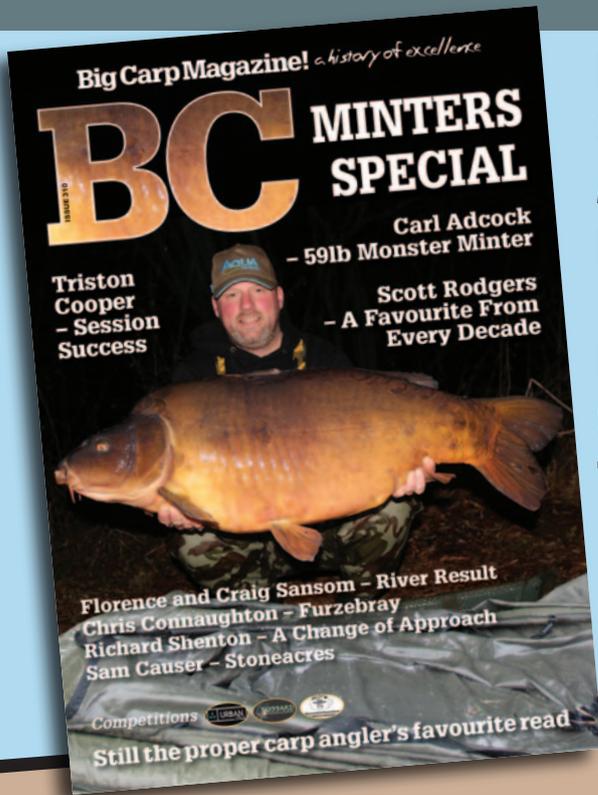


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ISSUE 310

MINTERS SPECIAL

**Triston
Cooper
– Session
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**Carl Adcock
– 59lb Monster Minter**

**Scott Rodgers
– A Favourite From
Every Decade**



**Florence and Craig Sansom – River Result
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Minters Special!

Whether you prefer the huge, pale, virtually scaleless, bloaters of France or the dark, scaly, classic English thoroughbreds really it is down to the individual. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder they say, and never did this phrase carry more weight than when talking about carp and women. Long ones, short ones, fat or thin, there is an angler that will find every variant irresistible.

So, when compiling a 'minters' issue please remember that although I may look upon these great carp with admiration, you may not see the beauty I do. Then again perhaps everyone is not as picky as me, when it comes to women I mean. As for carp, I love them all.

Cover story this month comes from Carl Adcock and what a carp this one is, all 59lb of it. Is it a minter? Well Carl and I think it is!! Scott Rodgers is up next. Scott has been there and got the T-shirt for sure. He has been fishing for five decades, from Savay to the River Trent and everywhere in between. This article shows a favourite fish from each decade, his success is legendary and he is still as keen as he ever was.

Florence and Craig Sansom, father and daughter and some minters for certain. Triston Cooper is back again this month with the second half of his amazing session. Chris Connaughton tackles Furzebray Lakes with incredible effect, landing some very large, amazing looking carp, whilst Richard Shenton looks back at the last Autumn and Winter and how a change in approach proved the downfall of a host on minters. You could not have a magazine devoted to minters without including something from Stoneacres, thankfully Sam Causer and 'The Bearded Lady' have just what we need. Add to these loads of carpy humour, all the latest tackle reviews and carpy news and competitions.

I hope you have been enjoying our 2 free monthly carp magazines, Big Carp and Free Line, see them both here - www.freelinemagazine.com

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Rob Maylin

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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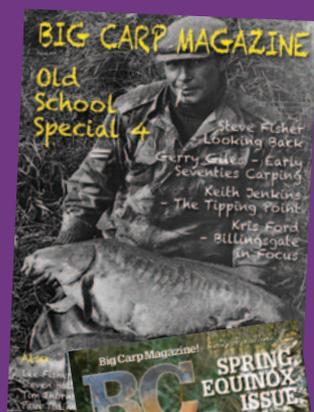
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BIG CARP 310
June 2022

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Carl Adcock with Dave.



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ShockLeader

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

Anglers join Great British Spring Clean in the fight against litter

The Angling Trust has pledged its support for the Great British Spring Clean, run by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, which will take place from the 25th March – 10th April.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of litter and is encouraging the public to roll up their sleeves and pick up as much litter as they can over the next two weeks.

To support this year's Great British Spring Clean, the Angling Trust is inviting the angling community to help remove litter from their nearby river, lake and beach.

Through our Anglers Against Litter initiative, we are encouraging anglers to make a pledge to Take 5 every time they go fishing – something that every angler can do to make a difference. By spending five minutes to pick up litter, or simply taking five pieces of litter home after they have been fishing, anglers will remove a huge amount of litter from the environment and protect fish and wildlife from harm.

If you are part of a club or fishery, organise a litter pick and



share your photographs with us through our website using the hashtag #anglersagainstlitter.

Emily Smith, Angling Trust Environment Manager said:

"We encourage everyone to get involved in the Great British Spring Clean which gives the opportunity for the angling community to take coordinated action to tackle litter and showcase the efforts that us as anglers make throughout the year to help to protect our aquatic environments. Every small action adds up, and collectively over these two weeks, we can make a huge difference to remove harmful litter from the environment."

Anglers can also help to be part of the solution, rather than the pollution, by recycling their old line and spools through the Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme.

To find out more about the Anglers Against Litter campaign and other ways to support action to tackle litter, visit the Angling Trust website. The Anglers Against Litter campaign is delivered in partnership with the Environment Agency and funded



Angling Trust appoint Steve Fitzpatrick in new Head of Competitions role

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Steve Fitzpatrick as the new Head of Competitions at the Angling Trust.

Steve (48) joins the Senior Management Team following a 25-year career with Bauer Media's angling portfolio where he was lately Editor-in-Chief, having stepped down earlier this year as Angling Times' longest-serving member of staff and Editor. Angling Trust CEO Jamie Cook described Steve as the "right person to take our competitions offering across sea, game and coarse to the next level".

During his time at Bauer, Steve edited Match Angling Plus magazine and led the teams on Improve Your Coarse Fishing, Sea Angler, Trout & Salmon, and Trout Fisherman print titles along with their websites, video production, and social media channels.

A passionate match angler, sea fisherman and carper, Steve brings a wealth of experience from all sides of the angling industry, with experience of running a tackle shop while studying at the University of Liverpool where he completed a Master of Science Degree in Environmental Biology. As Head of Competitions, Steve will lead the strategy and development of competition angling across all disciplines, ensuring gold-standard events are delivered both now and in the future.

He will also play a leading role in driving the success of the England teams on the World and European stages.



