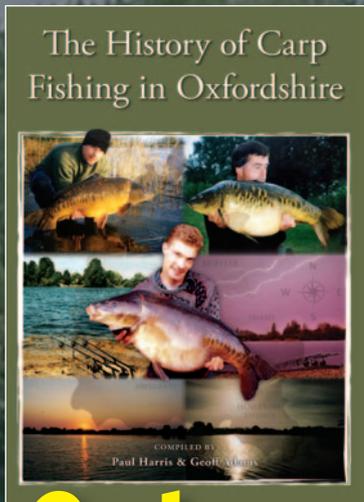
Good luck!



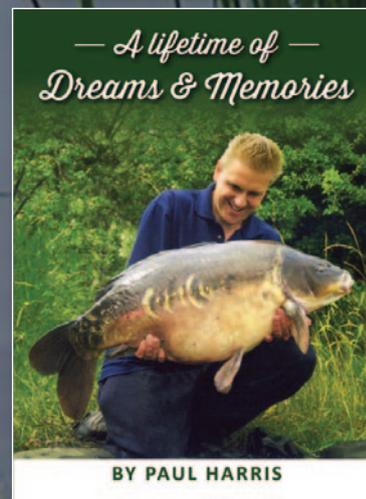
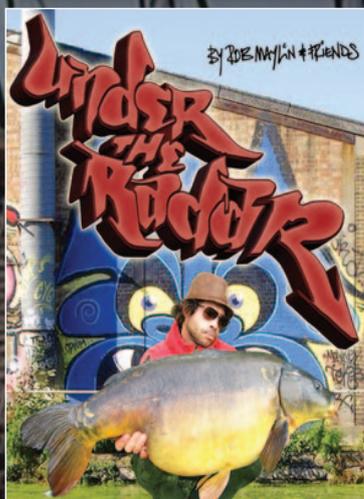
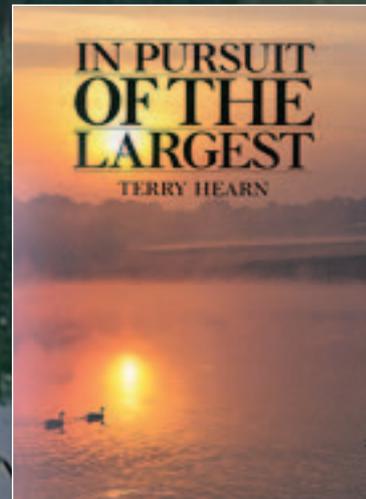
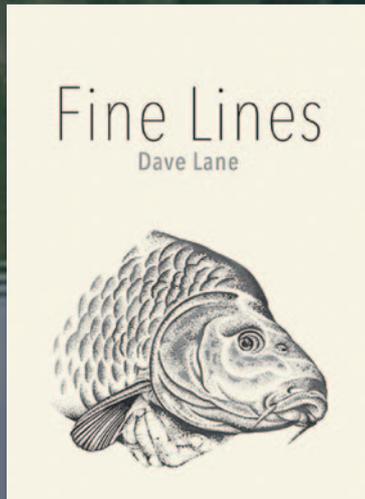
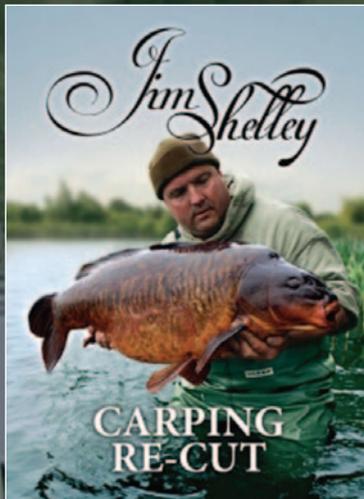
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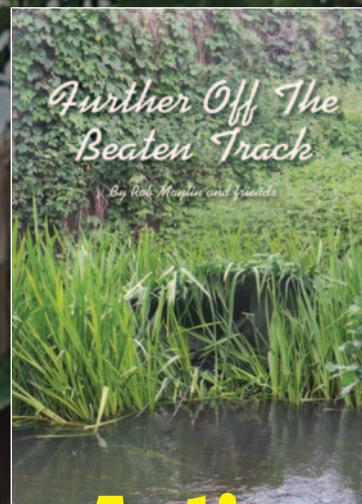
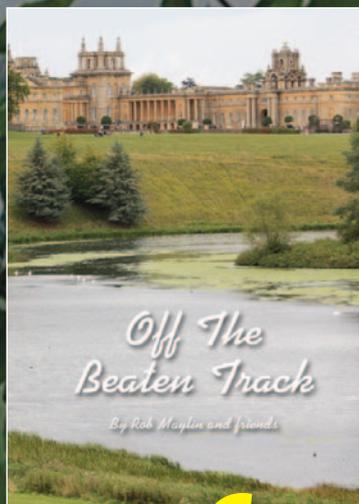
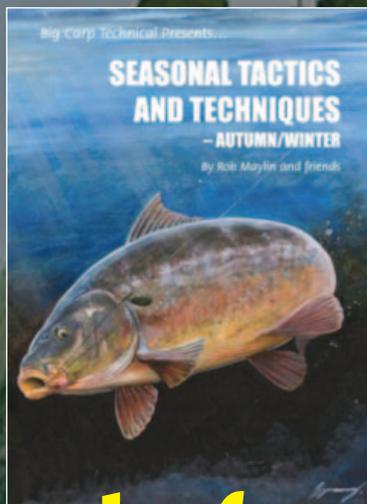


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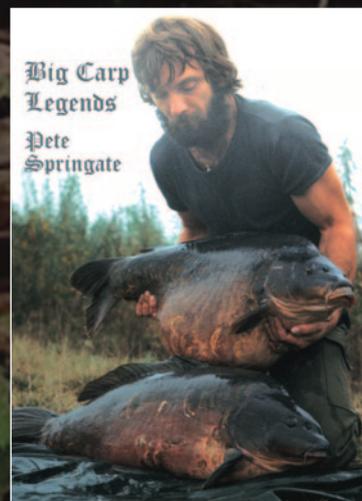
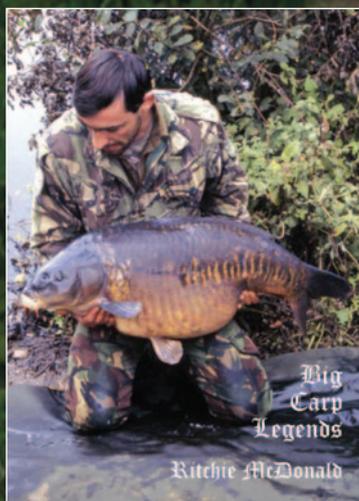
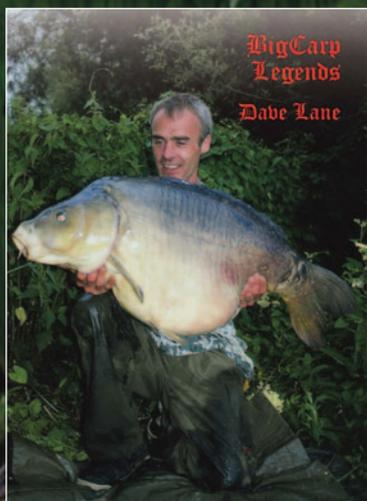
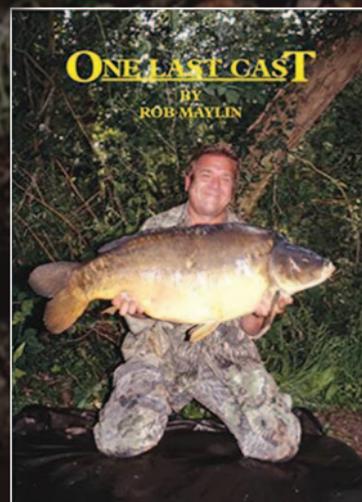
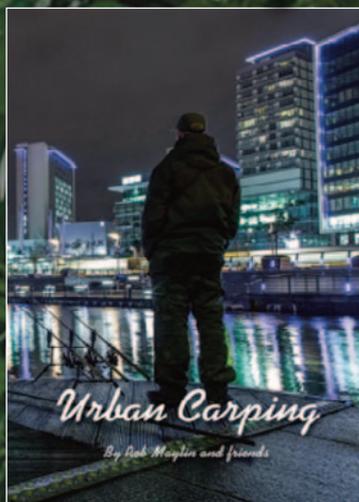
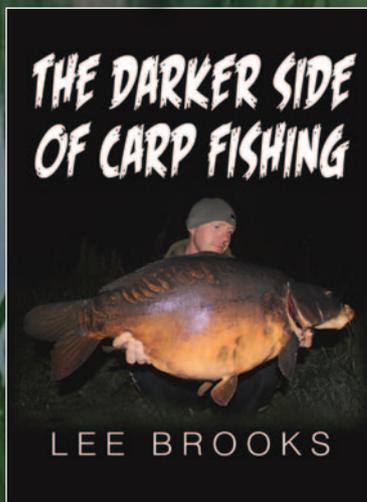


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River Lee Record

By Richard Pearson

It's late September 2002, 6pm, and I've just arrived at the river for a quick overnighter. I've run out of my usual bait, and the peg I fancied before I set off is gone. Guess I'll have to use some watercraft and find them... Never mind that; I haven't got the time and my beer is getting warm. I'll go to the other peg 150 yards upriver we'd been baiting for the past few months. The carp seemed to love this particular area, on the outside of a gentle curve in the river with eight to nine foot of margins at your feet and with the river bed shelving steeply upwards to the far side. An underarm flick of no more than three rod lengths out would land on gravel in about two and a half feet of water.

My friend Pat is fishing a lake nearby, and I intend having a social in his swim before getting the rods out.



This is the same fish Hearn caught in his book *Still Searching*. He refers to looking at a photo over and over, and that was my photo! Ha ha! The following weekend was a celebration piss-up that wouldn't have been out of place in your book, *Tiger Bay*! Good times.



This plan is put to rest as a good fish head and shoulders right in front of me before swimming upstream, rubbing its flanks on the gravel. I wait a few minutes until I'm sure it wouldn't be spooked before flicking the left rod right on top of where it had shown. A few handfuls of DT Baits Pukka Fish

Green Beast, a liberal dose of trout pellets, the right hand rod cast slightly further downstream and the traps are set. I see no more signs of the carp before hitting the sack.

I'd been fishing this stretch of the Lea the previous autumn with very little success. My head had been



turned by the empty banks and the cracking fish my good friend Gareth kept catching. We knew of one fish that had been caught a few years earlier at thirty-six, maybe carrying a bit of spawn, as it was caught again the year before our campaign at thirty-two, but this was the biggest we knew of. This year, however, the carp were about in good numbers. A twenty-pound river carp was my target, and I'd come close a few times. Beautiful rocket shaped commons that tear off like missiles, scale perfect every time – fish with no names and banks with no anglers (most of the time, as it seems word was getting out!). This was like a breath of fresh air.

At sometime just after midnight, the left rod trickles away. It's a slow, steady take, not the rippers I'd come to expect, and before I hit it, I'm already thinking it sounds like a better fish. I don't bully fish; I like to play them off a fairly loose clutch and after ten minutes, which seemed like hours at the time, the fish is still plodding away in the deep margins. It then goes on a fairly long run at which point I'm now thinking something special is attached to the other end. Due to the surrounding trees and new moon, I can barely see the rod tip so have had no glimpse of what's attached. After a few more minutes, it's in the net first time. Still I've had no sight of the fish but I know now it's good'un!

The mat, sling and scales are ready. Even after unhooking, it still hasn't registered. I phone Pat and tell him I think I have a PB, which at the time was a shade over thirty. He comes trotting over a minute later as I'm trying to read the scales, but I can't see the needle. It takes a few seconds to realise I'm looking at the top half of the dial – the wrong half. The needle is at the bottom bouncing around between forty-two and forty-three! I'm shell-shocked now, a gibbering wreck. This is what dreams are made of. After weighing on two sets of scales, we settle on forty-two and a quarter, but numbers are truly meaningless now.

(Top) Simon Ashenden, one week later, 25lb 8oz. Right place, right time – jammy git!

(Left) A return end of season trip six months later, same place, same bait, 25lbs.

I carefully sack her up in the margins and phone Gareth. "I've caught a forty pound carp!" I tell him. "A four pound chub?" comes the reply. It's not his fault. It's 1am and I just woke him up! He doesn't believe it either, but sure enough he's sat in my swim, stealing my tea an hour later. We sit up until dawn for the photoshoot. A small crowd gathers, photos are done, and I return the fish back to the river, knowing that I'll probably never catch one as good as her again. I'm still waiting.

The following weekend, I'm back, and a proper social is in order. I don't remember too much, but a mate who joined me banked a twenty-five common on his first trip there. Right place, right time for him, as it was for me! I've returned on and off for the past few years, caught some more myself to twenty-five, chub to eight pounds (awesome fight on carp gear) and moved house in the meantime, which has taken me away from that river. I hear on the grapevine that a river local to me has produced carp over twenty pounds. I wonder what else it holds? ■



I honestly thought when I got it to the mat that it was a small carp – 8lb 6oz chub a few years later.

Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack Competition

A massive thumbs up to our great friend Terry Dempsey for providing an awesome NEW monthly competition

And it could not be easier to win this fantastic **Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack** which contains **5kg of 18mm Nutcracker Boilies** (RRP £37.50) and a tub of **Nutcracker Pop-ups** (RRP £6.49), perfect for an early season session.

To win simply go to the Urban Baits Facebook page and 'LIKE' it. THAT'S IT! – Terry himself will pick a winner at random.

Closing date is 1st June, 2022

– SO GET LIKING!



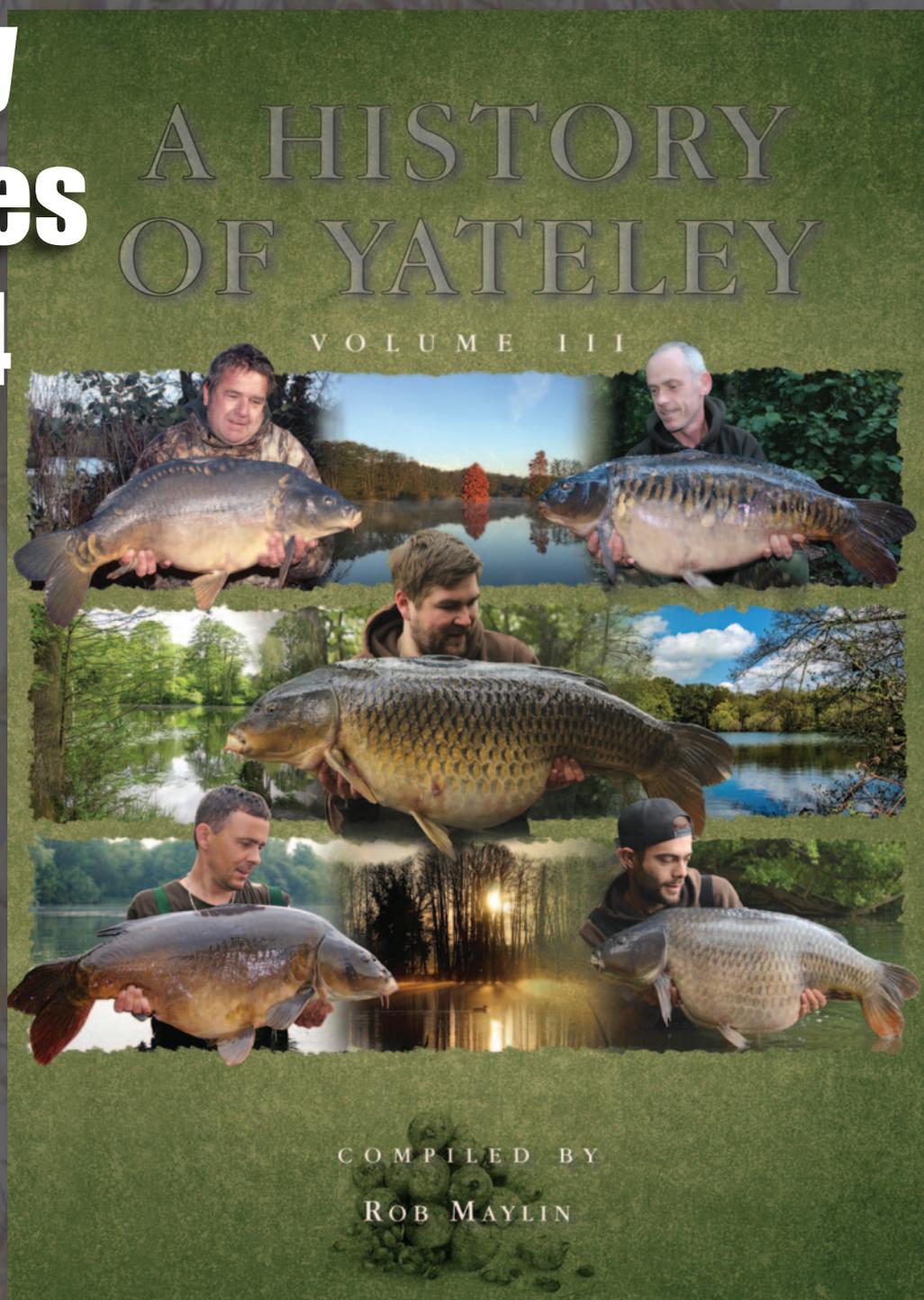
Yateley Volumes 3 and 4

In the time since the Cemex sell-off, Yateley has had a new lease of life. Although those legendary carp like Basil, Heather and their buddies are now long gone, the new stock has grown and returned Yateley to its former glory. Likewise, its banks may not now be trodden by the likes of Terry Hearn and me, but the anglers that fish Yateley now are just as passionate about the Yateley carp as we were 20 years ago.

Every lake has come on leaps and bounds in this time: The North boasts commons up to 54lb with a handful approaching 50. The Car Park too has numerous good forties. The Split Lake is a real eye-opener with a good head of big fish up to 47lb! You would never have dreamed it. The Pad Lake, South Lake and even the diddy little Horseshoe and Pump House all contain big fish. The Pad has numerous forty-plus.

Over the other side of the road there is a similar story: multiple forties in the Match, some beasts now in the Copse and The Nursery holding fish to 47lb and maybe bigger, as its anglers keep very secret squirrel about what goes on over there. The Nursery is certainly Yateley's secret jewel in the crown.

Hence the reason for this book... It's been six



years since the first two volumes, and the changes are phenomenal, the fish huge, and only living five minutes from the complex, I felt duty bound to record the history further on these lakes, the UK's true heritage waters. The format remains much the same: the page numbers continue through the volumes. Maybe in another ten years, there will be more history to record, even perhaps a Yateley British record... who knows? Now wouldn't that be something?

I have also decided to include the Yateley lakes on the edge of the old Cemex complex, these being Little Moulsham, Mill Lane, Swan Valley and Sandhurst. Each contain their own

treasures including a couple of fifties!

Because of the sheer size of this project and to do justice to all the lakes there will once again be two volumes.

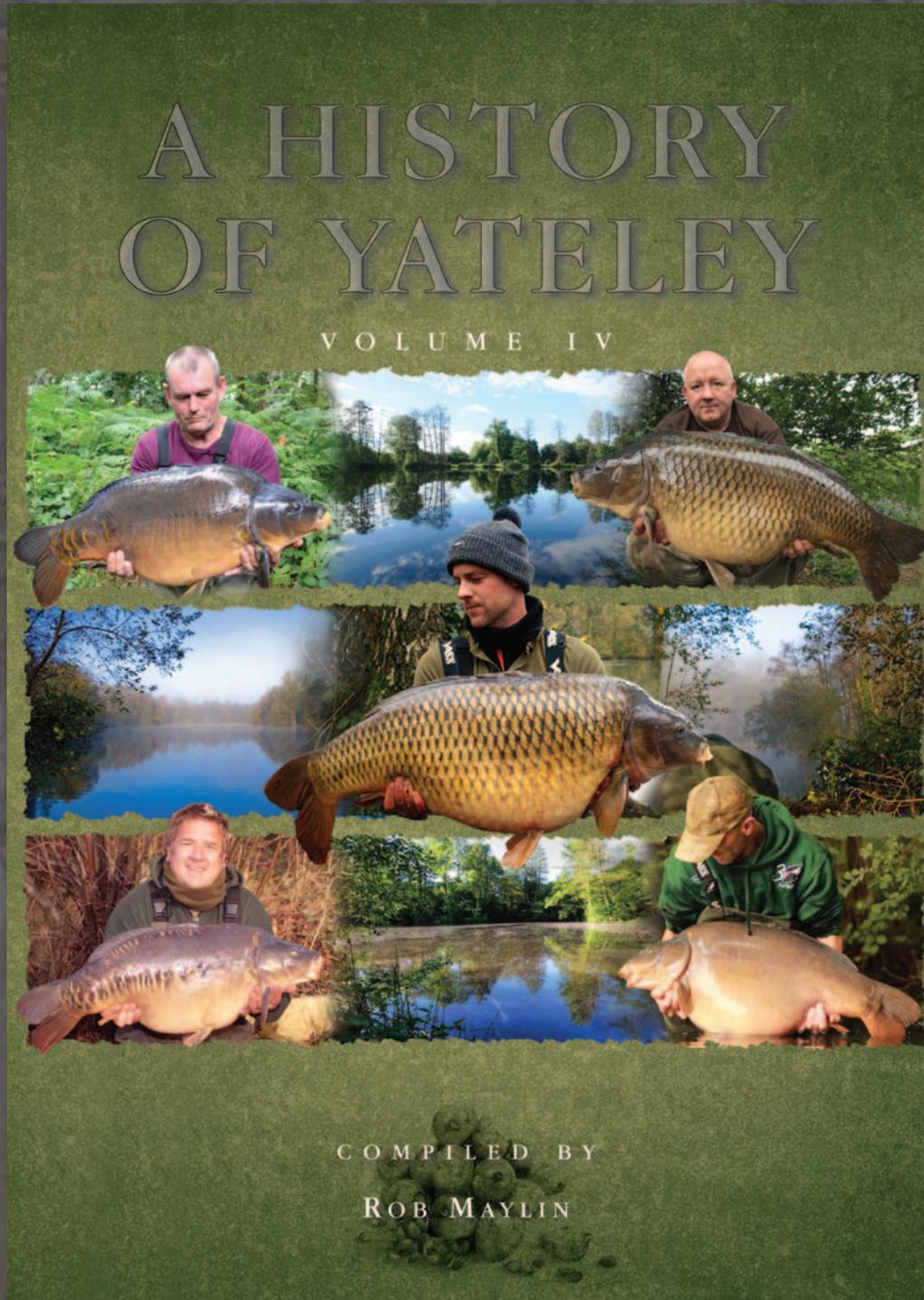
Volume 3 contains chapters on the North Lake, The Split Lake, Horseshoe and Pumhouse. The Pads Lake, Car Park, Moulsham and Mill Lane.

Volume 4 contains the chapters on The South Lake, Match Lake, Copse Lake, Nursery Lake, Sandhurst and Swan Valley.

There are some great introductory pieces from Martin Gardener, owner of Yateley West Fisheries and Ian Gray, Honorary Secretary of Farnham Angling Society, the owners of Yateley East, plus a chapter featuring the famous

Stoney and Friends MacMillan bashes each year. There are stock lists with photos of as many of the new residents as it was possible to get and chapters from the guys who fish there at present – ordinary guys with some great tales to tell of their captures on each of the lakes.

All this is combined with fantastic colour photography throughout, some amazing paintings of each lake and a host of special drawings commissioned for these volumes. These volumes are as much if not more of a work of art as the predecessors. The first two volumes were amazing and received worldwide praise... but dare I say, in my opinion, these two volumes could be even better? A massive thanks to all concerned, and long may Yateley continue! Long live the king of English carp fishing history!



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Trio of River Monsters

By CJ 'tight lines' Carpstar

It all started back in 2013 when I was walking down the river by my mate's house looking for a carpy spot to have a go. So I found a spot with a train bridge, a farmer's field and a stunning part of river in Surrey. I got up a tree and had a little look about, and on the other side of the river I saw what I thought was a fish, but could not see that far, so I risked going up on the train bridge, and to my surprise I looked over and counted nine carp. Three were proper monsters of 20lb-plus, and the others were mid to high doubles. So off to the tackle shop I went.

Over the next year I had small carp and tench and then I got breamed out every time I went, so I gave the swim a rest. I fished the weedbed in the margin, but then I went on to blank for the rest of the year. In 2014 I was putting all my eggs in one basket. I wanted that mirror carp I saw that day and a few times after. I asked every tackle shop for bait tips for the big river carp I had seen, but nothing came good. One day I went to a



tackle shop not far from the river, and the lad said, "Go old school, mate – hemp and corn and a really good boilie", so this I did and chose some Dynamite bait, as at the time it was all I could afford.

I started my river campaign on the first day of the season 2014, and off I went with 20kg of hemp, 10kg of sweetcorn and one bag off Dynamite Bait The Crave. I still don't know why

I chose this boilie to be honest. I knew it wouldn't be easy, but off I went to the spot, only to find weed covering half the river. After half the day raking two spots and a whole lot of weed later, I had two pukka spots so the line could lay flat.

That night I hooked a big fish, as it took me all over the river only to snap me up under a fallen tree. I chose not to fish for the rest of the night, and the next morning I rode my pushbike to the tackle shop and told the old boy what had happened. He said, "Use leadcore and 18lb line just to be on the safe side." So I got some ESP leadcore leaders and some Korda Sub-line, which did skint me right out, but I had to fish. So back at the spot I respooled my reels, made new rigs and kept the bait going in little and often. I had nothing for the rest of the weekend but went home feeling good for some mad reason.

I went back every three days to top up the swim, as I just knew no one would find the place or spots. Over the next few months I had been plagued by the bream, tench and six small commons, and then I got sent some bait from a competition on Facebook. It was Dynamite Bait The Crave pop-ups, boilies and some glug.





I went back on the 10th August and set about a two-week session, but with three rods instead of two.

I got to the swim at midday; it was a bit wet but the sun was just poking his head over the clouds, and I heard a mighty crash in the river. I looked up and my eyes nearly popped out of my head as I saw a massive carp. I'd never seen it before, and right behind it was another one of a similar size. I'd only seen carp like that in magazines and my knees went to jelly. It's mad how seeing a carp like that in the river makes you go all funny. I felt good about this, so I let the swim be, with no rods out, but just small handfuls of boilies in about four different spots just to see what's what. I sat there for

the rest of the day just watching, and then I set up my home and went to sleep, only to be woken by the odd train and the sound of carp crashing out. I set the alarm for 5am, and this would be the start of all-out war! I made a fresh combi rig with some Korda N-Trap stiff coated braid, tied a loop of about an inch or so and attached an ESP size 7 chod rig to the other end of the N-Trap. I made another loop of about 2 inches, and the movement was just what I was looking for. I had sort of seen it work when watching Terry Hearn on YouTube. Funnily enough the bait I chose all that time ago was The Crave, and that man Terry had put his touch to that bait, so you can imagine



I was feeling epic about it all – two weeks of fishing!

Day after day I had nothing apart from bream, so on the eighth day, as you can imagine, I'd had enough. My mate Lou had popped down to see me and to bring supplies and said, "Mate, why don't you fish by the bridge in the day? Look at all those carp there now!" I'd not moved from my spot to take a look for days, so I took two rods, cast the left one to the middle of the bridge and the right one just past a weedbed. We sat there just talking and having a right old good time. I was just looking and chucking a few boilies out when Lou said, "Mate, look at that monster in the weed!" I looked and in a hole in the weed I saw this carp I had not seen before. Lou chucked a bit of bread just near it, and 30 seconds later, slurp, and down went the bread.

"Oi," Lou said. "Get a float rod set up!" So I ran to get the third rod and set up the Fox float system with a nice bit of bread, only for Lou to say, "It's gone, mate." I said, "What do you mean, gone?" Lou replied, "It's sunk down and I lost sight of it." I felt gutted, I tell you, so I turned to walk back to the bivvy to hear the sound of my alarm just one-toning and the rod was bent round like mad. I flung my rod to the ground and picked up the right rod, striking into a carp for sure this time. Off it went upriver like a speedboat, and I was playing this fish to the left trying to stop it kiting left for the fallen tree. The rod went up high to the right, and the carp turned back on itself and swam at me. I was reeling in like mad to gain back some line and got it back under control for it to only run into the weed. I had the hump, put the rod on the alarm and left it for 20 minutes or so, when boom! Off it went again!

Then the sod went right into the weedbed it had picked up my bait from, which luckily was in reach with the net. I grabbed the line while Lou manned the net, and I pulled it by hand. Two pulls and off it went again. I grabbed the rod, but Lou was too fast for this carp. He scooped it up as it came to the top of the weedbed. It was in the net, sweating in the sun, and Lou said, "That's probably the biggest fish you've ever had!" I looked in the net and my hair went mad and I had to sit on the little brick wall. I went about sorting the scales

out and getting them spot-on as this was the biggest carp I'd ever had. My PB was a 27lb common, and this was bigger. She went 38lb 6oz, and we even put her on the scales twice. I had some pics taken, and then walked down to my normal swim and put her back.

We went back to the bivvy and just sat there looking at the pics, making a coffee and getting the right rod ready to put back out. Lou and I got chatting and totally forgot about putting the right rod back out we were having such a laugh, only to be stopped by my other rod screaming. I shot out and struck into the fish. It was in mid-water and felt nice. 20 minutes later I had another carp, another mirror, of 36lb 4oz.

I was now buzzing my bits off! Two 30s from the river in less than two hours after all the work I'd put in. So that was it – two rods out there and one in the old swim, but nothing till the next morning when the old swim gave me a 24lb 4oz common. I thought I was in for some fish now with three carp in under 24 hours. That had never happened to me

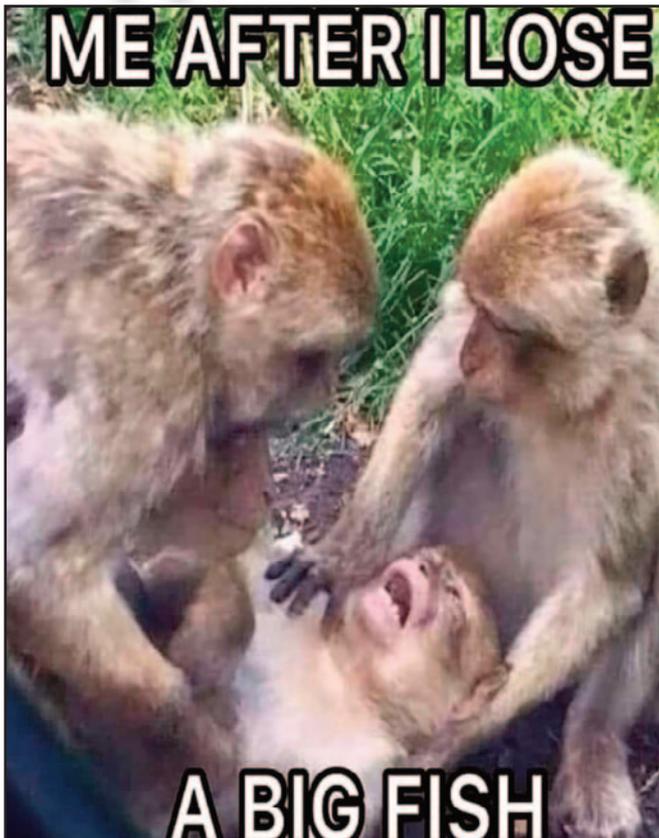


before; I'd have one, and nothing for a day or two. But that was to be the last carp of the two-week session, so I left there with a smile and some good pics and memories of lovely times.

Yes, I've been back there, and no, I've not had any of the big girls, but I

did see her just last week, and she is looking a good and 40-plus. So all I can say is watch this space. I hope to hook up with her again this summer but you never know. Thanks to Dynamite Baits, Korda and ESP and of course the legend Mr. Terry Hearn. ■

Carp humour



BIG CARP TOP TEN

Carp Fisheries




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fishery

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Email: cottingtonlakes@outlook.com
Tel: 01304 380691

River Delph

By Mark Barrett



Throughout my life I have fished for carp, though I would never class myself as a carp fisherman, as I have always enjoyed catching pretty much anything that swims. However a number of years ago I began to fall out of love with carp fishing. I had some really good times fishing for carp on the lakes and pits around my home in Cambridgeshire. Many of these lakes have since become household names, however what was changing was not the fish, they were actually getting bigger, but the anglers fishing those lakes. No longer were the fish themselves important it seemed, just that they were of a sufficient size to brag about with your mates. Not only that but the whole ethos of the sport seemed to be changing. Carping for many seemed to be second place to camping out with your mates with a barbeque on the go and as many tins of your favourite tippie as can be sunk in a weekend. Add to this the fact that there were many more of these types of angler and carp fishing on the pits just seemed to be something that was not going to be a part of my angling anymore, but then something changed.

That change actually came in the shape of a mid-twenty common caught by a good friend of mine, Richard Scott. Richard and another friend of mine Justin Webb had been baiting up a local venue to where I was living at the time and had been having some decent results. I must



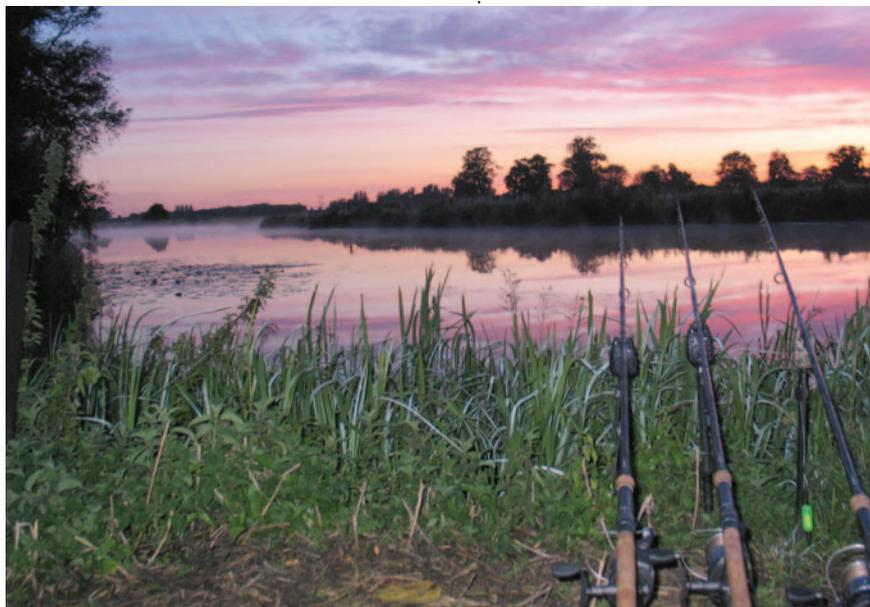
confess though that I was going through my withdrawal symptoms from the pits, and carp had somewhat lost their lustre at the time. I had little interest in joining them for the carp, but, as any river carper will tell you, baiting for carp brings in huge numbers of bream. Now in my neck of the woods that also means that the zander population won't be too far away either, and they have always interested me, so I joined them for a night. I targeted the zander whilst they went after the carp.

To cut a long story short, they both caught carp that night, but the one

that really caught my attention was one that Richard caught that morning. Weight was immaterial, as this was a glorious looking common, grey on its flanks, dark on the back and without a scale or fin out of place. As Richard held her up amongst the rape plants in the early morning sun, I could feel the stirring to go carp fishing rising once again.