"When the opportunity arose to work with the competitions side of the Angling Trust, I knew it would be a perfect fit,"

Steve said. "My most enjoyable role on Angling Times was as the title's Match Editor and this saw me covering events from small club matches to National Championships and World Championships, travelling all over Europe with the England teams.

"I'm also proud to have launched and run the Clubman Supercup and Maver Pairs events and worked closely with the team in organising the Angling Times Team Championships (Winter League) for many

years.

"This is an exciting new role and I'm looking forward to the opportunity to help shape the present and future gold-standard domestic events managed by a superb team at the Angling Trust and deliver competitions for every level of match angler from grassroots right up to the elite levels.

"I'll be working hard with all the England teams and managers to ensure we not only bring home gold medals, but also host a World event on English soil within the next few years."

Steve will take up his position in mid-April and will report directly to Jamie Cook.

Jamie said: "Competitions are a key part of what we do as the National Governing Body and in Steve I am confident we have found the right person to take our offering across sea, game and coarse to the next level.

"As a not-for-profit organisation our commitment is to invest back into promoting, protecting and developing angling at all levels."

Steve's appointment builds upon the work we have done for our customers and members in the competitions sphere over the past two years and will provide greater focus on developing the Team England brand to deliver international success at the highest level.

Media contacts: Jamie Cook – 07572 231329. ■

Carp Humour



Stop looking at bivvys – you already have one!

Why can't you just look at porn like a normal husband?

Bob Nudd MBE is New Fishing 'Ambassador' for SBP Bob is encouraging people to fish for relaxation and wellbeing

Four-Times World Champion Angler and fishing legend steps up to give advice on how to improve overall fishing experience. Bob Nudd – the nation's most-loved fishing star – has always been known for encouraging everyone to enjoy fishing at every level and he is now helping Stonham Barns Park in Suffolk and its sister parks Pisces Country Park and Acorn Holiday Park in Cambridgeshire to develop its fishing experience for visitors. Bob visited Stonham Barns Park (27 March) to meet anglers who were fishing there and to help give advice and fishing tips. He was given a guided tour by Owner Alan Forward who is looking to add a new sports lake (for SUP and other non-motorised sports) to the venue to add to the two fishing lakes already established there.

Alan Forward, Owner, Stonham Barns Park, said: 'Bob has kindly agreed to be an ambassador for Stonham Barns Park and we could not be more appreciative to have him helping us to develop our fishing lakes here. He is one of the world's best-loved anglers and probably most-loved here in the UK and so we expect his visits here to give anglers support here in the East of England. We will be asking Bob for his expert recommendations for the development of our fishing facilities for the enjoyment of everyone.'

World Class Angler Bob Nudd said: 'I am so pleased to be visiting as angling 'ambassador' at Stonham Barns Park. It's a venue that is fast-developing and it has something for everyone, particularly those with an interest in fishing. With such challenging times globally that affect us all every day, it has never been more important to look after our wellbeing whether that is for a day or a break to the countryside. Nature helps restore our balance and fishing can be one of the best boosts to your mental health and outlook.'

'I like nothing more than to talk to people interested in fishing at all levels. I guess I must have a natural talent for increasing the success of fishing a particular swim and I do like to share my experience and knowledge with others. It's always good to introduce young people to fishing and during the pandemic interest in the sport



increased dramatically. It's safe, it's fun and it's just perfect for the warmer months ahead that we are so looking forward to!

'It's good to be back out the bank talking to some lovely visitors here at Stonham Barns Park.'

Bob was appropriately on the coast at Caister on Sea, Norfolk. He started fishing young – like everyone – and with basic fishing gear. He was about 10 years old with his two elder sisters and caught his first 1 oz roach on bread paste using a hazel branch for a pole and a piece of cork for a float. He later moved to Essex, joined a fishing club – Marconi's and later moved to the open circuit at about 24 with the fishing club, The Essex Cats. He went on to fish in Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Hungary, Thailand. All around the world. He even appeared on The Wogan Show.

Bob was first angler to win four individual World Freshwater Angling Championships: 1990 (Yugoslavia), 1991 (Hungary), 1994 (England) and 1999 (Spain).

He represented the England team at international level for more than 24 years, during which time he became arguably the best-known angler in the world. The highlight of his professional career was victory in front of a home crowd at Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham. In 1884. In 1991, he

received the most votes in the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award but was denied victory by the BBC who ruled that a campaign to vote for him in the Angling Times was against competition rules. In 1996, he was awarded an MBE for his services to fishing.

Ireland was where Bob's match fishing really began. He has a great love for the country and its wild fishing environments.

Bob lives in Cambridgeshire and writes monthly for Coarse Fishing, and Improve Your Course Fishing Magazine. He is still known as one of Britain's greatest anglers along with John Wilson, Dave Harrel and others.

He presented a new series for Discovery Shed in March 2009. He features in a Masters of Angling DVD. His DVDs include Commercial Carp Tactics, Paste on the Pole, Surface Fishing with Controller Floats, Pole Secrets, and Expert Fishing on the Pole.

Providing expert fishing commentary on Facebook he continues to be an ambassador for the sport that is so loved – and arguably the most popular participation sport in Britain. He loves being outside in beautiful countryside settings, testing his skills in competitions, meeting fellow anglers and teaching others the delights of fishing that have captivated him for

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MY BIG CARP BUZZ

by Darrell Peck

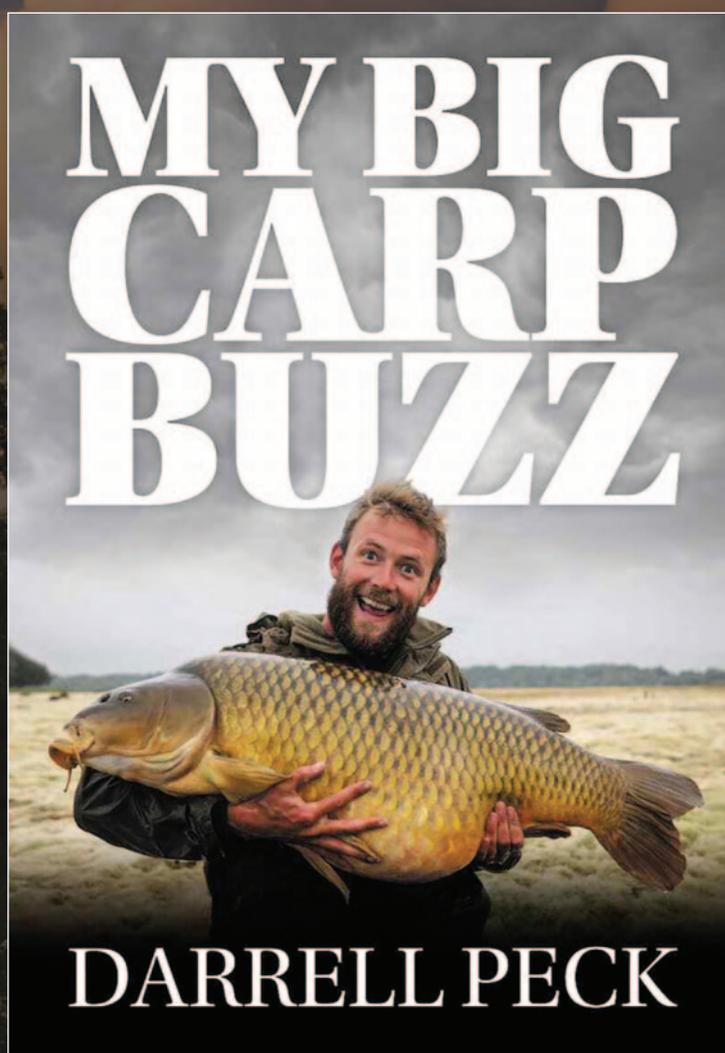
If you have read "My Misspent Youth", then you will know the story of a passionate tackle shop Saturday boy that went on to catch some of the UK's most sought-after carp.