Respect for the angling that the other two were doing meant that I didn't start straight off that season, but Justin decided against carrying on the following season, and Richard was not going to be doing as much so I decided to have a look at that venue too.

Now if there is one tip that I would give to any budding river carper, it is to spend as much time as possible in reconnaissance before starting upon a baiting campaign. It's an old military maxim that time spent in reconnaissance is rarely time wasted, and so it is with river carping. I have found river carp to be highly nomadic, and though you can keep fish in an area if it is one that they regularly visit, you will struggle to get fish to stop in an area that they don't. It is a lesson that I have learned on more than one occasion. So get a feel for your water and an eye out for the fish before you



(Top) A 23lb Cam common.
(Left) What it's all about.



start fishing, as you will save a lot of wasted hours and wasted bait.

So with that in mind I spent the intervening close season walking the banks and watching for fish, but, if truth be told, by the start of the season I had seen very little in which to place my trust to start baiting. This wasn't helped by the weather being

pretty ropey during the spring, to the extent that there was a flood only a couple of weeks before the season began. So with that in mind I began the season, on the first night, with zander in mind, but by the dawn of the new season I knew that I had found my starting point, as with pretty much every cast that I made

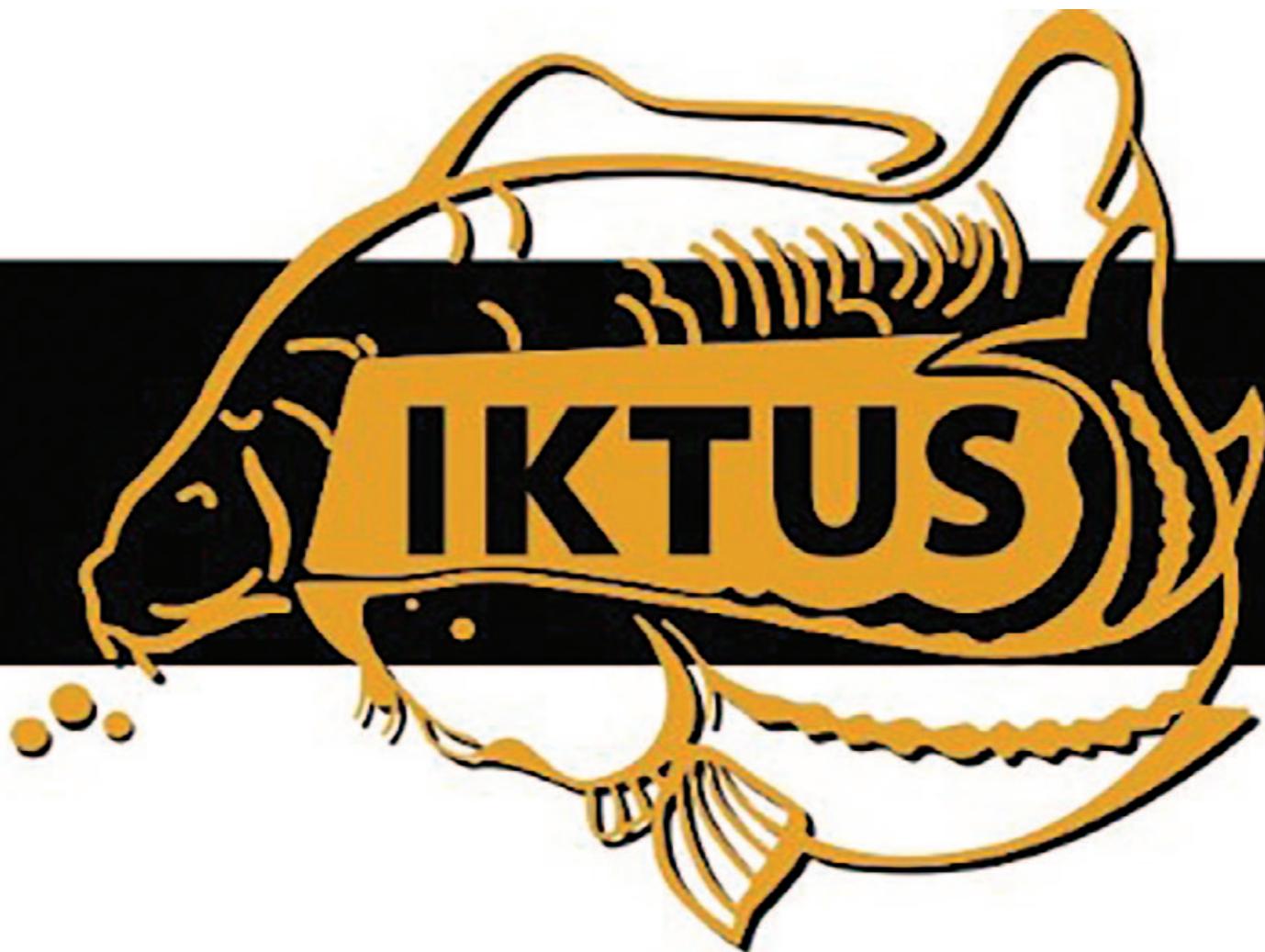
with my zander rods, a carp would bow wave off. With finding fish the priority, so the baiting campaign was to start in earnest.

Prebaiting is, to my eyes, possibly the most important aspect of river carp fishing. Due to their nomadic tendencies, keeping the carp in the area long enough to catch them is paramount. Therefore you need to be able to introduce enough bait to keep the fish in the area and of a type to keep them foraging and coming back, time after time. Now the mix that I have has no special name designed to catch as many anglers as fish; it's just a pretty straightforward and easy to prepare mix consisting mainly of wheat, pigeon conditioner (maple peas, wheat and mixed seeds), sweetcorn and hemp. Of course what you choose to use will depend in part upon where you are fishing and what means you have to introduce it. What do I mean by that? Well as an example, on a big, deep, flowing river, then I would suggest that bigger, denser



(Top) Glenn with 34lbs of Ouse mirror.

(Left) 23lb 6oz for Richard Scott, amongst the rape plants.



FISHING RESORT



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onto the new water... The first trip that I made there I made a huge mistake. Though I had been introducing a large bucket of particles into the area that I had seen the carp in before, every other night, I was persuaded by Richard to go and fish the area that he had been baiting. To say this trip was a disaster would be to put it mildly. It would be no exaggeration to say that the walk to this swim was in the region of two miles. Now that's not too bad unencumbered, but pushing a barrow it was an absolute ball buster, and by the time that we arrived at the swim, over an hour later, we were both sweaty, panting messes! Feeling that a cuppa was in order before anything else, I went to dig out the stove, only to realise that I had left it at home! I can honestly say that I haven't walked as far in years as I did that weekend, and at the end of the session, without a run to show for it (though I did manage a good zander of 11lb 11oz – old habits die hard!). On the way back I told Richard, in no uncertain terms, that I wasn't about to repeat that anytime soon, the next weeks campaign to take place in my baited area, a mere half mile from the cars!

That week was extremely hot, and with the cool spring, the chances were that the carp had not spawned, and so it was with some degree of doubt as to whether the carp would be otherwise engaged that we set

**(Top) 21lb of perfect common.
 (Left) 20lb common from a confluence.**

particles are going to be needed to get down to the bottom, especially if your only means of introduction is via hand or spod. You could very easily end up introducing bait all over the place if it's too light and gets swept with the current. Fortunately the majority of the rivers in the Fens that I fish are pretty sluggish for most of the summer so that mix that I use works very well and has the added bonus of being very cheap and easy to prepare. I do also introduce some boilies and on occasion, peanuts or tigers, but only on the odd occasion when I think that the bream are going to be inactive – so not often!

So going back to my initial forays





forth. Another mate of ours, Glenn Gillet, joined me for the first two nights. Glenn had been at the river carp long before we had, but in common with some of us, he was taking a break from the carp on pits and had got quite keen on zander too, so in much the same way as I had the year before, he looked to take advantage of the bream feeding there to get amongst the zeds.

That first night was to be a turning point, as just as the sun started to climb into the huge Fenland sky, so one of my rods ripped off, and I was

doing battle with my first river carp. To say that these fish are wild would be a massive understatement. Soon all my rods were bleeping away as the fish managed to pick up all the other lines! Eventually a huge mess of line, weed and carp were bundled into the net, and amongst the detritus lay a pretty 14lb common. I could scarcely believe that this fish had been responsible for such carnage, but I beamed ear to ear as I held it up in the dawn light for a few snaps.

The next night was uneventful with no carp to Glenn or me, though Glenn

had managed a few mid-sized zander to keep him occupied. Glenn was on his way midmorning, but Richard was to join me later in the day. Whilst I awaited his arrival I rebaited and soaked up the summer heat, which was by now getting pretty oppressive, and I had a mooch around to see if there were any fish that fancied a floater.

With my floater fishing coming to nothing I was napping on my bed-chair when Richard arrived mid-afternoon, along with a friend of his, Phil, who had come down for a look. We all pitched in to get Richard set up, which was a wise move, as no sooner had we done so than a huge dark cloud loomed on the horizon. The heat that had built up all day was about to break in the most spectacular fashion. Already we could see the lightning forking across the sky and the rumbling of thunder. I hightailed it back to my broly and battened down the hatches just as the storm rolled in.

The rain was absolutely torrential, and I sat on the chair peering out at the monsoon, when I realised one of my indicators was hanging on the floor. My first thought was that the rain might have knocked it off the line, but with the rain sheeting down, I wasn't really inclined to go and check, but something made me do so.

Upon reaching the rod I realised that it hadn't fallen off, but had just dropped back. Now for some reason the penny didn't drop as to why this would be; I still felt the weather was the culprit. It was only after I had reeled in something like twenty yards of line through the indicator that I realised something must have been responsible, other than the weather. I picked the rod up, with the rain still running off my face and swept the rod up. I could see straightaway that the lilies opposite me were swaying with the pressure I was exerting, despite the fact that this rod was cast down-river. I could feel a substantial weight plodding away on the other end, trying to bury itself in the pads. Fortunately these were pretty sparse, and steady pressure brought the fish free. Now I would love, at this point, to depict an epic battle to and fro. The truth of the matter is that the fish



**(Top) Bit different from a bait boat and often just annoying.
(Left) Clearing a swim.**



came in like a dog on the lead, but what got my knees knocking was the immense back that was heading towards the net. Here a problem raised itself in that the banks were quite high, and I had to kneel right down to get the net low enough. I managed that with no problem, but to grab hold of the frame I had to lay on my belly. On my first two attempts to lift the fish out I couldn't shift it; in fact I was checking for where the net

had snagged. It was never snagged though; it was just the weight of what was in the net that was causing the issue, as I was to find out when I eventually got her out and onto the mat.

Turning the fish out of the net, I really struggled to comprehend the size of the fish in front of me. Not only was she thick across the back, but she was as round as a football and obviously carrying a good amount of spawn. I slipped the hook out and grabbed my scales and sling, being very careful about handling her (in fact I only have two shots of me holding her, as we didn't want to handle her too much in her state, most of the shots being on the mat). I slipped her into the sling and lifted. Immediately



another problem hit me as the scales just bottomed out. I had actually only just bought them, and I had certainly wanted 40lb Avons, but I was certain that as this fish was bottoming them out, they must be the 32lb versions. This left me in a bit of a quandary, as I obviously wanted to get the fish back as soon as possible, but at the same time I realised that this was certainly a personal best, and its true weight was unknown. Add to these factors the continuing thunderstorm and the fact that I was completely drenched from my outer to my jocks, and I was looking at a somewhat uncomfortable night. I certainly didn't want to subject Richard to the same if he brought up his scales.

With seemingly no other option, I

(Top left) Crack of dawn 21lb common.

(Top right) Double 18mms to avoid the bream – it doesn't work.

(Below left) Glenn doing battle with a River Cam carp.

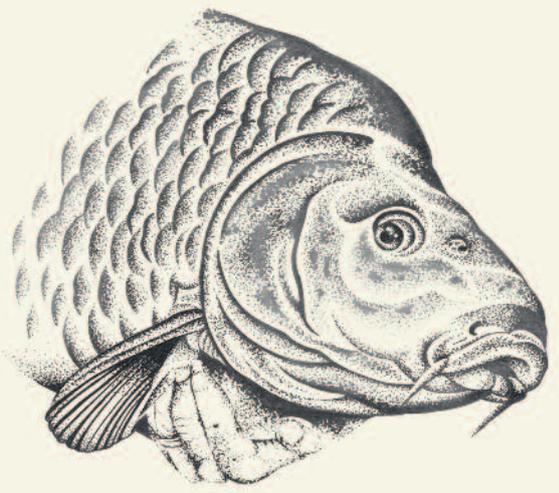
(Below) Glenn using a long-handled baiting spoon to introduce particles.



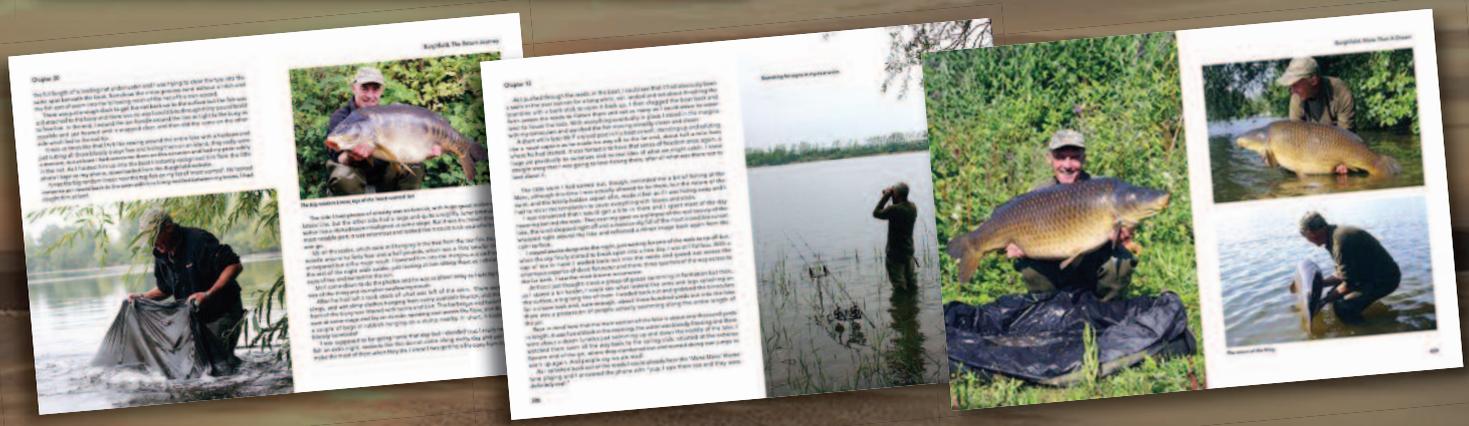
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put the fish very gently into the sack and then dived back under my broly, though in all honesty by that point I really couldn't have got any wetter! I rang Richard and explained what had gone on, but I cannot repeat his reaction! Very generously he offered to come down with his scales and



weigh the fish, even though the rain was still persisting down. I managed to persuade him to wait till it relented, which it looked like doing some time soon, in the way that summer storms do.

Around a half an hour later Richard and Phil came wandering down with big smiles on their faces, very eager to see exactly what I had actually got in the sack, as was I. I lifted her out onto the mat and to a few comments that again I could not repeat, I revealed

the fish to them. We started off by trying Richard's scales, which we knew definitely were 40lb Avons, but after zeroing them the scales were still bottoming out, so we tried winding them back, but at 42lbs they were still not lifting the fish off the ground. It was only now that the penny dropped as to what I had actually caught. I have to admit that at this point the old heart started to pound and the knees wobble a bit. These are the moments that all anglers, regardless of quarry, live for. Eventually we jerry rigged both sets of scales onto a storm pole, after confirming that mine were indeed 40lb versions. Finally we could get a weight to the fish, the scales reading 43lbs 14oz – an immense fish.

After a few snaps of the fish we got her back in rapid order and then the phones went into meltdown letting all our angling mates know. The texts and calls came in for a few days after that, but my abiding memory of the post capture events was very early the next morning, sitting having my first cup of tea and cigarette of the day, sitting in Richard's swim, the pair of us watching the water and quietly steaming where we were starting to dry out in the rapidly increasing temperatures. Either way that we looked not only could we not see another carp angler, but any angler of any



**(Top left) No manicured swims here!
 (Top right) Later that same morning, twenty number two at 22lbs.
 (Left) Like a giant slug.**

description – just heaven.

That fish caused somewhat of a stir for a short while, but it brought with it a lot of lemmings, following in the footsteps of others. There was also an awful lot of conjecture about where it was caught from, with a number of friends reporting back on conversations with other anglers who were determined that they had the true venue. Because of this pressure I didn't go back after that capture; instead I waited for the next year when the fuss had died down. However it was to be a summer of frustration, as the fish seemed to have done their disappearing act. Not a carp did I catch that summer, and in truth I didn't see many either. I have never before named the venue in print, but it's not exactly a state secret that the venue was the River Delph at Mepal.

With the poor summer and with a change in personal circumstances I decided to move on and try carp fishing on some of the other venues around the area. We are pretty lucky in the Fens that most of the rivers and drains have their carp populations. Some are larger than others, but they are there all the same. Top on the Fen carper's hit lists are the Rivers Lark, Little Ouse, Great Ouse, Cam and Wissey and the numerous drains that feed them. I haven't as yet made my way around all of them, for to do so would probably take a lifetime, and that is a massive part of the attraction. There are always other options and there are always surprises. This is

not the land of named fish on their umpteenth visit to the bank this season, nor is it the land of rows of bivvies and full time anglers. Because the truth is that though I had a fish beyond my wildest expectations, far more realistic a size are fish that are pretty unlikely to feature in the magazines, nor will they win you a fat sponsorship deal. What they are though are wild, untamed fish that have attained the size that they have by natural means, and not only that, but they have all the worst that the conditions throw at them to contend with.