"My Big Carp Buzz picks up from where I left off and covers my fishing through my 30's - from the year 2012, until 2021. Chapters 1-5 take place at some of the UK's most famous venues, before chapters 6, and 7 recount two extremely intensive stints in Belgium searching for a new personal best.

Having now dipped my toe into the European scene the English Channel is no longer a factor when deciding where next.

As a teenager a Rod Hutchinson Carp Scene magazine had been hugely inspirational, and in particular the story of his month-long stint at lac D Orient. Now in my 30s I felt confident enough to fish alone in Europe, and longed to experience a lengthy autumnal stint upon one of the infamous mud beaches of the champagne region of France.

One of my biggest drivers has always laid in progressively testing myself, and at 6000 acres Lac Foret D' Orient was 'my' Everest.



To this day I regard Orient as THE pinnacle of 'my' own carp fishing adventures and I truly believed if I could catch them here, I could catch them anywhere.

The sessions relived in chapters 6,7 and 9 are amongst those I am most proud off and really serve to open my eyes to what is on offer beyond the crowded banks of the UK big carp scene.

The middle chapters cover a mixture of angling from both home and abroad, with tales of a Dutch record carp, two Belgian canal giants, The Coconut Common from Bayeswater, and some forgotten old English leviathans.

The last few chapters then recount two extremely successful

campaigns at Wellington Country Park and The Wasing Estate, and take the total number of UK 50lbbers within this single book to an unprecedented 10!

Ultimately this is the continuation of the same old story really. An extremely single minded, and determined lad that loves to hunt big carp above all else. Join me for the adventure, as I continue to search out My Big Carp Buzz.

Enjoy, Pecky

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over six decades.

He continues to fish competitions throughout the season on the European circuit. While famous for his course fishing hints and tips, he likes to sea fish when he can for the extra challenge it brings and for the diversity of fish that can be caught.

It is estimated that around 2.9 million people regularly fish British lakes, rivers and coastal waters.

Programmes like Monster Carp, Mortimer & Whitehouse and Extreme Fishing with Robson Green are keeping fishing mainstream and with its wellness benefits is still a top relaxation choice for people of all ages and social demographics.

Stonham Barns Park has been awarded the VisitEngland 'We're Good to Go' industry charter mark which verifies that the attraction meets the Government and Public Health guidance on Covid-19. All the required health and safety processes are in place including hand sanitising stations, social distancing and NHS Track & Trace check-in.

For more information call Stonham Barns Park on 01449 711111 or visit www.stonhambarns.co.uk

Alan Forward, Owner of Stonham Barns Park, and Fishing Icon Bob Nudd MBE.

Fishing legend Bob Nudd MBE.

Photography Credit: Keith Suffling

Alan Forward (Owner)

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Stonham Barns Park Events Team

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events@stonhambarns.co.uk. ■

Good plan, but far too slow: our rivers and coasts need action now!

Too much raw and partially treated sewage is still being poured into our rivers and coastal waters. In 2022, we are still too reliant on Victorian infrastructure, which itself has suffered from a chronic lack of investment. Against this backdrop, the announcement from the government today, in the form of their consultation on the Storm Overflow Reduction Plan, is to be welcomed.

Its ambitions to set targets for water companies to reduce discharges by 80% and to ensure water companies completely eliminate the ecological harm any storm sewage discharges cause to the environment and significantly reduce discharges to protect public health, will bring about a step change in how water companies treat sewage – and how they treat our rivers and coastal waters. This move is a useful reminder that our rivers and coastal waters are not drains in which to dump sewage. At this time of a biodiversity crisis, and a mental health crisis as we slowly recover from the Covid pandemic, our rivers and coastal waters are precious ecosystems and important recreational spaces.

This change in the government's approach to the dumping of raw sewage into our rivers, the very fact they have published this report, the last minute additions made to the Environment Act, and the new duties recently placed on OFWAT (the water industry regulator) are largely due to the concerns expressed by the public and the efforts of the Angling Trust's Anglers Against Pollution campaign, our Broken Water Report in partnership with Salmon & Trout Conserva-

tion, and the work of many other NGOs, including the Rivers Trust and Surfers Against Sewage through the #endsewagepollution coalition.

But why are we being asked to wait until 2050 before the targets set out in today's announcement are delivered? With such a drastic decline in freshwater species, from fish to invertebrates to plants, we do not have that much time. The actions needed are welcome, but set against the urgency required, the investments proposed in the next few years will not be enough.

Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns at the Angling Trust, said:

"Today's announcement is welcome. It is good to see the government at least proposing to do the right thing. But this report has been months in the making and has involved a broad range of stakeholders from industry, consumer groups, regulators, and NGOs. Now we have another consultation when what is needed is action – action today, not tomorrow, because today, only 14% of our rivers meet good ecological status, as assessed by the Water Framework Directive, and not a single one meets good chemical status.

"The government has all the tools it needs; new laws in the Environment Act, new duties on OFWAT, and the overwhelming support of the public who want to see clean rivers and seas. I very much hope the government will now drive this forward with a lot more urgency.

Let's not wait to 2050 before we get the job done, and let's make sure that water company bonuses and dividends are directly linked to how much they do and how quickly they move." ■



“It quite literally saved him”: How carp fishing helped one Dorset teenager through gruelling brain tumour treatment

On the afternoon of his 15th birthday, they told him he had cancer,’ said 44-year-old Hayley, mother of brain tumour survivor Ryan. ‘I begged the consultants to wait and tell him the next day, but they said he needed to start treatment immediately. There was no time to wait.’

Ryan had been a sporty, fun, outgoing 14-year-old who loved rugby, football and fishing, when he began complaining of frequent headaches and exhaustion in April 2020.

‘At first we thought he could be struggling with the COVID restrictions,’ remembers Hayley. ‘He has a great group of friends and loved being outside, so it made sense that he’d hate being locked in the house. But soon I knew it was more than that.’

Hayley and Ryan endured months of back-and-forth medical appointments throughout spring and summer of 2020. ‘They thought it could be migraines, eyes problems, maybe referred pain from an old injury,’ said Hayley. ‘They gave him all sorts of medication to try and exercises to do in his room, but nothing worked. He was in so much pain and only getting worse. In early September, the weight started to fall off him. It was like I was watching him deteriorate before my eyes. Within two weeks, I could see his bones.’



Ryan pre illness.

On the 15th September 2020, Hayley took her son to Salisbury Hospital where they were again prescribed sickness medication and physiotherapy. Hayley remembers: ‘I took him back home and we gave it 48 hours, but he was still getting worse. I said – “this is nuts, I’m taking him back in”. It was mother’s intuition. I just knew something was really, really wrong.’

After scans picked up a lesion on Ryan’s brain, a biopsy was arranged for 24th September – Ryan’s fifteenth birthday. It was confirmed that he had nasopharyngeal carcinoma – an extremely rare and difficult-to-detect cancer that occurs behind the nose and back of the throat.

‘Everything changed,’ said Hayley. ‘It was a whirlwind from that point on. They told us they were going to hit it hard and hit it fast, because we only had one chance to get it right. If this treatment didn’t work, there would be nothing else they could do.’

Right from the beginning, Ryan was so resilient. I asked how he was feeling, and he said: “There’s no point worrying, it won’t change anything, so I’ve just got to get on with it. The doctors get paid to worry – not me!”

After three rounds of high dose chemotherapy at Southampton Hos-

pital, Ryan was transferred to The Christie NHS Foundation Trust in Manchester to begin proton beam therapy; an advanced form of treatment that uses a high-energy beam of protons to deliver radiotherapy. It was there that Ryan began his own form of therapy – watching fishing videos.

Hayley said: ‘When he was at his worst, when he could barely move and was nauseous all the time, he would sit in bed with his headphones on to drown out the noise of the machines and just watch carp fishing videos. He’d always enjoyed carp fishing – we’ve got beautiful lakes near us, so the videos were like meditation. He was taking himself out of the treatment room, away from all the wires and chemo bags, to be by the lake.’

Radiotherapy can cause amnesia, but Ryan would sit there for hours and re-learn how to remake his fishing knots, teaching himself with the videos. The social workers said that he didn’t need therapy – he’d found his own. The thought of being back at the lake, being able to fish again – it quite literally saved him.’

Back home in Dorset, Ryan’s health started to slowly improve. ‘The first time his Dad took him to the lake, we wrapped him up in loads of blankets and he was only there for a few



With Angling Direct vouchers.



Watching videos.



hours,' said Hayley. 'But when they came back, he just looked like Ryan again. Bit by bit, that pull to the lake – it was bringing him back to life.'

When the charity Make-A-Wish UK got in touch, Ryan knew exactly what he wanted to wish for.

'To have a fishing bivvy would mean that Ryan could always go carp fishing, no matter the weather, no matter the time of year,' said Hayley. 'It meant he could always go to his happy place. He'd never have to be away from it again.'

In March 2022, Make-A-Wish UK granted Ryan's wish for his chosen bivvy, along with fishing-themed wall prints and gift vouchers to Angling Direct.

Hayley said: 'Ryan's face lit up like you wouldn't believe when he got his wish! He'd always enjoyed fishing, even before he fell ill, but it's taken on a whole other meaning now. He won't ever be able to play rugby again due to the risk of head injury, which is very sad, but carp fishing has given him something else to focus on and helped him feel like himself again. Having all this new equipment and a bivvy from Make-A-Wish UK means that he can go fishing whenever he wants – it's like he has his wish granted all over again every time he goes.'

Ryan's wish has been granted, but 503 UK children like Ryan are still living with a critical condition and waiting for their wish. Some of these children have been waiting for years, and some may not have long left. Make-A-Wish UK hopes to raise £1.2 million by World Wish Day (29th April 2022) – a figure which it says is needed to grant each wish still waiting.

Steph Sherwood, Wish Delivery Lead at Make-A-Wish UK, said: 'As

Ryan's story shows, a wish really can bring light and joy back to children and families in their darkest times. Right now, more than 60,000 children in the UK have been diagnosed with a critical condition and are eligible for a wish. That number is set to increase by over a third in the next 10 years.

We want to grant the wish of every eligible child but, right now, we cannot even grant the 503 wishes of children currently waiting. By donating at <https://www.make-a-wish.org.uk/worldwishday/>, you have the power to revive 503 childhoods stolen by critical illness, across the UK.'

Now in remission, Ryan has started his own Instagram account to document his carp fishing adventures. Although the family will need to remain alert to long-term side-effects of radiation therapy, chances of recoc-

currence are slim, and Ryan's prognosis is good.

'When Ryan was diagnosed, it was like a cannonball had slammed into my chest,' said Hayley. 'But to see him come through that is very special. It makes you realise what's important, and it's very simple. If you have good health for you and your family, you have all you need.'

When I think back to when Ryan was very sick, I know that the love of fishing got him from there to where he is today. I cannot begin to say how amazing it's been for healing his soul. Everybody in this world needs something to look forward to – and fishing was that for Ryan.'

To donate to Make-A-Wish UK and light up the darkness for children like Ryan, visit <https://www.make-a-wish.org.uk/worldwishday/> today. ■



Ryan with parents after ringing the bell.