So with this in mind what do we

**(Above) Misty autumn mornings.
(Bottom) My last river carp to date,
just over 20lbs from a new venue.**



look for in locating carp on rivers? Well the first and most obvious is the carp themselves. I have had far too many blowouts over the years by just trying to pick a swim on a river. These days I try my hardest to make sure that I or someone that I trust, have actually seen carp in that location. However this isn't always possible with some rivers. Here we do have to fish blind and in those instances it's down to good old fashioned watercraft to show us the way. Now this is where river carpers stand or fall. What might make a good feature on a lake will not always be so on a river, because there are different factors to consider on rivers than on lakes. To me the most important factors that carp on rivers have to consider are:

- Availability of food
- Respite from the current
- Suitable spawning habitat

Now this may seem like pointing out the obvious as regards the first and last, but how many times would you consider the effects of the flow on carp? The answer is of course never, because for most carp anglers flow has never been a consideration. It is though a huge consideration for river fish. Those species that don't deal well with heavy flows, which are most of our river species to be honest, will look for somewhere where they feel comfortable in times of heavy





flow or flood. Going back to the capture of my 43lb'er you will remember that I said that I found the fish on the first day of the season. Well those fish I am sure had congregated in that area, as just a few weeks previously there had been a spring flood, and the area I was fishing was just downstream of the only bend in miles. Just a simple bend will mean that the flow will be diverted to one side of the river, the other side being almost still. Carp are rarely far away from such areas if they are present. Falling into a similar category would be cattle drinks, though these are far from

common these days due to flood prevention measures.

Aside from these two, another very consistent carp holding area is around moored or derelict boats and marinas. Boats tend to mean food being dumped overboard, protection from overhead predators, and marinas offer flood refuge and again food dumped overboard. The other very consistent areas that I have found are areas where water is either pumped in or watercourses meet. Confluences of two rivers are always a good bet. A few years after catching the forty, Glenn and I found two such areas on



(Left) My mate George Day with a 21lb Cam carp.

(Bottom left) Not all twenties.
(Bottom right) Prebait.

the rivers Cam and Ouse. One was where a side drain was pumped in to the main river. The pump was so strong that when it came on, usually in the middle of the night, I had to move my rods out of the mouth, where I was fishing as they got swept away otherwise. Despite this, within an hour or two I would be getting runs from the same area. I am sure this fresh influx of water was attracting the carp, and we had some great nights on there, the best being six carp in one night, four of them being twenty pounds plus.

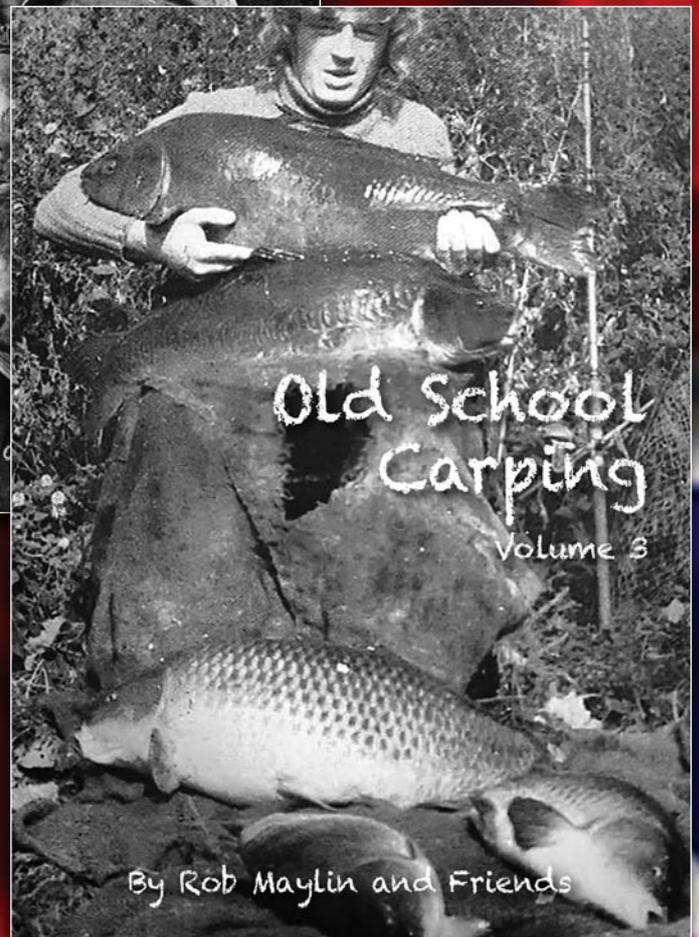
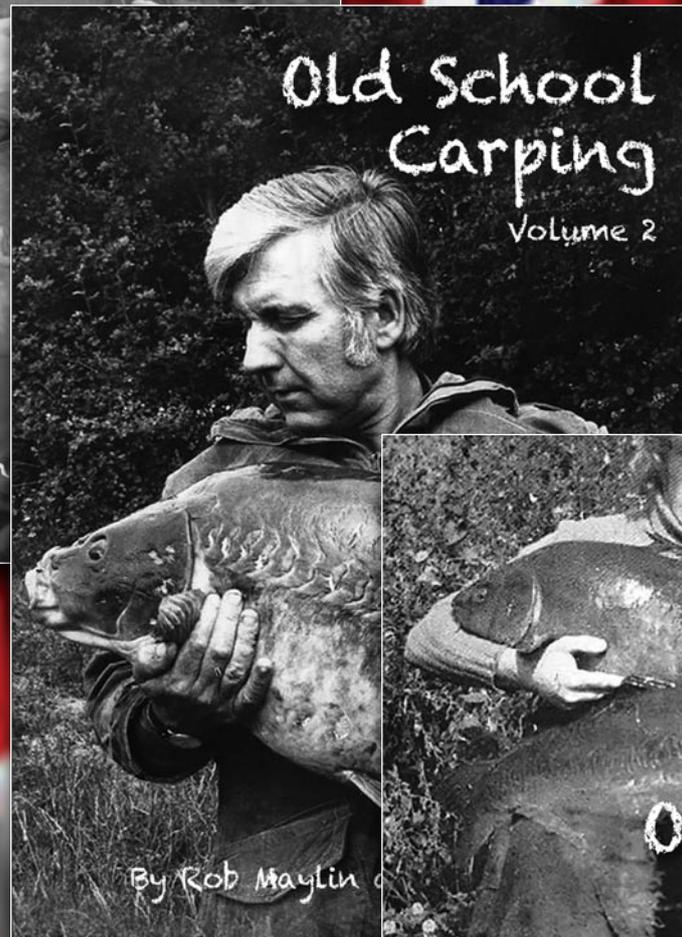
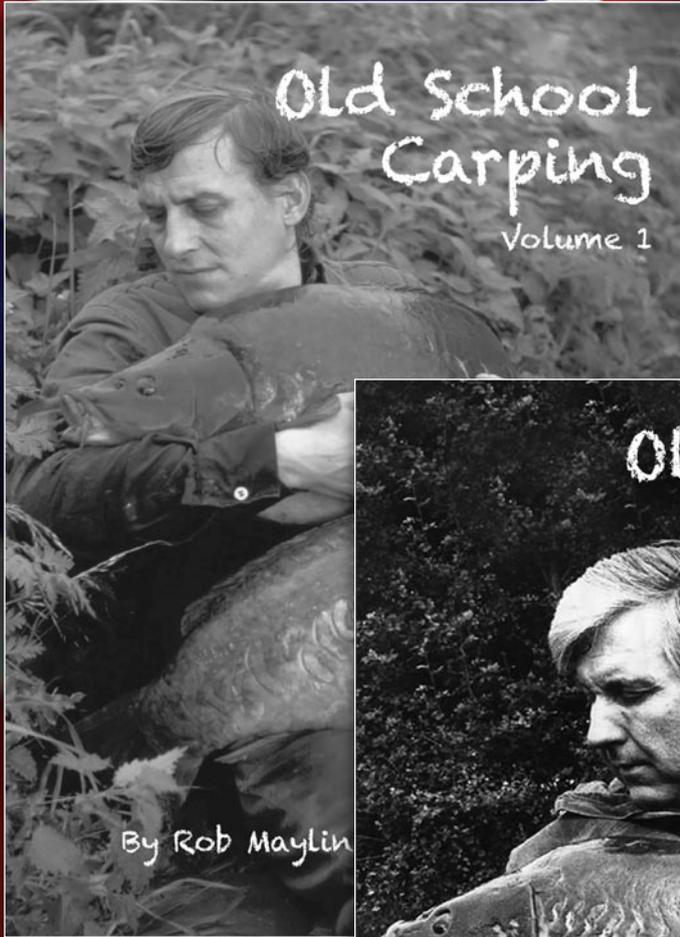
On the Ouse we fished where another river joined, and Glenn was the main beneficiary, in the shape of the most glorious 34lb mirror that was just stunning, though getting called out to do the photos at 5am was less glorious!

If I had to catch a carp to save my life, those would be the features that I would look for. Of course weeds, bridges etc. can also hold fish, but in my opinion this is far more of a transient area than one in which the carp stay for any length of time. I know my picks are more long-term through the occasional repeat capture. One such fish was caught from the same area, two years apart, instantly recognisable by the fact that it was possibly the ugliest carp I have ever caught, barely having a full fin on its body, and to use Glenn's words, "It looked like a giant slug!"

I hope that this has given you an insight into river carp fishing. It is never going to be everyone's cup of tea and can be, at times, bloody hard work, but this final tale sums up to me just what river carp fishing is all about.



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This tale takes place on the River Cam, one of my favourite rivers these days. I had already had a fish or two overnight, and I was sitting on my bedchair watching a barn owl hunting the fields across the river. The sky was going from deep purple to red to blue as the sun was rising slowly on the horizon when my morning cuppa was rudely interrupted by the run from hell. You often see in carp angling literature that “the spool was a blur”, well in this case it was true. So fast was this fish motoring that my initial attempts to slow it with my hand on the spool were completely fruitless. In fact all that happened was the line whipped up across the surface causing droplets to fly off in all directions, highlighted by the dawn light. At the same time the carp hit the surface, bow waving on and on down the river.

I eventually managed to get the free spool off, but even hitting the clutch didn't stop it. The fish eventually just ground to a halt 50-60 yards down the river, and I made the fateful comment to Glenn that “This fish doesn't even seem to realise its hooked,” when it made an unstop-

pable run into a massive near bank lily bed. Despite trying to keep the fish on the move, it just bedded down and everything went solid. No amount of tugging from me could get the fish free, and I couldn't go down to the fish as the drain that I mentioned earlier on was in my way.

Glenn then came up with a plan to don his chest waders, take the net and see if he could extract it from where it had gone doggo. It took a few minutes for Glenn to get round to the lilies, but when he got there he could see the fish, but agonisingly, though he could get the net under it (in fact at one point he had the fishes tail on the spreader block), the drawstring wasn't strong enough to get the fish free. Even more annoying was the fact that usually I took my large round pike net, but I had left it at home as the triangular net was easier to carry!

Eventually all the poking and prodding got the fish agitated and it took



(Top) One of four twenties in a night for Glenn.
(Right) Setting the traps.

off again, tearing itself free of the lilies but out behind the bed from where I was standing. Three times I played that fish back to Glenn, but at no stage was the fish in a position to net, and finally on the fourth time of asking the hook came free, later proving to have bent almost straight. To say I was gutted was the mother of all understatement, even more so because I suspected that I had lost the fish that I had been after ever since I had caught my forty, namely a thirty pound common.

The events I have just described happened about six years ago, however that vision of that carp heading off downriver will never leave me. It is still as vivid today as it was at the



**(Top) Sunrise on a new day.
(Below) The biggest of all at 43lb
14oz.**

time. Interestingly Glenn has never told me how big that fish was in his opinion, nor what type it was, to this day. I think that in itself tells the story, a story that one day I hope to have an

ending to, but until that day I will keep on searching for that big river common and expecting the unexpected. Maybe I will see you down there... ■



Rockford Haul

By Alan Rawlings

On Friday the 6th of March at 3:30 I arrived at Rockford Lake in Ringwood where I had pre-planned which swim I would fish. Unfortunately it had an angler in it already, so I spent most of the afternoon walking around the 55-acre lake watching the water when I saw a fish bosh. I ran to my car, loaded up the barrow and quickly got round to a swim, which was two pegs away from where I had seen the fish jump. I quickly set up and was ready to cast my rods to then realise I had left my net at home (gutted, really gutted), so I packed up and went home.

I then returned in the morning at first light in the early hours of Satur-



27lb 8oz.



43lb 2oz.



43lb 2oz.



40lb 2oz.

day morning. I sat in a well known peg and stayed there until 10am to then see a fish jump in the same place as I had on the Friday, so my thoughts were that I'd fish for a night here and then move on Sunday morning when the other anglers left. I put 3kg of bait at 175 yards spread 10m or so across and fished two rods, one with a white Krill pop-up and one with a pink Krill pop-up to either edge of the spot. All night I was having lots of liners until around 5am Sunday morning.

I woke up to a one-toner on one of the long rods with the white Krill pop-up on. After an epic battle I banked one of my target fish, the Random Lin at 42lb 2oz. I could not explain how I felt – speechless. I then changed pop-up and Spombed another kilo of bait over the area. Only 45 minutes later the same rod had its second run, and after yet another good battle I landed another 40lb'er at 40lb 2oz. Wow – a brace on my first 24 hours back on Rockford. I was so pleased and overwhelmed – one in the retainer sling and one in the net! I could not believe

my eyes. The rest of the day was uneventful, but it did not matter.

The following morning I had still had no further action, so around mid-day I decided to rest the swim for an hour. When I stretched my legs I recast the two long rods 175 yards the third rod 110 yards. After about 25

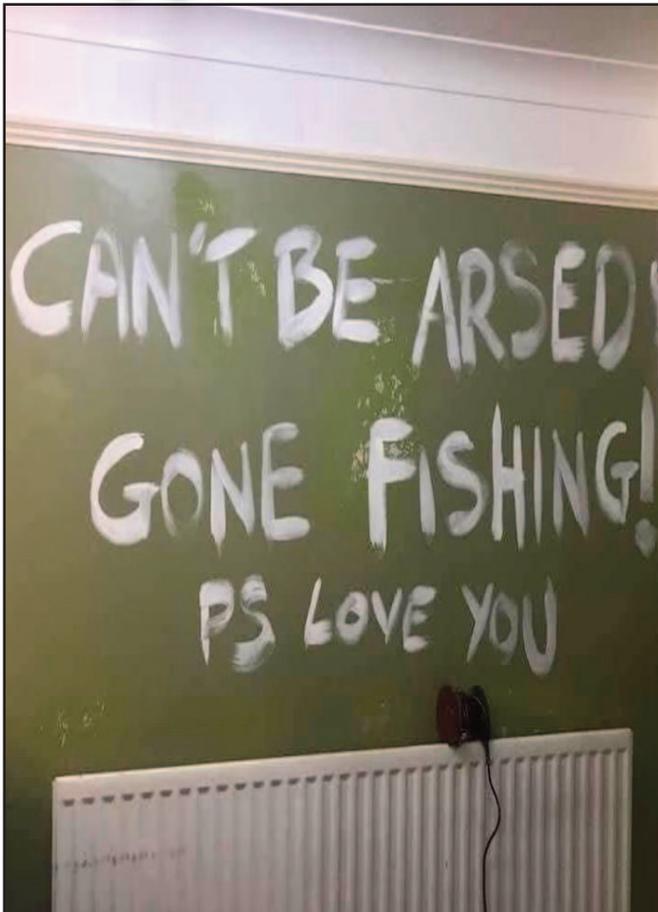
Wow – a brace on my first 24 hours back on Rockford

minutes the third rod (110 yards) took off. I then banked a lovely, stunning mint condition 27lb 8oz common. I could not believe my luck! A pal and I took photos, and I cast back out. At dark I put out 2kg of 20mm Krill bait over the top of the 110-yard rod, and a further kilo over the rods at 175yards. That night my receiver had run out of battery; I realised this when I was awoken to my reel ticking away on the long rod. I pulled into it, but nothing was there.

I cast the rod back out, but only

short to the left of the 110-yard spot, then back to bed. The next day (Tuesday 10th) at about 12am I followed the previous day, and rested the swim for about 20-30 minutes then cast my rods back out. 45 minutes later the 110-yard rod had a take. This fish had no intention of coming in easily, and after a heart stopping 20-30 minute battle I victoriously slipped the net under another Rockford character. Come on! I knew it was a lump when I put it on the scales, but I could not believe it went 43lb 2oz! Three 40s in my first session back on Rockford this year, and two of them target fish and a lovely common. Another 14 hours and the session came to its end. I had no more fish but did not really matter, as I was loving it. It was the best thing I had ever done leaving my net at home to return and have three 40lb'ers and a stunning 27lb 8oz common. I'd like to thank everybody who took photos and helped care for the fish – spot-on, lads. I can not wait to get back to the lake; I really can't.

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Watercraft

By Ben Eglen



For me watercraft is split into lots of different categories and definitely something that comes with experience – not just your own, but others' too. This can sometimes be portrayed as bad angling, which I disagree with cos one-track minds (I can do it all myself rather than watching, listening and learning from others as well as learning from every time you're on the bank) can be a mistake. Some of my early experiences of my first ever syndicate lake will live with me forever: turning up on a big windswept water full of weed, bars, plateaus and casting into the weed after fishing relatively clear day ticket lakes was a bit of a shock to the system, as you can imagine. That year watercraft/feature finding was to be a very big learning curve. The watercraft was a case of watching and learning for me, and the feature finding came next.