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England U25 team announced for World Championships



Name: Andrew Cranston
Role: Angler
Age: 21
Caps: 6
Team: Daiwa Dorking
Sponsor:
 - Preston Innovations
 - Sonu Baits
Major Honours:
 - 1 x Team Bronze 2016 Worlds
Record weight in RiverFest qualifier - 194lb

I love 'bagging venues' prefer float venues. I would love to progress through the ranks eventually to become a full senior International. After a two year Covid International break I'm itching to get back onto the medal podium



The Angling Trust has announced the England squad that will head to Slovenia to compete in the 14th FIPSeD Coarse Angling World Championships for U25's on the 6th and 7th August 2022. The competition will be held on the River Sava in Slovenia, a fast flowing river with depths up to 20ft. England's management team are familiar with the venue and anticipate a wide range of skills will be required to be competitive, big flat floats at one end of the scale down to whip fishing for bleak at 3 metres. The team was selected following a trial event which was held on the River Wye in Hereford, prospective team members were assessed under the watchful eye of team manager Mark Downes and former u25 world number one Rory Jones. Following the trial Mark Downes and Darren Bickerton selected the experienced trio of Andrew Cranston, Jordan Holloway and Josh Newman, while Owen Robinson and Dean Jaques have been rewarded for their progress in recent years and receive their first international call up. Manager Mark Downes said: "We had a great session on the Wye and we learned a lot about the anglers. The secret of the Sava is accurate feeding and presentation. The lads now know what to expect and I am sure they will all be putting in the time and practice that is needed to hit this venue full on. England are ranked number two in the world and a strong performance in Slovenia will see them close the gap on current world number one France.

Media contacts: Ben Thompson - 07854 240177. ■



Name: Dean Jaques
Role: Angler
Age: 23
Caps: 0
Team: Browning Osset
Sponsor:
 - Nu-Fish
 - Browning
Achievements:
 - Team success with Osset

"I love big open natural waters, especially where the long pole comes into play. Fishing at the highest level has always been my goal and now I feel I have a chance to make my mark."




Name: Jordan Holloway
Role: Angler
Age: 22
Caps: 3 x U20
Team: Drennan Barnsley
Sponsor:
 - Preston Innovations
 - Sonu Baits
Major Honours:
 - 2 x Fish O Mania finals
 - 2 x Golden Reel finals
 - 1 x Maver Match This final

"I just thrive on competition, the bigger the event the better. I'm really looking forward to tackling the River Sava from bleak to Barbel, I'm ready to go."




Name: Josh Newman
Role: Angler
Age: 19
Caps: 2
Team: Sensas Starlets
Sponsor:
 - Dynamite Baits
 - Normark
Major Honours:
 - Team Bronze 2017 u15 Worlds
 - Team Bronze 2021 Youth National
 - Team Bronze 2021 Evesham

"I Love catching fish on natural venues. I love the Fens in winter where catching lots of small fish quickly is my forte. The Sava should suit, big river, varied methods and an out and out tactical matchcant wait."




Name: Owen Robinson
Role: Angler
Age: 24
Caps: 0
Team: Drennan Oxford
Sponsor:
 - Drennan
Achievements:
 - Numerous team medals
 - Section placings with Oxford

"Over the last 4 years I have committed myself to Team fishing. With Oxford I have come on in leaps and bounds and I feel can do a job for the Team in Redede. It's a river and by the sounds of it will suit my strengths."





I've not been out for a while due to having an op and blaming covid. I've managed to get out for a day session last week and this week hears a few of the fish I had all caught on CC Moore live system hard hook bait drilled out with a pink pop up inserted to balance the bait presented on a blowback rig with a bit longer shrink tube than normal so the carp find it harder to get rid of the hook. This was all over a spread of glugged live system boilies fired around the area.

Emma Rimmer



Flying ATM, zigs doing it again over hemp and MTN liquid. Zigs soaked in hemp oil also. 30.8oz on the nose.

James Berry



I've wanted to fish Farlows for a number of years but never got round to going there. I turned up at farlows at about 11am and had a good lap around the complex, towards the end of my lap I just saw a couple of bubbles in peg 11 near the island. I went and got my ticket and shot round as quick as I could. I tied up a spinner rig with a whittled down yellow hit n run pop up so it would sink very slowly, and aimed for the island and didn't really feel a drop. Pulled it in and was covered in weed. This happed about 5-6 times. I cast again and the drop felt perfect I scattered about 10-15 boilies over the spot and carried on setting up home for the night, just sat down on my bed I had a couple of bleeps, then it pulled up tight. I hit into it and she swam left and stripped about 40 yards of line from me. When she didn't really put up too much of a fight until she got near the net and then like a power house stripped another 20 yards off me. She finally stuck her head up and slipped over the net cord, was a stunning 31lb 13oz mirror.

Jason Bridger

First bite of the year – Wes Leadbeater – 48lb UK ghost carp



Well like your any typical angler you wanna get out and try get your first bite of the year and that I did but in style. My approach on this private lake was a solid bag with a Fruitilicious wafer being my hook bait choice with crayfish mini mix pellet both products coming from DNA baits and my hook choice was a size 6 wide gape x from Haulerz tackle. So, I opted to fish the right side of the lake with the overhanging willow tree with the aerator pump not that far behind with just a gentle overhead cast got the solid bag to land in the middle of the willow and aerator on a nice little hard spot. With most of the day being quite sitting back in the shed with my good friend Seb joking around about I hope I don't catch this one fish so we didn't have to get in the water on this cold winter day but after 30 minutes of speaking about it one of my rods has rattled of and not just being first bite of the year and but the first fish out of the lake this year and it was the big girl of the pond a 48lb Uk ghost carp and with me and my mate joking around about not wanting to get in the water I couldn't wait to jump straight in and hold my new Uk pb even if it was like 4 degrees outside but it was worth it and it still don't feel real it happened and still buzzing to this day. Wanna say a massive thank you to the guys at DNA Baits and Chris Horler at Haulerz Tackle

Wes Leadbeater



Will Crowdy trio

Recently I've had a little bit of time off work and decided to start fishing back on my syndicate. With poor winter form it was a perfect time to take advantage with this warmer weather coming in. Baiting lightly with crave and MTN and fishing yellow Hit and Run pop ups on small hinges has over the top has been kept the bites coming. On the first session I managed one of the lakes gems known as the big fully. Coupled along with a couple of mid double stickies, then on my next Session I had a proper apple sliced mirror at just over 20lb. Finally, my last fish as I was packing up on my last morning. One known as the 'Grey Mirror' One I was watching all last year but couldn't catch it for love or money. At just under 30lb I wasn't complaining.

Will Crowdy

Matt Heath – 37lb 6oz



Matt Heath from Heacham in Norfolk fished his local syndicate recently and landed this superb 37lb 6oz cracker. The successful method was a Size 5 straight point Ronnie on a 30lb semi stiff boom, whilst the bait was a drilled, 8mm, corked black tiger.

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In this issue:

- New Direction Tackle
- HayMax
- Geoff Anderson

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How Anglers Can Stave Off the Sneezes

Angling should be an enjoyable and peaceful pursuit, but if you have hay fever it's anything but. Pollen from the grass on riverbanks, fields, verges and lawns is the main culprit and it affects around 95% of sufferers, causing unpleasant symptoms such as sneezing, sniffing and watery eyes.

However, help is at hand in the form of HayMax organic drug-free allergen barrier balm, which is perfect for angling as it is non-drowsy...

A great way to reduce the severity of your hay fever symptoms is to reduce the amount of grass pollen entering your body.

Everyone can tolerate a certain amount of pollen in their body without reaction. But once this amount is exceeded – known as the trigger level – hay fever symptoms will start to occur.

HayMax organic drug-free allergen barrier balms work by stopping grass and other pollens getting into the body. And they're perfect for anglers because they're drug-free with no drowsy side-effects so won't spoil your enjoyment.

HayMax is easy to use; simply

apply a small amount around the rim of the nostrils and bones of the eyes before going out fishing or outdoors, and as necessary during the day.

HayMax has been proven in independent studies to trap all types of pollen, as well as dust and pet allergens, before they enter the body [1], [2]. An independent study by NPARU* found that when applied around the rim of the nostrils, HayMax trapped over one third of pollen grains [2].

In an independent survey by Allergy UK, the leading national charity providing support, advice and information for those living with allergic disease, 80% of respondents said that HayMax worked for hay fever [3]. Many people report that HayMax works straight away, and in the same survey, 94% of participants found HayMax quick to be effective. 44% said that it worked immediately and a further 35% said that it worked within an hour or two.

Previously in July 2014, almost eight out of ten survey respondents said the balm helped some or all of their hay fever symptoms [4].

HayMax can also be used whilst

driving and operating machinery, and will not adversely affect your performance at work, school, during exams or while taking part in sporting or fitness activities.

It has been used successfully by two Olympic athletes, with many doctors in the media regularly talking about it. HayMax has attained The Allergy Friendly Product Award from Allergy UK, awarded to products that are potentially of benefit to people affected by allergy, asthma, or sensitivity and are unlikely to cause a reaction.

It is 100% natural, certified organic by the Soil Association and carries the Vegetarian Society Approved vegetarian trademark. In all, HayMax products have gained over 50 awards from various consumer and trade bodies and organisations.

HayMax organic drug-free allergen barrier balms have a rrp of £8.49 per pot and are available from independent chemists, pharmacists and health stores, Holland & Barrett, Booths, Ocado, selected Superdrug and Boots, on 01525 406600 and from www.haymax.biz. ■





Press release

Thermal3 Overall Long Sleeve



Thermal3 Overall Long Sleeve is super breathable and regulates core warmth thanks to the lofted fibre structure. Flat elasticated seams, incredibly soft to the touch yet extremely durable. The fabric design creates open air channels for improved breathability. Super stretchable and in combination with the Shearling you get the best performance and warmth combined with a second to none freedom of movement.

See the entire Thermal3 family.

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, 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, Tel: +45 71 991 859.



Hay Fever? Dust or Pet Allergy?

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* National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit, 2012.
* 134 of 166 respondents: Allergy UK Survey, 2015.

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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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Oak Lakes Fisheries

www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk



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



Message from Gareth "I called Paul earlier to tell him that I did my first session today on the Syndicate lake. I started fishing at 10am and had my fish at 12:30. I'm absolutely buzzing. I caught a Common weighing 20lb 10oz picture attached."



28lbs 4oz common carp caught on Saturday by Mark Jennings fishing in the Bay swim on Oak Lake. Some lovely fish being caught, more photos please anglers.



34lbs 2oz common carp first catch for Gary Pearman this season using A M Baits his favourite. He could have had a double if he had not dropped the other at the net but we agreed not to mention that!!



George Long fished Oak Lake at Easter and had bigger fish than his Dad. The mirror carp was 14lbs. He was using AM Baits. Well done George.



Nice small fish for Richard Draycott aka Buddha well small for him this one at 20 lbs lovely looking carp.

**** STOP PRESS ****

Just as the magazine is finished we have news of two monsters from Oak Lakes, a 40+ carp and a 137lb Catfish, don't miss next month's issue for more details and pictures.

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.

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Dave Session

By Carl Adcock

I live in Oxfordshire and obviously there are plenty of waters to choose from for my fishing, after fishing on and off for 30 years (match and carp fishing) I had pretty much fished them all and it was time for me to get a syndicate under my belt. After looking around and doing some research I decided to join The Guys Syndicate run by Linear Fisheries.

The complex boasts 3 lakes to fish: Yeomans, Unity, and Gaunts. I decided to settle on Gaunts first as it was more my kind of fishing and having a few 40's and a 50 made it that much better. Around the same time, I had started my own fencing and landscaping company which led me to not having as much time on the bank to concentrate on my fishing, however all that was about to thankfully change. My business went from strength to strength so with this I asked my brother Rob to work alongside me as I needed his experience on the jobs I had coming through, because of this I was able to leave

him to oversee jobs to get them completed therefore leaving me with more time for fishing!

Now that I had spare time to get down to the lake and have a few socials with friends who are also members of the Guys Syndicate, one of which being Keith Newton who recently moved off Gaunts to fish The Bluebells complex in Peterborough. Keith has got a lot of experience and is not only a great angler he's also become a very good friend. After visiting the complex with Keith for a few socials and having my first fish from there being a common a few ounces under 40lb and another 33lb common my attention clearly switched onto Bluebells, and I planned to visit as regularly as possible. I started to build up some information about the lake regarding fish stocks and watercraft. Keith introduced me to Trevor the Bailiff who was quick to give me more information about the whole complex and explained to me about the syndicate and waiting list. Unfortunately, the spare time was slowly creeping

down as my business started getting really busy and with the festive period quickly approaching, I had to concentrate back on the business and started to plan a few sessions for the new year.

Fast forward to January and I was looking forward to my highly anticipated session, however Covid had other ideas and I was subjected to a positive Covid test. With a spanner thrown into the works I had to get my brother involved to run the jobs for me but sadly he also had tested positive. Thankfully my brother tested negative before me so work could once again resume. With Rob and one of the other lads who works for me being healthy and ready to work that was music to my ears.

5 days later and it was time to test again, I waited for the minutes to count down and eagerly awaited the results alongside my Mrs (Laura) longing for that single red line to appear and then there it was.

Turning to look at Laura with a grin she knew straight away what was





going to happen, while she rolled her eyes I reached for the phone and told my brother that Jamie and himself were going to be on the job a few extra days without me, as quickly as it took to end the call the car was packed, food was brought and I found myself in the car on my way to Peterborough with the grin still firmly on my face.

Keith was already there waiting for me to join him, and I had my money ready to hand over to Trevor for the syndicate place I was given that morning. So, I set about by doing some laps round the lake to locate some fish, finally after 3 laps I settled on my swim and got my spots sorted.