I remember speaking to a regular a few years later about my first session and how they were all watching and laughing at how I turned up and was casting accurately tight to an island. I didn't realise it was an island that had six swims on, as I hadn't bothered to



walk round, so I was affectively fishing someone's margin, but from the other side of the lake. At the time all I was worried about was doing what I had done on a lot of the day ticket lakes I had fished and fish tight to an island. Needless to say I didn't catch and soon realised by watching others and signs of fish that I needed a marker rod to find areas out in the lake. Now I think that feature finding is a category of watercraft, and that first six months was a big learning curve.

After a long hard winter it was

coming to the end of my first season, and there hadn't been a fish caught in the new calendar year. I woke early one morning and was up watching the water when I started to see fish show in an area that from what I had been told was not a normal place for them at this time of the year. But they were there, and by moving on them before others were awake, I managed to catch my first fish. That part of being one step ahead is now a big part of modern day carp angling and another part of watercraft.

The new season came, and by





watching the fish there were definitely spots they preferred to show over. This led to finding clear spots in the weed, but I soon found that the spots were different at certain times of the day and with different light levels. This led me to believe that the weed was standing up in the daylight/sun and lying down in the lower light levels. Finding these clear spots

and learning the gravel bars and plateaus became a big part of my armoury in the coming years on that lake, and some very nice fish were landed as a result. Line lay also became a big part of my thought process, and having line going over bars also came under watercraft for me, as being able to hide the line going over a bar and presenting bait at the bot-

tom of their patrol route means the carp aren't swimming into your line.

There you go – I've just touched on another part of watercraft – their patrol routes. The fish in that lake would definitely show in one area at first light and would move in patterns across the lake as the day progressed. By watching them morning after morning, traps could be set accordingly in a swim and the bait presented over a bar into a gully on a patrol route or in a clear spot in the weed at the end of where a series of bars ended. All this is watercraft, made easier with an aerial photo of the lake. Certain swims can have night spots and day spots, like being able to put a bait off the edge of a plateau in say 12ft of water at night and then when the sun comes out if you see fish cruising up in the water moving the bait onto the top of the plateau in say 3ft of water, or doing it because it's hot or on a hunch all comes with experience, and is all part of watercraft.

Using things at the lake to make my life easier happened at this lake as well. There was an old crane arm that was left from the gravel digging,



The History of Carp Fishing in Oxfordshire

Paul Harris and Geoff Adams

Carp fishing has a very rich history. In the early days of it becoming popular, Kent and the Colne Valley were the hot beds of our fledgling pastime and of course there was the legendary Redmire Pool.

Into the new Millennium and one area above all others exploded onto the scene, this was of course Oxfordshire. The quality of the stock of carp in this county was incredible but where did these beautiful scaly beasts come from? When did the Leney's get stocked? What were the origins of the famous Linch Hill fish and what of the history of the now infamous Linear Fisheries? Over the course of the pages of this book all will be revealed as Paul and Geoff have put together the facts of how these lakes were stocked and also banded together many successful local anglers, some of which have never published any of their catches, who tell their fishing tales on these stunning lakes.

With more than 300 pictures of some of this country's finest ever carp and several full page maps, this huge volume tells the story of Oxfordshire's carp fishing history whilst still leaving a little bit of mystery for your imagination!

Included within the pages of this book is the foreword written by local legendary angler and former tackle dealer Joe Taylor. We have chapters from Paul Kitchin on the legendary Vauxhall Lake. David Brian Williams tells us the story of the lakes in the City of Oxford itself! Chris Robinson has written an incredible chapter on two of Dorchester's lakes. Orchid and The Lagoon. The history told in Chris' chapter on these lakes is just incredible and wait until you see the pictures!

Next door to The Lagoon is Dorchester's Alliance Club Lake and Joe Forrester tells his story of the incredible scaly carp that inhabited this lake and how he outwitted them.

We have a real coup in the fact that brilliant all-round Oxford angler John Everard agreed to be interviewed and he has an incredible amount of historical information to share, as has Gerald Stratford who is also included in this informative chapter.

No book about Oxfordshire's carp fishing history would be complete without the story of Oxford's first forty and what a story it is. Richard 'Paddy' Paradine has never written or published any of his catches before and we have his interview here for you of his historic catch which was kept under the radar for so long.

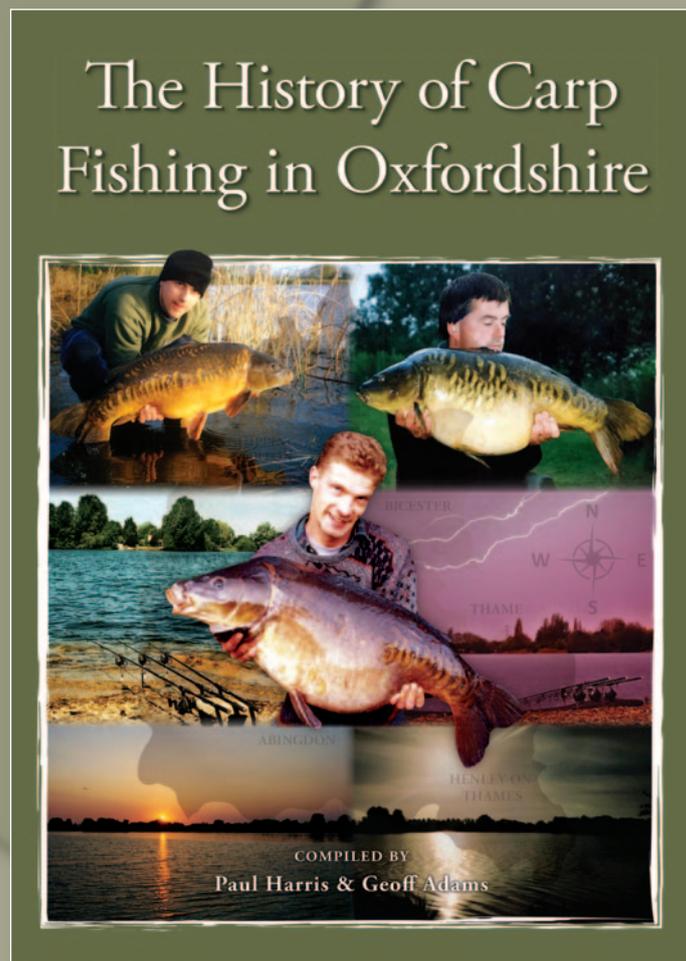
Nick Stansfield is a brilliant young Oxford carper who doesn't shout about his catches. We have two incredible chapters from him from two of the county's most iconic lakes, The Leisure Park and The Big S! Josh Chatfield has written a fantastic chapter which really gives you an insight into how fishing on The Leisure Park was back in the day when the Leney's were still about and culminates with his capture of The Big Leney at its biggest ever weight, the iconic 'Paddy's Fish'.

We have brilliant chapters on Newlands from Ginger Robinson and Milton Pools from Stuart Rothwell. Danny Aplin has written about his time on Linch Hill which will just blow you away! His pictures alone are worth purchasing this book.

Nick Franklin has written a lovely chapter on one of Oxfordshire's little known lakes and his account really hits home that carp fishing isn't always about the numbers game. Sometimes it's just you fishing for the unknown! There are superb chapters on Manor Farm from Paul Hathaway and St Johns from Stewart Roper.

If that wasn't enough Paul and Geoff have wrote chapters themselves which cover the stocking history of lakes, how the gravel company ARC played such a big part in the early stockings of Oxford's lakes, the early days of Linch Hill and Linear Fisheries and facts and stories regarding Oxford's other lakes, some very off the radar!

If you like your history, you like carp fishing and love stories of beautiful scaly carp, there is only one book to purchase this year. Here it is...



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A V A I L A B L E N O W



which made a perfect ladder to walk across and bait up off the island rather than standing there spodding for hours, saving time for other things, which all helps and all comes under this topic I think.

Moving onto another lake I fished around this time brought a completely different type of watercraft: being able to use a boat. I soon made up a clear bottom bucket, and being able to see over the side of the boat into the water viewing the bottom with my own eyes rather than trying to work it out with the marker rod was brilliant. Baiting and waiting to see which areas were being fed on was a completely different style of carping, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

The lake had a very long, thin, rectangular shaped island with a small channel through the middle of it sort of splitting it into two. I concentrated my baiting on spots I found at either end of the island. The lake itself was around sixty acres, but bank access was restricted to one bank, which the island was closest to, hence the baiting. The lake was mainly for watersports, and the anglers were second best, so I could not get away with much boating, and the fish very rarely showed, so it was definitely a case of observing the baited areas and wait-



ing to see which spots got feed on the most. Unfortunately there were a lot of tench in the lake, so they made this part tricky, as you just didn't know if it was carp or tench feeding.

One day when I was going out to check one of the spots I saw a big, dark shape slowly move off the spot, and that was enough for me. It could have been a pike, but I was confident it was a carp. Over the next few sessions I caught lots of tench and a number of commons, all under 20lb, which was good, but I knew the lake held bigger carp. Up until then I had been using a lot of particle, as the carp

in that lake had not seen a lot of boilies, but I decided to change to a bait and method that has always well for me when fishing for big carp, and that was to use Mainline's Active-8 and tigers in a ratio of 3 to 1 boilie to tigers for the next few sessions with the intention of trying to feed the tench off.

This worked, and on the final morning of a three-night trip I had a very fast take and just knew it was bigger. I took to the boat, and after a mental boat battle netted a lovely dark common and another type of watercraft was added to the armoury. ■



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A Few Along the Way

By Dan Hegan

So after what seemed like a very long and fruitless winter on Swan Valley it was finally nice to start getting amongst the carp as they began to move around and start feeding. The month of April has been very kind to me at Swan Valley; it's worked out that I have caught every trip apart from a work overnighter that I did, so I can't really complain about that. Now all of my fishing consists of weekends and the occasional work overnighter, so it's a case of slotting in and around people, as it's been quite busy there of late, especially with all the new members being quite keen and putting in some serious bank time straight away. This of course is expected due to what is swimming around in the lake. There are some truly stunning and big carp.

My first couple of sessions in April I managed to catch carp of 21lb 10oz and a lovely scaly 20. On a midweek overnighter the following week I was rewarded with a 28lb mirror, so already the effort I was putting in was



paying off. The following weekend I wasn't due to get down to the lake until Saturday afternoon, but as one of my jobs was cancelled, I managed to get down to the lake by 3pm-ish on the Friday. After a couple of laps of the lake, I settled for a swim called Ginger Ben's in the Match Lake, and to be honest it was a no-brainer going in there, as it was the only place that I had actually seen carp, and plenty of them. The swim itself has had recent form, as Ginger Ben had done a few nights in there prior to me and had a bit of a result with a few decent carp being caught.

As the carp were fairly close in, I didn't really want to make too much disturbance, so with that in mind I put

(Top) Swan Valley in winter. Many times I woke up to this.

(Left) 20lb Scaly from an overnighter.

1oz leads on all three rods, so hopefully it wouldn't spook them off. After a couple of casts I was happy with the drops I got. All three rods were to be positioned in gaps in the weed, and although I felt fairly good drops the fishing conditions dictated that I would be using chods and a hinged stiff rig due to the amount of weed and silt that was present. The bait that I would be using was again going to be the Nutcracker. It's a bait that had been going into the lake the previous season in large amounts, and the carp had already built up a liking for it, so again it was a no-brainer to use it. At the moment I'm using the washed out pop-ups, the white ones, but adding a little twist by topping them with a bit of plastic



(Top) 21lb 10oz Mirror.
Below) 29lb 14oz common.





33lb 12oz mirror.



38lb 2oz mirror (the Long Fish).

CARPING RE-CUT

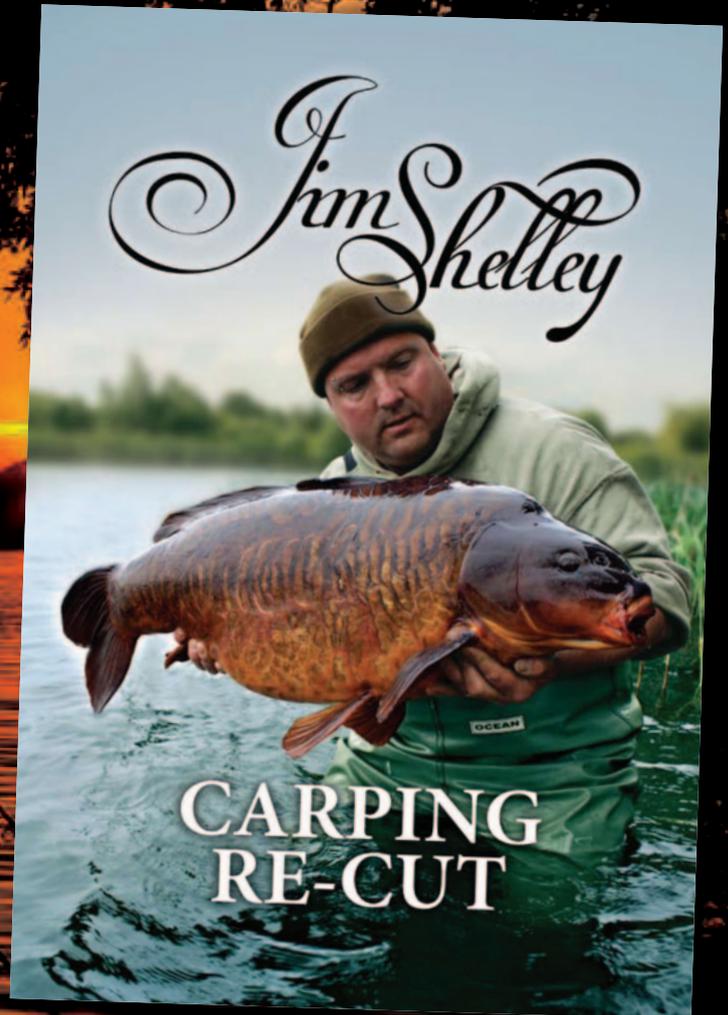
Jim Shelley

Jim Shelley is the UK's most prolific hunter of big carp. He is a carp fishing force of nature and no carp can withstand his pursuit for long. He has carved out a career in carp fishing with an iron will and perspiration, and this book is the physical embodiment of that drive. Every single word is testament to the fact that Jim won't ever give up. He taught himself to write so that he could genuinely say that he'd written this huge book unaided. That is just what he has done too.

Inside you'll find the truth... the whole truth. Nothing has been airbrushed and at times Carping Re-Cut can make for uncomfortable reading. It's gritty, it deals with difficult situations that Jim found himself on and off the bank. Let's not forget, throughout a portion of this book, Jim's wife Jane battled with cancer and if the strain took its toll, then Jim has written about the consequences, and left nothing out! Carping Re-Cut tells the story of a man driven to catch the biggest and best carp out there. There are colourful and touching moments along the way and of course, there are the fish! This book holds beautiful images of many of the fish that captured the hearts of carp men throughout the last decade or so. Eventually, Jim worked out how to catch them all, and the way that he did it is laid bare here for you to read.

So, join Jim on a journey that starts in 'bandit country' near Heathrow, passes east through Cambridgeshire and Norfolk before swinging back via Royal Berkshire, and plunging deep into the jungle that is the mysterious Colnemere, as Jim searches for the ultimate prize, the Black Mirror. One thing's for sure, it won't be dull!

At last the long awaited second book from carp fishing's No.1 angler is available direct from Bountyhunter Publications. Carping Re-Cut is the follow up to Jim's highly successful first book Carping Un Cut and is a mammoth size publication containing over 400 beautiful colour plates, exclusive stories and an incredible amount of huge carp from waters far and wide. Jim always was a great carp angler but over the past few seasons he has evolved



into the ultimate catching machine. Water after water, target after target and record after record have fallen to this sometimes controversial angler, nevertheless no one can deny his ability and no carp is uncatchable once Jim sets his mind to it. Jim's first book was a great read and it's sometimes hard for an author to match the quality of his first book, however this is not the case with Carping Re-Cut. This book is a revelation and no carp angler of any ability, age or status should miss out on what is definitely the book of the decade from the world's greatest carp angler.

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corn by Evolution Carp Tackle (just trying to be different).

So with the rods now fishing, it was time to sort out the rest of my gear and set up my home for the weekend. It couldn't have been any more than 30 minutes later when the middle rod was away with a one-toner... Lovely. After what only seemed like a few minutes I slipped the net under a 29lb 14oz common. It was a pretty lacklustre fight, but I'm guessing that was due to the amount of weed that was covering its head. Fishy pics were taken and the carp returned, and the rod was flicked back out on the spot. Just as it got dark I decided to bait up. I waited until then to do it, as the gulls were relentless every time I tried to do it during daylight. About 20/30 baits were fired out around my middle and right hand rod, but none round my left one, as I wanted to keep it as a single for the night.

Around 5am the following morning I received a single bleep on the left



(Top) Ginger Ben's swim.
(Below) 28lb Mirror from an overnighter.

hand rod. Thinking it was nothing more than a liner, I closed my eyes. As soon as I did so, the line on the reel

sounded like it was going into melt down. I was out of my bag and on the rod in a second. You can generally tell



when you have a decent one on the other end of your line, and I knew it straight away. It wasn't really going on long fast runs, but more of a slow and steady plod around. It would have done me a favour if it had got some weed over its face to help me out, but instead it was going up and down the margins doing what it wanted. Well, due to its close-in plodding around the inevitable happened, and it wiped out my middle rod, but after a little bit of untangling I was soon sliding the net under her. As it was a good sized fish, I quickly got on the phone to a mate fishing a couple of swims down from me and asked for a hand with the weighing and pics etc.

A couple of the lads came round and gave me a bit of assistance. She went 39lb 10oz on the scales – not quite the magical 40, but I was over the moon nevertheless. I had just beaten my PB by just over a pound, so

plenty of photos were taken and of course a few trophy water shots. To be honest I was blown away with the capture; for one, it's a fish that really doesn't do that many bites, and it was one of the cleanest carp that had ever graced my net. My next session at Swan wasn't going to be until a few weeks' time, as I was starting to get really busy with work, which meant working at the weekends.