Due to the pressure and blanking on my previous session I decided to fish zigs on all rods, I set two up on 3ft and one on 4ft. After 2 hours I was off the mark with a 20lb mirror, this boosted my confidence that I was in the right area and on the right track. Sadly, the session took a turn for the worse the next morning after a 20-minute fight I found I had foul hooked a mirror in the fin at just shy of 40lb I was gutted but knew I couldn't count this so dusted myself off and started again. When my alarms went off again later that day, I was buzzing to be able to put the foul hook behind

me however it wasn't to be as I proceeded to lose two fish on the bounce in thick Canadian weed. Devasted I jokingly I turned to Keith and said "I deserve Dave after that" who would of known what was on the cards!

I was woken from a deep sleep at 1:30am by a one-toner, picking up the rod and putting on the waders I was still half asleep but keen for a comeback following the disaster the day before. I could tell it was a better sized fish as it was plodding away. After fighting with him for around 20 minutes he found himself in the same weed bed I had lost the two previous fish in, this made me sweat!

He then proceeded to completely bury himself in the weed as the battle commenced, I was starting to get nervous at this point as it was obviously going to be a good fish and I was fishing with 10lb line with a size 8 barbless hook it was apparent I had to do my best to steer him out of the weed, so I kept steady pressure and changed the angle of my line lay and he came out pretty easy.

The night was very clear, and the moonlight was bright enabling me to see the huge weed bed attached to the clearly very big fish. After struggling to scoop it all in my net, finally everything slipped across the net

cord and after a quick sigh of relief it was time to unravel my prize, and there he was Dave in all his glory, he looked huge. My joke I had made earlier to Keith had come true.

After ensuring Dave was safe in the retaining sling, I ran to wake Keith up to help me weigh the fish and take photos. On our way back to my swim I asked if there were any other big mirrors in the lake other than Dave, to which Keith smiled and said no. The moment of truth came, we hoisted him onto the tripod still in the retaining sling and I held my breath as the needle on the scales kept on creeping round, I asked Keith for the final verdict, and he said 59lb! I couldn't believe it and looked at Keith in disbelief! I was in shock and still am to this day.

That wasn't the end of my session, I kept on fishing still in shock and not being able to sleep as I was absolutely buzzing. The day after catching Dave was a blur however I caught another three fish, two mid twenty fish and a 28lb mirror to finish the session off nicely before heading home with an even bigger grin on my face than when I left.

I will continue to fish this amazing venue with loads of other targets to aim for. ■

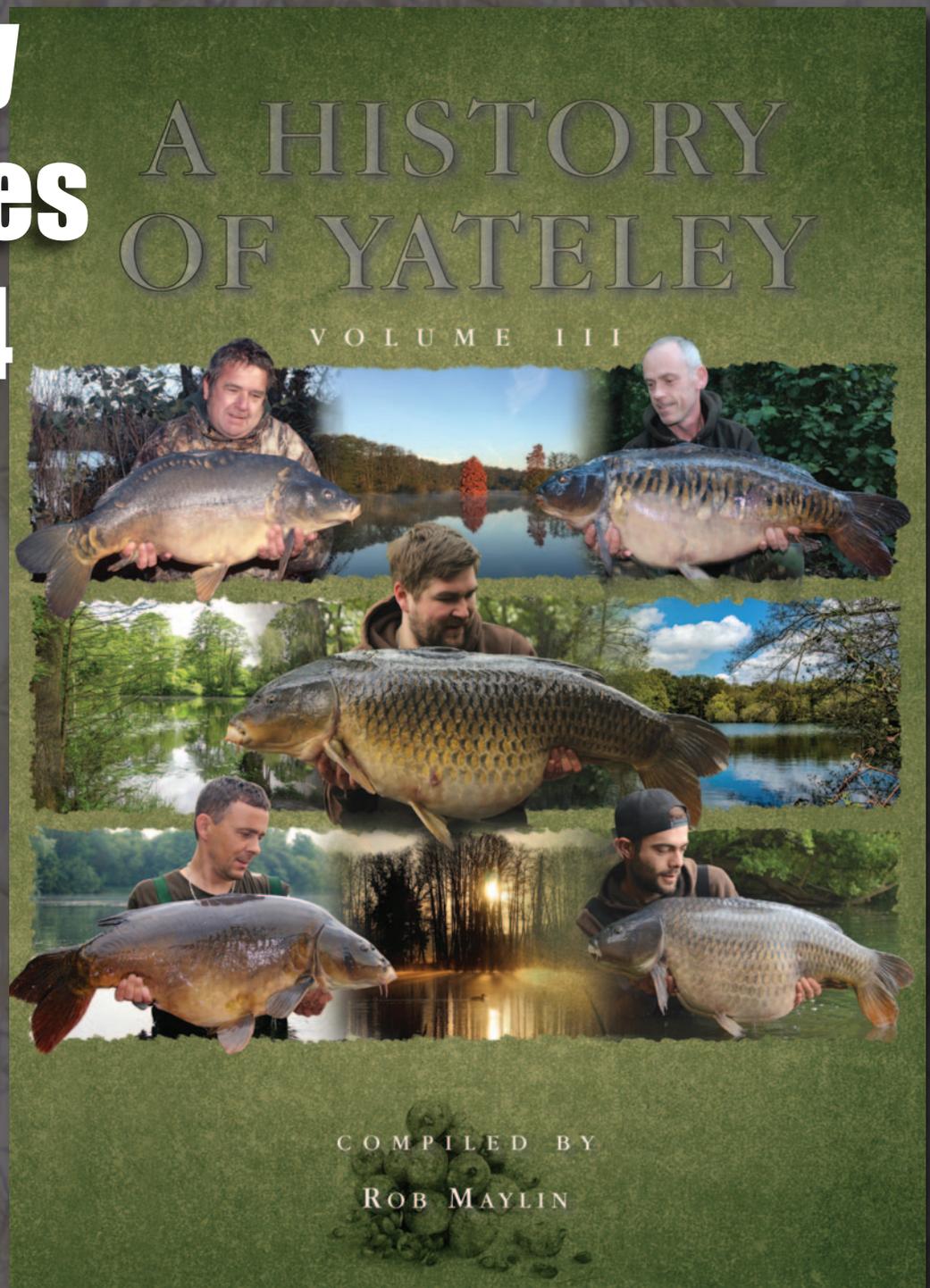
Yateley Volumes 3 and 4

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.