A few fish had come out the following Saturday, so I thought I would pop down and see a few of the lads. On arriving it was very clear that not many people were fishing, which was strange. After a catch up with the lads and a quick walk around, I decided to go home and grab my gear, as it looked spot-on for a bite. Luckily I'm a Yateley Boy, so I was back down at the lake within ten minutes having another walk around. Again it was very obvious that a good head of carp were still in the Match Lake. It was

quite sunny and warm, and due to the amount of weed that was present it was obvious to fish in the Match.

I opted for a swim called the Pallets. This swim was in fact opposite Ginger Ben's where I had caught the 29lb 14oz common and 39lb 10oz mirror the previous weekend. Again as my last session the fishing situation dictated that I would be fishing in and around the weed, so again it would be two chods and a hinged stiff rig.

The two chods were to be positioned either side of a big weedbed about 15 yards out, and the hinged rig was going down my left hand margin in the silt. Nutcracker washed out and white pop-ups were again what I would be using, and of course they were to be topped with fake corn by Evolution Carp Tackle.

Around 6:30pm the carp started to put on a show; they seemed to be crashing out all over the place, and to be honest I was amazed I hadn't had



39lb 10oz (new PB).

a take yet. About two rod lengths off to the left of my middle rod there were a few patches of floating weed, and a couple of carp had shown themselves in it. I decided to bring in my margin rod and replace the hinged stiff rig with a chod. I had a couple of casts in the general area and was happy with the drop I was getting. As I was putting on a fresh hookbait a carp head and shouldered on the spot where I was clipped up to... Excellent, I thought. The rod went out first time, and I was pretty confident of a quick bite.

Around 30/40minutes later the left hand rod one-toned. Due to the swim I had to get the chesties on, as I would be getting wet to land the fish. As with the big girl the previous weekend, this carp was doing exactly the same – a lot of plodding around with the occasional run towards some snags down to my left. But after a short while the net again was sliding underneath a decent sized carp. The rain had arrived by now, so it looked like I was going to get wet after all. I asked a mate if he could get someone to do some pics etc for me,

and luckily one of the lads who was fishing down to my right was walking round and offered a hand. So after lifting the carp out of the water and placing it on the mat, I parted the mesh of the net a was greeted by a familiar face – the Long Fish.

I had caught the Long Fish the previous season at 38lb. To be honest recaptures have never been an issue for me; I just love catching carp, and this time it went 38lb 2oz on the scales. A couple of photos were taken, and she was sent back home. I wasn't to concerned about getting lots of pics, as it was a recapture, plus we were both getting a true soaking as the heavens had truly opened. Once I got myself sorted, the rod was put back out on the spot with a fresh rig and hookbait. This time I decided to put about half a kilo of chops in the area, as the carp were still very active showing themselves. About midnight there seemed to be a flurry of action from the opposite bank as my mates Ben and Chris both had runs no more than five minutes apart. This filled me with optimism, as surely it was only a matter of time until one of my alarms

sparked into life?

It wasn't until around first light that the recast rod that had done the Long Fish went off like a steam train. Again it was on with the chesties, and it was time for battle with another Swan Valley carp. Unlike the Long Fish, this carp went straight into the weed and locked me up straight away. After keeping steady pressure on the fish, it was free after about five minutes and plodding around down to my left hand margin. After a couple of near misses with some snaggy overhanging branches in the water, the carp was soon gliding over the net cord... Result!

A friend of mine was fishing one of the island swims behind me, so I gave him a call to see if he could do the honours with the camera. He had actually caught one himself and was waiting for some pics to be done as well. He came walking round the corner a couple of minutes later to assist with my prize, which was languishing in the net. Another mint looking mirror was staring back at us after I parted the mesh, and on the scales it went 33lb 12oz. The trophy shots were taken, and she was sent back to her watery home. I thanked my mate for helping out as he headed back to him swim, and I was left to gather my thoughts on another productive session. The month of April has really been quite epic for me with plenty of carp being caught, and all of them being over 20lb, which in itself it's amazing, especially as the last four bites have been fish of 29lb 14oz, 39lb 10oz, 38lb 2oz and 33lb 12oz.

So that long cold winter spent on here, waking up to a frozen lake on many occasions was nothing more than a distant memory. Don't get me wrong; I know it's down to being in the right place at the right time, but I would like to think that all the time walking round trying to find them first and a little bit of angling ability has helped.

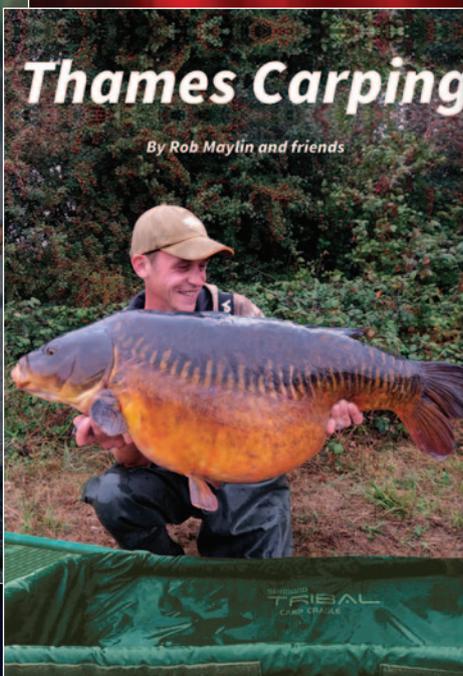
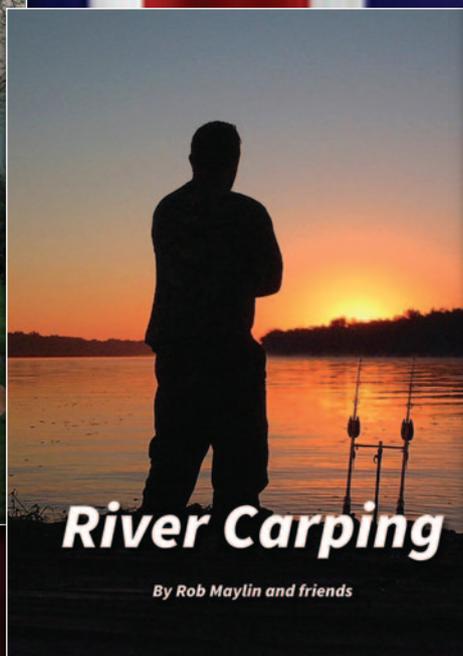
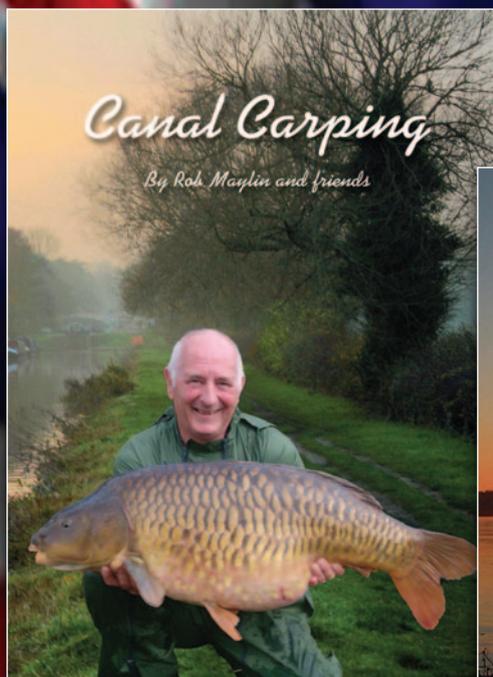
All I can hope is that the rest of the season proves to be as productive as this past month, and who knows? Maybe once I start to actually give them some bait my catch rate may improve drastically, but time will tell I guess. To be honest I'm just looking forward to spending another season on a lake that I'm really enjoying being on and hopefully catching a few along the way. ■



The Pallets swim.

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Top of the Wanted List

By Chris Claxton

So I'd got my Swan Valley ticket, and finally I was going to have a crack at some real old units – I just couldn't wait! Enoch was at the top of my most wanted list; in my eyes it is the best looking of the bigger fish in the lake. To start with though the goal was just to get into a few fish and try and work my way up. I had done five nights across three different sessions, and despite spending lots of time on the lake before the sessions to ensure I was dropping in swims on the fish, it just wasn't happening.

Then came the special session... I had the Friday off work and arrived at the lake first thing with the view to

spend a lot of time just watching the water and taking my time to pick the right swim. Although I had started to question if it was worthwhile and whether I was calling it right what with five nights for no return under my belt. I narrowed the swim choice down to two swims where I had seen fish, and I then spent a couple of hours walking between the two trying to make a call. I finally decided on the swim called "Ginger's" on the shallower Match Lake side of the lake. The fish were crashing and fizzing on this side of the lake consistently, not to mention I had seen fish here every time I had been to the lake, and it had produced a few fish over the weeks gone by.

I had a lead about and found a fairly clear spot in front of a weed bed; it seemed to have a little low lying weed but nothing of too much concern. With this in mind I rigged up with hinge stiff rigs to be fished helicopter style, I made the boom section from a fairly supple coated braid and made it longer than usual to ensure any weed in play would cause no issues. For extra peace of mind I put a tiny nugget of foam on the ever-reliable hand sharpened Drennan Continental hooks to ensure they were kept 100% clean.

The bait of choice was Area-51 from Heads Down Baits, but with a new little twist. I was fishing over the top of about a kilo of loose boilies with





standard Area-51 pop-ups on the rigs. The pop-ups had been soaked in a couple of different oils to give them the same twist as the bottom baits, and to make them ultra-attractive.

As I sat back and had something to eat that evening it just felt right; the conditions were bang-on, and it felt like something was going to happen. I think it might have been that anticipation that stopped me getting much sleep. I just couldn't settle; I was up and down all night watching the water.

I was sitting under the broly having a brew when all of a sudden the middle rod rattled off a several bleeps and the bobbin crashed up to the rod.

The rods tips were in the water to avoid floating weed and the clutch set reasonably tight to stop the fish getting into the weedbed behind the spot, so I was a bit uncertain about what to expect.

As I lifted into the fish the rod almost bent over double, and the fish was about 20-plus yards down to the left. Luckily the right hand bank in the swim had a reasonable amount of

room, so I walked down the bank keeping the pressure on. After a bit of a stalemate for five minutes or so the fish started to come straight at me and into a thick weedbed in front of the swim.

However, I managed to keep the fish quite high through this so it didn't get chance to plant itself deep. The weed around the fish seemed to calm it down as I slowly dragged a dead weight into the net.

I couldn't really see the fish through the weed, so I just assumed I had a big net of mainly weed with a fish in there somewhere. I wasn't concerned... whether big or small, this was my first fish on the bank from the lake, so I was as happy as Larry. I leant over to pull some weed off the fish, and it was then I realised it was just a light covering over the fish and the net was filled with a brute. I was blown away and couldn't believe what I was seeing.

I safely pegged the net in place and called my mate Mark. I told him he needed to come over lively to take some pics, as there was a real chunk

in the net. I got everything organised and unhooked the fish.

When Mark appeared, we hoisted the fish on the weigh crook, and I couldn't believe it when she tipped the scales 43lb 2oz, my first UK 40! I couldn't stop smiling; it's a moment that will live with me forever. We took a few snaps as you do and slipped her back safely.

I had got a bit caught up in the moment and didn't even think to try and identify the fish, so when I got a text from a mate to say it was Enoch, I thought, surely not? This was the fish I wanted the most. After studying some pics and chatting to the regulars it was confirmed as Enoch, and this really was the icing on the cake – I was over the moon. It is a stunning fish and a proper result – one that's going to be very hard to top.

I had a couple of smaller fish after this, a mint 21lb 12oz common and a 30lb 10oz mirror. I had got on a few fish at last, and best of all Enoch had graced the net! I am still smiling from ear to ear as I type this days after the event! ■

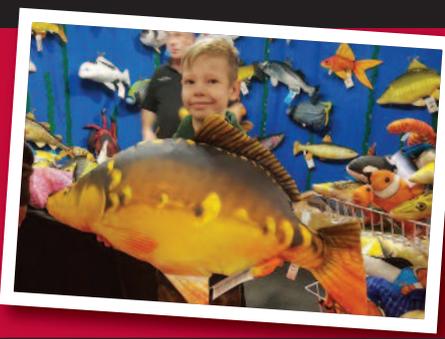


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Chronicle Fishing

April 2015 Lake Diary - Fryerning Fisheries, Ingatstone, Essex By Kevin Goss

First of all happy one year's anniversary to the Fryerning diary this month! April will make this the 12th page inside Big Carp Magazine. It's been a pleasure reporting on such an amazing syndicate, and I'm looking forward to reporting on another twelve. Now down to business! Well, as I said at the end of March's diary page, "Watch this space" and April has definitely not disappointed when it comes to the catch report this month, although the main lake is not in full swing just yet! There have been fifteen carp caught across April, all over 30lb, with a few of the A-Team coming out at over 40lb as well. I've not included a picture of the Gurm this month, as she's had her fair share of publicity over the last year, but I thought she still needed a mention. Neil McCann, fishing as a guest and on his first session on the main lake, managed to catch her at staggering 51lb 9oz, while in turn smashing his PB by over 25lb. Top angling, and well done.

Out of the hat next is Darren Pavitt finding Charlie at 43lb, a fish that's not caught all that often, and in doing so managed gain a new PB for his efforts on the main lake. Another success story this April is none other than the 'fish whisperer' himself Carl Carlucci, catching two main lake

Darren Pavitt holding Charlie at 43lb.



carp, one at 34lb 4oz and the other a member of the A-Team in Four Scale at 38lb 12oz. Well done, Carl, fantastic angling. Now here is a turn up for the books and a fish that I've been told has not made an appearance for a good few years. New member Luke Glover was fishing a 72-hour session out of the RH point when he glimpsed a rolling fish and cast a chod tipped with a Bait Locker SX white pop-up at the lingering swirl. He was then rewarded an hour later with a new PB grass carp, which moved the dial to 32lb dead. Great work, Luke – top angling.

As ever the Valley faithful are always on point when it comes to catching a few fish, with sixteen to be exact finding anglers's nets, all being over 20lb and three breaching the 30lb mark. So as ever, well done to all that have caught during April, and I can't wait to see what May is going to bring for Fryering Fisheries.

For the entire up to date goings-on at XL please visit the website at www.xlcarp.com or if you would like Chronicle Fishing to help showcase your lake in Big Carp Magazine please visit www.chroniclefishing.co.uk

Carl 'The Fish Whisperer' Carlucci with Four Scale at 38lb 12oz.



New main lake member Luke Glover finding a rare 32lb grass carp.



Chronicle Fishing

April 2015 Lake Diary – Bentley Fishery, Mores Lane, Brentwood, Essex By Kevin Goss

April sees us reporting back on the stunning a picturesque lake of Bentley Fishery. The lake has burst into life since the start of the warm weather in April, and the carp can be seen cruising all over the complex with fish being found and caught from all swims around the fishery. Not only is it getting very hard to choose between some of these stunning fish that are coming out, there are large numbers of carp to choose from as well. But from the pictures that I've been sent for April, I've picked some of the largest and most stunning fish to grace the Bentley banks this month.

First up on the diary page this April is Dave Gillmore who caught this absolute stunner, the biggest of April's fish, which went 26lb 8oz on the scales. Well done, Dave – excellent result.

My next choice was another stunning mirror in absolute mint condition weighing in at just under 25lb. It's a perfect specimen of what Bentley Fishery has on offer and well worth any angler's efforts.

Now the next two fish were chosen not only because they are stunning, but because there were only a handful of commons caught this month, and these fish are in exceptional shape. Nick and Mick caught these beautiful carp over the April bank holiday weekend, and coming in at just over 20lb each they are an amazing reward for the anglers of that weekend.

Looking at the catches for the fishery this month and the quality of fish



Dave Gillmore with the biggest in April at 26lb 8oz.

coming out, I can see its going to be a bumper year for the lake in 2015. For the entire up to date goings-on at Bentley Fishery and exclusive booking of the lake please visit the Bentley

website at www.bentleyfishery.co.uk or if you would like Chronicle Fishing help showcase your lake in Big Carp Magazine please visit www.chroniclefishing.co.uk



Danny Rowlinson with this mint 24lb 3oz Bentley mirror.



Mick finding one of the bigger commons of 21lb.



Nick with his bank holiday 20lb'er.

Fully Focused

By Colin Walford

As you're probably aware, Rob runs a competition in conjunction with the Good Looking Carp page on Facebook, so having been fortunate enough to catch a few lovely looking fish over the past few years, I sent a couple over to them. Then blow me, I only bloody won the March competition! I felt pretty chuffed with this, not because my picture appeared in the mag, or over the Internet, but because people had taken the time to look at those fish entered and picked mine to win from all the great lookers that were posted up. I'm not one to seek fame or the limelight, but I do like sharing my captures with people, and now I have the opportunity to write about one. I hope you enjoy reading my efforts.

I have to cast my mind back to 2009, which is bloody difficult! I do try

and keep a diary of sorts for my angling, but generally rely on pictures to jog the memory.

It was my fifth season on the mighty Cemex run Sutton 2. I'd joined because I'd spent years on the DDAPS complex just over the river, staring at its hallowed water, knowing exactly what swam in its depths and how special those carp were. I knew one day I'd have a go, but I needed to be ready mentally. That may sound weird, but I knew a fair few people that had gone on there and struggled with fishing days only 4am to 10.30pm, and the time, the lack of sleep and the anticipation of angling for some of the country's finest fish has taken its toll on many a talented angler, some of them very well known indeed! So I knew I what I was going into, and even though I thought I was ready, I'd just started the steepest learning curve in my angling life!

I'd began my Sutton journey a few years previously quite successfully, taking a stockie mirror and my first 30 common in the first two days of my first season. That was it though. I don't remember getting another chance for rest of that season! Oh boy, what had I got myself into here? I knew I wasn't going to give up; I wanted these fish so badly and vowed not to leave until I'd caught them all. The good thing about fishing Sutton at that time was the amount of quality anglers that were also there, people like Kodak (Mark Dean), Steve Wade, John Elmer, Keith Sullivan, Clayton and Jonny Miller from Essex... I could go on... the list was endless to be honest. Some of these guys had caught nearly all of the main targets and plenty more besides!

I spent my time on the lake watching these guys. I never asked them for any information; it wasn't that type of lake. You worked it out yourself, and



Here she is in all her glory.



The Little Fully, another of Sutton's gems.

that's the way I like it anyway. The main part about watching the successful anglers was sussing out where they were catching their fish from – not the spots (for the time being), more the swims that the bigger fish frequented. The spots came later, after I'd fished the swims a few times and maybe caught a few. I started to build the right picture, and because I hadn't asked anything from anyone, I got passed the odd snippet of information from a few anglers, and many would become close mates. I felt that I'd been accepted when things like this happened, and even more so when people would appear in your swim and shake your hand and sit down for a brew with you after a capture.

I began to fall in love with Sutton. It got under my skin. I had withdrawal symptoms when I wasn't there, and I only lived two minutes from the pond! I'd walk it at odd times, nearly every day. I wanted to see where the pressure was and what the fish were up to, and it was all this walking that led me to my best season and the capture that won me the right to share this with you.

As I said, I'd reached my fifth sea-

son, and I'd managed to land a few of the known fish over the last few campaigns. I'd taken a mirror called Cluster at 40lb on the button (witnessed and verified), the first time she'd gone over the magic number, and also my first forty. Not long after I caught my first forty common, the Big Common at 41lb 2oz. Those captures lit a fire in me. I love catching carp of all sizes, but it was those lumps that really made me buzz, and my thoughts started to drift towards the one, the jewel of Sutton and King of the Dar-enth Valley, the Big Fully. Not a true fully, but more a heavily plated mirror, but it mattered not. I wanted to catch it, and I set my sights to this task alone. As I mentioned, I was walking the lake at really random times, and it was one of the walks that saw me staring at a group of fish feeding in 3ft of water at two in the afternoon in 85 degrees heat one hot July day in 2009. The penny dropped big time! I sat there for ages watching these fish feed. There were eight of them, all 30-plus, eating with merry abandon, totally undisturbed.

When you fish Sutton, you learn and get fed that bite times tend to be within the first four hours of being

there and also the last four. Well as I said, the penny dropped. These fish could be caught at anytime, providing the swim choice was right. I knew they weren't going to feed like this in open water, not at this time of day, so I walked fifty yards up the bank to a swim called The Hole. There was a plan brewing.

As its name suggests, there really isn't much room in this swim. It offered a very large snaggy tree covered area to the right and another small snaggy copse to the left. I knew that there was a spot under the right hand canopy but wasn't exactly sure where it was. Like I said, I never asked anyone for anything on there and it was up to me to find the right areas. I got down on my belly and leaned out as far as I could to look under the canopy. It was so obvious that I almost didn't believe it. A rod length under, tight to the bank, was a small cove, with brambles at the back. I realised I was looking at a great area and began to trickle bait onto this spot when anglers weren't fishing the swim.

At the time, there was a no baiting rule on Sutton, and I made the decision to ignore it! Not something I

make a habit of doing mind, I just thought I needed to help myself out a little bit! I started to bait at around 6am every third morning. 6am was usually the time that people wanted to get some shut-eye after a 4am start, and on quite a few occasions I baited the Hole with anglers set up just 20 yards away in the Trees swim! Sneaky I know, and if I'd been captured, then I knew I'd be facing a ban, but felt it was worth it considering how badly I wanted to nail the Fully!

I began to fish the swim as often as possible, baiting up when leaving and still every third day. I caught from the off. A 23lb-plus common started a run of fish from there, but things were going to get a whole lot better! I had one problem, well not so much a problem, more of a hindrance to my angling in that swim. A very good mate, who was also on the same bait, happened to be spending a fair bit of time in the same swim. He was also trickling the odd kilo in there in between my baiting trips, and I wasn't aware until we bumped into each other one morning heading in the same direction intent on the same thing!

By this time I'd taken a few more fish including Jacksons at 34-odd, and the Little Fully at bang on 35lb. I was absolutely buzzing and another good

mate pointed out to my other mate that it was only me getting the bites from the swim. Very kindly he let me carry on with what I was up to, as did all the other guys on the lake. Fair play to them, and it's something that doesn't seem to happen anymore. Angling etiquette wasn't an issue at Sutton, and I was free to reap the rewards!

I continued to catch fish on almost every visit to the lake. I was only ever going in one swim, and I knew I wasn't far away from my goal. The Fully liked this area too much. I arrived on the last Sunday in August for the gate, and if I remember there were only a couple of us on that day. Everyone was cool with me dropping into the Hole, and I quickly set about getting

my traps set. One spot in front of this swim was around 30 yards – a lovely strip of clean gravel in 5ft of water, and I dispatched a bait to that mark. The right hand rod, as always, was placed under the canopy, tight to the back of the small cove in around 2ft of water. I used to PVA a straight, small twig to the hooklink to keep it straight as I placed it under the canopy. I also used double bottom baits a lot and used a small piece of spaghetti to keep my two hookbaits together. I wanted the baits to really hinder the carp when they entered its

mouth. 100 or so baits, some whole and plenty crushed, were introduced via a baiting pole, tight right over the rig. Small back leads were dropped right off the tips and all was set. I'd done this 100 times before and set the bed up right on the rods. It was always a hairy thing getting a kip in this swim, as bites would come at any time, but I never lost a fish whilst snatching forty winks.

The morning passed with nothing happening. But as the day wore on, I started to get liners on the left hand rod. I suspected that the fish were coming along the bottom of the gravel shelf a few yards from the bank but was very reluctant to move anything. These fish knew where you were, and I wasn't about to give them any excuse for doing the off! All day I had a string of visitors and had to keep them quiet. 99% of the guys knew what the score was! Nearly everyone had a bait in the edge in most of the swims around the lake anyway, and it was only the odd person that required a quiet word.

I hadn't seen anything in the snag to the right, but it was prime conditions for them, and I knew they'd been in there. A warm gentle south-westerly was blowing across me, and the day was overcast, but I knew I had to be away early evening. If I



Jackson's came from the same spot too. It really was a big fish area.

From the Colne Valley to the Coast

By Ed McDermott

Having owned Farlows Lake in Buckinghamshire for nearly four years, we can now sit back and really take in the amount of work that has taken place. I can't put into words the amount of man-hours and passion that has helped rejuvenate the famous complex, but needless to say the team should be very proud of their input. However wonderful it is to fish your own home water, it's a great escape to get away and fish somewhere a little different, and for the second year in succession I booked Cottington's Pepper Lake for the guys as a thank-you for their efforts. For me Cottington is the nearest you will get

to France without actually going there; it is in fact only 22 nautical miles away, and the fish are very large. Due to their size there have been numerous rumours that they are French fish, but having spent time there and spoken to the owner and his team, I've seen the stocking records, and the majority of the fish were already in the original 'Black' Lake. It's testament to the work that's been done at Cottington that the fish have spawned well and grown on. The management of the stock has been very selective, and the fish that don't grow so well are moved to the smaller waters around the complex. Lake Pepper is their main specimen water, and to date the fish have been caught up to 49lb-plus, and with a

stock of nearly 200 fish you know you're never too far away from them.

The 24th April couldn't come soon enough and with five nights of fishing ahead of us a somewhat reduced team got on the road and quite possibly exceeded the speed limit a few times, as we excitedly glided the 80-odd miles to Deal in Kent. The first day we were met with a windy but bright day, and with only four of us arriving to begin with we set about walking the lake to see if there was any fish activity. There were still a number of anglers who hadn't yet left the lake, and it was clear it had been fishing very well but had slowed a little in the previous few days.

Ross Dodd and Matt Walker had spied a number of fish in the reeds,



This one has a great story behind it as last year Chris Thompson caught this very same fish as his first of the trip at a new PB then of 40lb 4 and this year it was again his first fish at a new PB of 42lb.



Lewis Daneshi, 37lb 14oz PB.

which were on the far side of a long channel that led from the older part of the lake into the more recently dug lake. They decided to drop into pegs 7 and 8, and this left Jamie Williams and me the remaining 11 swims, which was no problem, as we felt the slightly deeper new lake was where the fish may be moving to on the new wind. I plotted up in peg 10, which controlled a reasonable bit of water and had two islands to fish to. Jamie set up next door. Despite choosing peg 10 I did do another lap of the lake, as I really wanted to make sure I was making the right call. Upon returning to my peg, I opted for simple tactics of a dumbbell topped with a slice of white pop-up, giving me a nice bottom bait with a dash of colour.

A crushed up bag of nut based boillie and I was ready to go. I had already clipped up having had a gentle lead around and away my baited rigs went. The cast was no more than 30 yards so very little drama was involved.

I was purely fishing for a bite at this point, and being a lake of no more than six acres, I didn't feel a lot of bait would be advantageous, so singles

were my favoured tactic. As I set about clearing up my messy tackle boxes and the general chaos that had become my swim, I stopped for a minute to take in the scene and watch the water a little. As if on cue my right hand rod tip pulled downwards, and before I even had a bleep I was bent into a fish. The rigs had only been out for an hour or so, and I can't tell you how pleased I was to be holding a bent-double Free Spirit Hi-S. The fish didn't want to show itself, and with over ten forty pounders and over 30 thirties in its depths, my heart was beating out of my chest.

I saw a flash of cream under the surface and was somewhat curious as to what was dragging me around the near margins. When a stunning ghostie of good proportions broke the film, I was very pleased when Jamie lifted the net cord. At 25lb 8oz I was holding the cleanest ghost common I've seen, and it was certainly the biggest carp of that subspecies I've landed. Pictures done and the carp returned, I sat back and felt any pressure evaporate.

Only a few hours later Jamie's left hand alarm signalled a high-pitched

squeal, and he was literally hanging on for dear life. Whatever was on the end was strong. I should add I had predicted Jamie would comfortably beat his PB, and I wasn't wrong! Jamie's previous 29lb-plus PB was decimated by over 10lbs, and he was the proud captor of a scaly 40lb-plus mirror. Jamie has two kids and doesn't get out a lot, and additionally the park lakes we have fished together don't hold a lot of fish over 25lbs, so it was awesome to see him struggle to lift the monster he had fooled.

The rest of the evening was a quiet one, and with the lake effectively empty we inhaled a pizza and saw an early night. I awoke at about 5.30am to some breamy like alarm beeps, and while I hovered over my rods I could see something was happening at the rig end. Unfortunately the fish on the end had not taken my rig but was trailing a good 30 yards of line from a previous angler. Try as I might I could not get the fish in, but I was relieved when the rig pulled from its mouth and it was at least free. However I would have liked to be able to treat what was probably a nasty hookhold

by that point. At this point Lewis Daneshi, Paul Forsyth, Chris Thompson and friend of mine, Gabriel, had all arrived.

As I had my second proper bite of the day at 22lb 6oz, I was just getting ready for some quick snaps, and Lewis on the far bank could be seen racing back to his swim to retrieve his rod from Paul who had hit a take. The fish turned out to be a 37lb 14oz mirror and a new PB for Lewis. With the fish safely in the sling, Lewis came round to take some good snaps of my fish and also Jamie's second fish of the trip, which was another lump and a mirror of 36lb 6oz. This was turning into quite a trip. As Lewis began his walk back to his swim, Gabriel's left hander belted off, and he banked his new PB in the form of a 32lb 4oz mirror. Lewis was soon into a fish, which turned out to be a 36lb mirror, and again he was made up to have banked two upper 30s in a short space of time. Ross and Matt who had spent the last 36 hours scratching their heads decided a move was in order, and as soon as they'd got their rods out Ross was into a beast of a fish. The effort proved to be the differ-

ence, and Ross hoisted up a brute of a 40lb mirror with which he was well pleased!

As quickly as it started, it stopped, and after another quiet night we couldn't believe that the only activity was between 10am and 4pm. We knew the previous week the action had been at night and day, but we knew our rigs were fine, and when bite time was in full force we were catching. Having purposely left a spot to develop, I decided to drop a rig on it. As soon as I went back to my bivvy my left hand rod was nearly ripped off the buzz bars, and I was in again. Although this fish was powerful, I knew it was yet another smaller one! I wasn't wrong, and though I was very pleased to be catching, I was honestly a little hacked off I seemed to keep catching the smaller ones. Smaller fish seem to love to trip up to my rigs, and you may ask yourself "Why?" Am I using 'small fish' tactics (which by the way I don't believe exist)? The answer is no! I often use bigger hooks than most, I like a hinge stiff rig. I use chods, yet I do seem to be in the habit of catching smaller fish. For example I have caught three fish at Farlows

which very rarely drop below 30lbs, yet I've had them all at under 29lb. Anyway the fish in question turned out to be a lovely mirror of 25lb, and it did put a smile on my face, but I wanted some big fish action.

In fairness, at this point Paul, Chris and Matt had yet to get off the mark, and I did feel for them, as we've all been there! Unfortunately I was due to leave early, as were Jamie and Gabriel, so I had only a few hours left. As I had yet to get my rod back on the spot, a large fish stuck its head out on a close-in channel spot I'd been baiting, and with the wind now swinging back to an easterly, the fish were passing this channel now. I hastily walked down the bank so I would make less noise with the cast and got a nice drop with the lead. I returned to packing up my various bits and bobs, and once I was pretty much there I returned to stand by the rods to soak in the atmosphere of Pepper Lake.

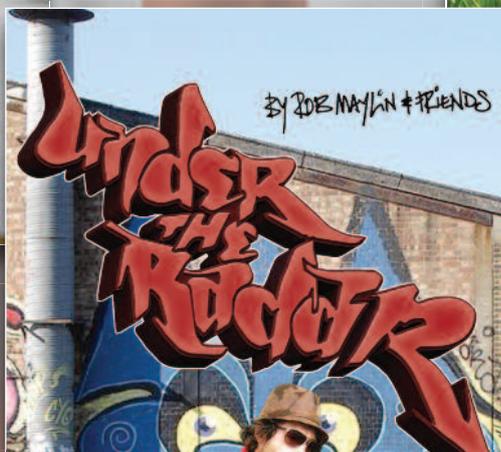
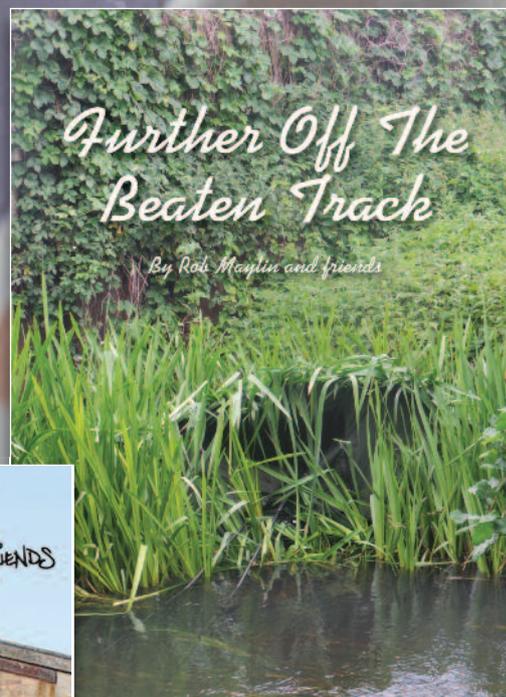
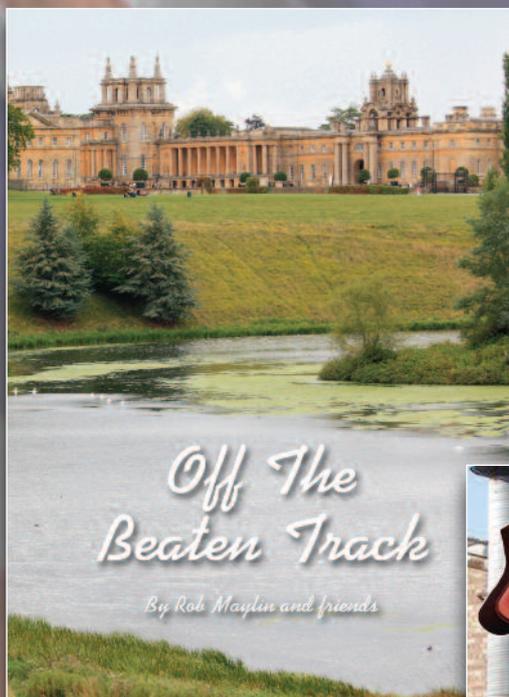
Lewis had begun his pack up, as he wanted to move into my peg, and as he just walked out of sight my recently cast rod hooped round and I was in. I knew immediately that it



Ed McDermott with a scaly 33lb 8oz.

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Jamie Williams with a 36lb 4oz mirror.



This was Ross Dodds first fish and it was also a new PB of 40lb dead. – Buzzing New PB at 40lb from Cottington Lakes Pepper, on a trip paid for by Ed McDermott (owner of Farlows) as a treat to us bailiffs of Farlows Lakes. Caught on five star baits the Nutz over chops and crumb. Using a Combi rig critically balanced on a size 6 long shank.

was a better fish, but I refused to believe it, worried I could jinx it. The fish scrapped hard, as they all do at Cottington, and the Free Spirit flexed in the way that makes us all want to get back on the bank. The fish stayed low, and I caught a flash of colour. I did think for a second it may be a common, but I was very pleased to see a very long mirror with massive apple slice scales along its flank. She wasn't ready for the net, as the Cottington fish never are, and it was three or four more surges before I felt she could be teased over the cord. Normally I'm more inclined to let a fight drag out till the fish is well and truly beaten, but on this occasion, as I felt she was just about to turn for another surge, I lifted the net up and scooped her in it... well most of her, as it was a long mirror. Despite being pretty sure I was back amongst the bigger fish I was not 100% sure and was anxious to get the Reubens zeroed. When you've seen a lot of 40s and upper 30s even a near mid 30 can be deceiving, but I was so received

when the dial said 33lb 8oz. Truly the best had been saved till last.

My Cottington journey was over for this year, but Chris, Paul, Matt, Ross and Lewis were staying on. The first 24 hours after I left were slow, but as Sod's Law would dictate, Chris left his rods to answer the call of nature, and while he dealt with that his alarm livened up, and Paul was left to battle what was clearly a big fish. Chris returned in time to get hold of the rod and play the angry carp for another 15 minutes, and finally got his prize in the net! It was a unit. Unbelievably the fish in his net is the first fish he ever had from Cottington, which at 40lb 4oz was a PB, and here again his first bite was from the very same fish at a considerable 42lb. What a result! Now this is where the story gets weird: there are 200-plus carp in Cottington, and of those fish we had caught less than 15 on this trip so far. The 42lb mirror being held up for a shot had been caught by Chris on day one last year, and it had then been caught by Paul off the top on the last

day. Lewis' 37-plus had been caught by Paul last year at 36, and I had the same ghostie that Chris had had the year before.

The next day Chris went on to have the same 22lb mirror that I had caught 48 hours earlier, and Lewis went on to catch another 30 caught by Paul the previous year. Now this may make it sound like the fish are total mugs, and I would certainly not call Cottington a hard water, but equally it can be very moody and is not a runs water. The irony is the fish Chris had is not a regular capture, nor is the ghostie I had had, but the exact same weekend a year apart got me thinking there maybe is something to it. Maybe that's just an angler's thinking, the same way someone searching for answers may explore religion or make links with events and their own reason for being. All I know is Cottington is a unique water where the fish are phenomenal, and at an average weight on our trip of just shy of 30lb I'd say that it is very, very special indeed. ■

Carp humour



Cleverley Mere 2015

By James Cottee

After losing the buzz for carp fishing due to personal matters, my angling in 2014 seemed to take a back seat in my life last year. I can only thank good friend and fellow carp angler Chris Eaglestone for pushing me back down the right path and getting my fishing back on track. It wasn't until January that I really started thinking about carp fishing again when Chris, me and a few other fellow anglers went for a day session to Newlands Hall. It was absolutely freezing, but we still caught fish! The buzz was building up again, and I was enjoying fishing. In February I went along to a carp slideshow talk with Terry Hearn. After seeing some of those epic old carp and the stories to go along with them, that was me. I leaped at the opportunity to jump on a bait firm that Chris had been having some

(Top right) 21lb zip.
(Below) Mofo - 27lb 6oz.



results on the previous year, which was Cray Valley Baits. I also found out that the ticket I had been waiting for on a very special lake was coming up for this coming season. The angler

inside me was burning to get out!

In March, I decided to return for a walk round the syndicate I was fishing before known as Cleverley Mere, steeped in history and home to some



serious carp in the past and now. After doing my research for a while and talking to other anglers over the year I was on there, it was very clear where the big boy known as Hendrix was caught from on a regular basis. It wasn't just one spot; there were around six places the fish came from, and enough to show a pattern. It seemed to work its way up and down the lake. Two years running it was caught out of a swim called the Tall Tree as its first capture for the season, and the year previously a swim called the Cage. These swims were all situated around an island. I chose to start my campaign in a swim called Gav's, which was also evolved around the same island, but controlled more water and a lovely corner of the lake surrounded by trees and snags where I'd seen them the spring before. Funnily enough I knew the swim quite well, having caught a few of the residents from here previously, including some scaly mirrors and mid to upper 30lb commons.

It wasn't long before Chris managed to nail the first carp of the year

on a zig from the swim opposite called the Grassy. I shot down to see Chris that night after work and pick his brains. I wanted to bait Gav's, but didn't, as Chris was fishing so close it might have ruined his chances for the night ahead. Chris, being the good friend that he was, told me he'd bait the swim for me the next day when he left. Brilliant!

I didn't return to the lake until two days after Chris baited my desired spot. The spot was a clay hump, which rose up in the lake then dropped down into a silty gully before shelving back up to the island. It was around two thirds of the way from the bank to the island.

I got to the lake to find Gav's free, so exactly in the same way as Chris had baited for me, I put out a kilo of Spicy Lobster and half kilo of Maple X and stuck two rods well spaced apart over the top. I'll never forget the next day, it was a Friday, and after an uneventful night Tristan Peel had turned up and come to see me before setting up in the Car Park. As he walked in, jokingly I asked, "Can you

do me some photos?" As he replied, "Of what?" the left hand bobbin cracked the carbon on my rod, and the clutch went into meltdown. After a long, dogged fight she was in the net, and on first sight she was an absolute stunner, a fish called Mofo. She weighed in at 27lb 6oz, and it was the first fish of 2015 that had been caught off the bottom. Ironically Tristan got to do the photos, and very well I might add.

The next week saw me working nights, so overnights weren't a possibility, but during the day when I'd dragged myself out of bed I was down there walking around. Everyday I dropped into Gav's and put a kilo of bait over the spot. I know of four different anglers that fished the swim that week but with nothing being caught... Ideal. I worked days that weekend, so Sunday after work I was off to the lake to do my overnights before going back to work on Monday night. Rods on spots and another uneventful night, although I did see the big boy bosh over the spot!

It wasn't until 11 o'clock, exactly



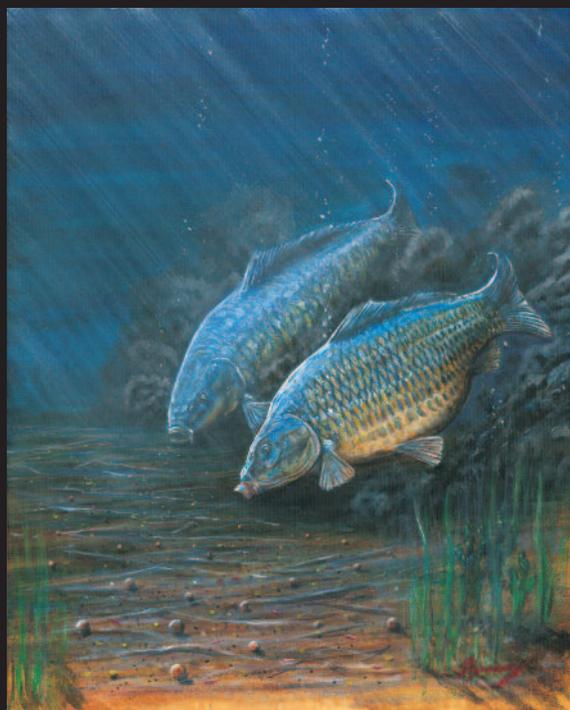
Marlin - 35lb 10oz



Hendrix at 42lb 8oz.

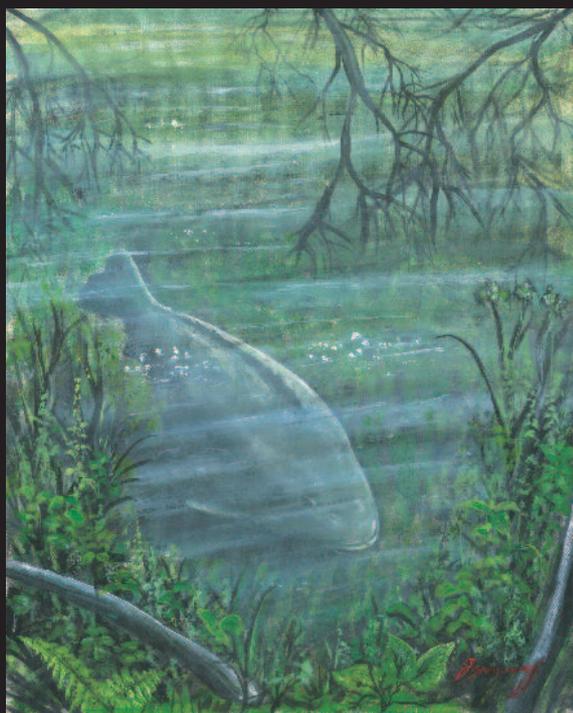
CARP Watching

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No.1 – THEY'RE 'AVIN IT!

It depicts the typical 'heads down tails up' scene, which occurs beneath the surface when the carp are really on the feed.



No.2 – MARGIN MONSTER

It shows a big-framed carp beneath the overhanging tree branches, patrolling the snags and weed beds in its search for food.



No. 3 – CARP ON!

This is what it's all about, the 'take', as our quarry makes its last mistake, the hook goes in, the buzzer sounds, carp on!

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the same time I had Mofo... same rod same rig same bait – whack! This fish was relentless, flat-rodging me and taking easily 80 yards of line off me on the first run, and there was nothing I could do! After a long powerful arm-wrenching fight I had a very lean chunky common in the net. The fish was called the Marlin. Can you guess why? She weighed in at 35lb 10oz and looked epic in her winter colours! Buzzing! I kept baiting during the days through the week whilst working nights. The same thing happened the week after, but this time a smaller 21lb common was the culprit that managed to weed me up in the process.

It was April before I was next down. After putting in a two-night blank on the new syndicate, I was itching to get in on the action. On returning to the lake I was amazed to see Gav's free on a bank holiday weekend! I was so surprised. It was only too right that I fished the swim I'd been baiting and catching regularly from. But it seemed too late for the fish I desired to be at the top end of the lake, confirmed by another good friend Carl King. He had just done a 72-hour blank in a couple of swims up from Gav's. I wasn't sure about whether to fish or not. I had in mind where else he would come from,

which was a very popular swim known as Point 2, slap bang in the middle of the lake with a tree line opposite, but the carp had been hammered in this swim year in, year out. Even saying that, the treeline was another spot Hendrix was known to be caught from.

I walked my bucket round to Point 3 to talk to Tristan and find out what he'd seen. He had said it was quiet, so I carried on after a quick catch up to look in Point 2. Right on queue, as I got to the front of the swim, wham, three fish showed, all in close... one straight in front and two to the right in the mouth of the big bay. That was me! At least one night was to be spent in here. I couldn't ignore the treeline, as it was so renowned for doing fish, so the middle rod was smashed in there. The left went in close where I'd seen fish, and the right went where the other two had showed, just behind a weedbed. All were topped up nicely with a kilo or so of bait over each spot.

That night Tristan and I sat back and chilled with a takeaway – a nice relaxing night. That was until Neil the bailiff and a couple of other members came round to Point 3 also known as Party Point, and we didn't retire until around 12 o'clock that night due to drinks, a few munches and a good old

chat about all things carpy along with a large chunk of banter thrown in for good measure. At half past three in the morning when all was quiet and the lake was like a millpond, the right hand rod pulled up tight before hooping round and stripping line. An angry little 21lb linear was to be blamed for the commotion on such a beautiful night. Tristan, being the top man he is, came around to do photos (after a lot of convincing), and the rod was placed back on the spot before crawling back into bed.

At half eight that morning I received a rather disturbing phone call from a close friend, and I had to go home and see him. I remember sitting back down on the bedchair to take it all in and call my mum to break the terrible news. I didn't have long on the phone though, as the right hand rod once again pulled round and held at a 90-degree angle to the way it was originally facing. After a short lived scrap a battered up old warrior of a common lay sulking in the folds of the net. Whilst standing at the front of the swim another fish topped exactly over the same spot. It was a big carp, judging by the water it moved, and the dark colours of its back stood out like a sore thumb against the flat calm water. After doing photos of the common, which pulled the scales around



30lb 2oz common.

to 30lb 2oz, I quickly shot down to see Neil the bailiff to tell him the antics of my morning. I told him I still wanted to fish the night, and like the true understanding genuine guy that he is, he gave me the nod to say, "Do what you have to do but to try not to be too long." I shot back to the swim to put another kilo over the spot before attending to personal matters.

I was back that afternoon and a little bit shaken by the situation but was back on my fishing. I had to be, as I was quite sure that the fish I'd seen was the one I was after, so all rods were put back on the spots and topped up again, and the kettle was on. That night as it got dark, I was so confident of a take I lay in bed texting Carl King telling him, "It's going to happen! I'm having H tonight!" and went to sleep dreaming of such events...

At 12.30 the right hand rod gave off a few single beeps, enough to wake me up, with receiver being under my pillow. With that I sat up and looked at the rod. The hanger slowly pulled up

to the top and just held with the tip just slightly pulling round. With that I was out like a flash and struck into what felt like a huge ball of weed... which started then kiting and plodding up and down in front of me. This must have happened for a good ten minutes before the fish was on the surface and ready for the net. It went in first time, and with a massive sigh of relief I pegged the net down and went back to the bivvy to grab the head torch. On inspection of the net I couldn't believe my eyes. What a carp! I was sure it was the one! The net went back down and was pegged in until I went and got a friend who was fishing next door. I told him I'd either got H or Melv - similar looking fish with about 10lb weight difference. It wasn't until I slipped the fish in the retainer before hoisting it out of the water I realised the size.

On quick inspection on the mat whilst unhooking it was clear that it was the one, and with the scales wrenching around to 42lb 8oz I was ecstatic. I sacked the fish up until first

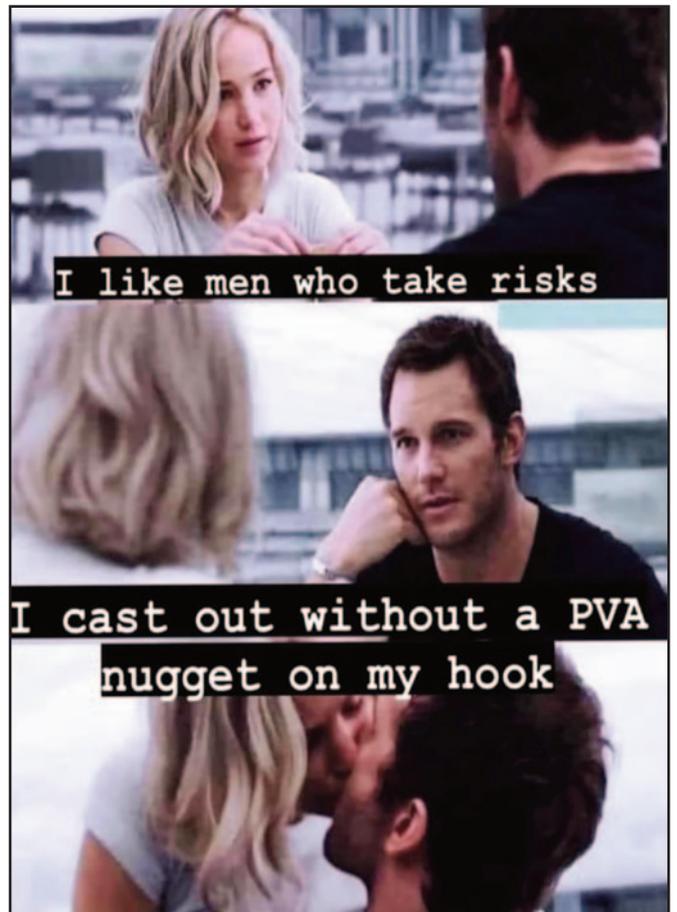
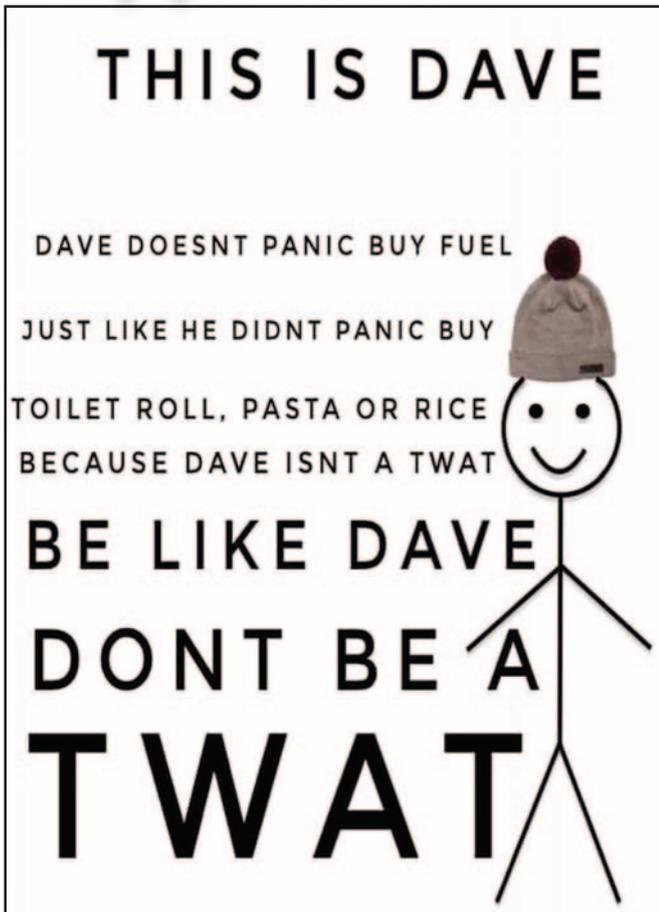
light, but I could barely sleep I was buzzing too much! When I finally got to sleep, within what felt like minutes I had Matt Gothard, Ian Head, Spencer Humble and little Matthew Rynor standing outside the bivvy door ready to do pictures.

Climbing into my waders and walking out to where the fish was retained was like walking on the red carpet. I'd been wanting to catch this fish ever since a young boy and starting carp fishing when an idol and friend of mine Toney Prayell had caught this fish.

As I unzipped the sack on the mat, I saw that the fish had been passing Cray Valley Baits Spicy Lobster and had filled up the sack. I can only describe the next 30 minutes of having the mighty Hendrix in my hands and in the water as pure magic. I sit here writing this to you from the Essex Manor, my new syndicate lake, and I'm sure to tell you that moment in my life is going to take some beating. Thanks for reading, and be lucky.



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