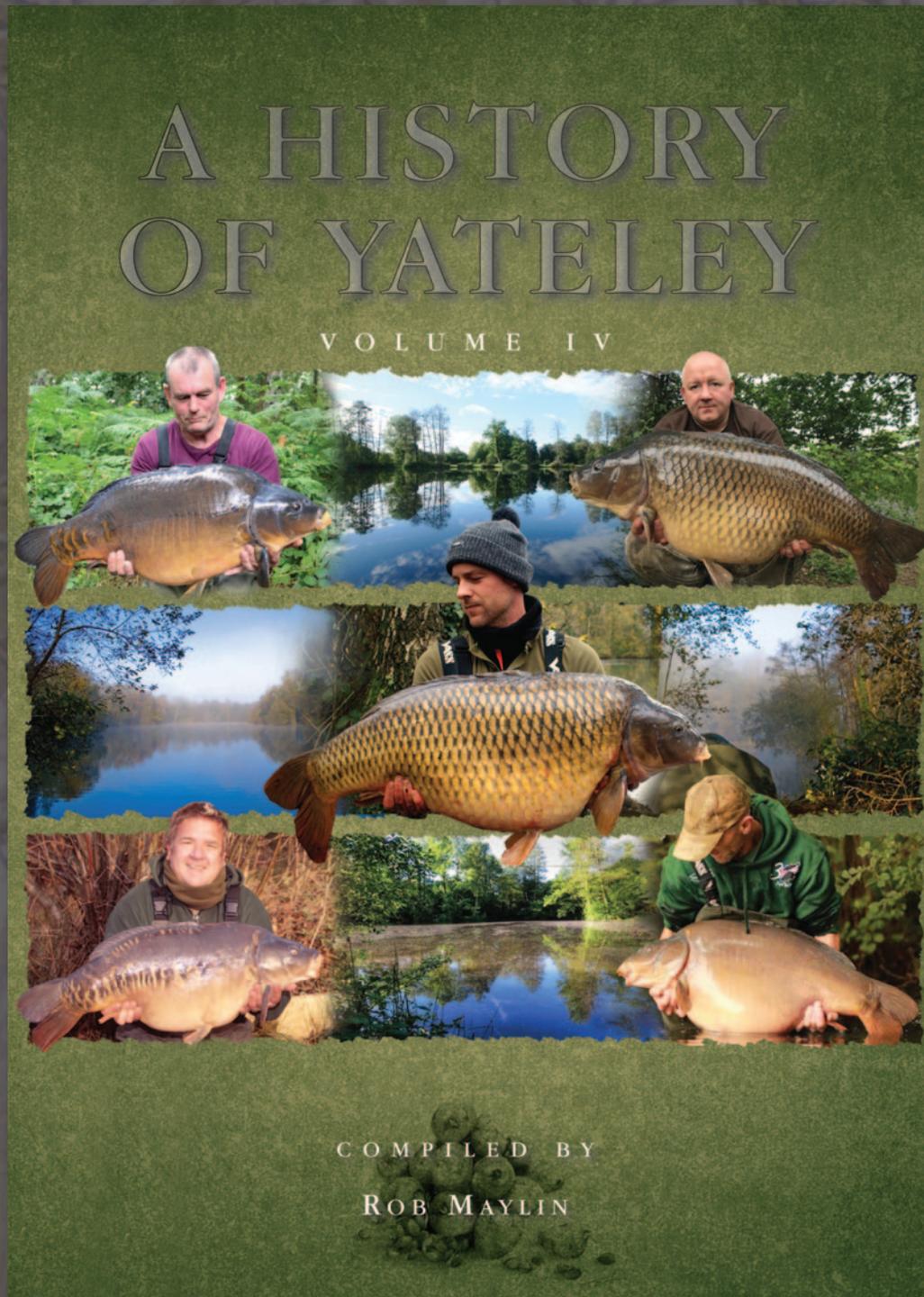
Volume 3 contains chapters on the North Lake, The Split Lake, Horseshoe and Pumhouse. The Pads Lake, Car Park, Moulsham and Mill Lane.

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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Colebrook Fishery Session

Part 2 by Tristan Cooper

We ventured up to Colebrook fishery in Devon over the Halloween weekend in search of a Halloween carp. I chose Colebrook after having a super successful session landing 'Chunks' at 25lb 12oz and 'Smudge' at 29lb 12oz previously.

We originally planned to get to the lake on Friday night but as the winter nights has drawn in we decided to skip setting up in the dark and get down to the lake early Saturday morning.

Once we got to the lake, we quickly unloaded the van and barrowed all our stuff down to the swim. I choose the same swim as I fished last time but this time I was sharing it with my

dad who wanted to fish the right hand side so I decided to fish the left hand side as it is a double swim.

I quickly set all my rods up with a drop off inline leader fishing a Ronnie rig which is the tactics which caught me Smudge last session, one was rigged up with 2 pieces of Pop up corn and the other was a pink fluoro cell 14mm pop up. I know these baits work well up here by speaking to the people that have fished here longer than me and from first-hand experience. I casted the first rod over to the far bank, attached by rig filled the baiting spoon with my rig in and freebies and then carefully pushed the bait under the tree on my left. The 2nd rod I done an underarm flick minding the trees overhead and haggig over the lake and the bait landed perfectly under a big overhanging branch

where I know the fish love to feed. I catapulted some bait around it and I was finally fishing.

The afternoon passed extremely quickly and before I knew it the night was already settling in and the temperature started to plummet. I didn't see a fish going into dark so I thought this might not be a very productive session but thinking back to last time this is how it played out going into dark.

The night was passing quickly and quietly and at 1am the storm hit with torrential rain 40mph+ winds and me being in my small aqua atom bivvy was definitely feeling the effects. The storm lasted till about 6am and I was woken up to the sight of puddles around my bedchair coming from my rods. The fish are known to be caught in between rain spells so as soon as



there is a dry period that's when the bite time may be. I left the rods where they were this entire time without touching them and only topping the baited spots up with 15mm cell and 15mm mainline baits fish prototype bait once after I casted out. The morning just like the night was passing by incredibly quickly to the point where it was nearly time for us to leave. Carl in the swim to our right in peg 9 came over for a chat and as we were all about to start packing up my left-hand rod went beep beep, we all looked over and then as I got a little closer to the rod the bite alarm absolutely ripped off, rod was hooping over, line peeling out and as soon as I picked into the fish it was just hugging tight the left hand margin. Once I turned the fish it came in with ease straight to the net and I thought it was only a upper double. As soon as the fish saw the net it decided to go the complete opposite direction back to where I hooked it from. I managed to pull the fish back into open water where after a bit of a back and forth fight it finally went over the net cord.

Looking into the net at this fish I knew I underestimated the size of it

but I still guessed it as 23lb/24lb, we safely retained the fish in my retainer sling and waiting for Matt the owner of the fishery to come down as he likes seeing the fish and how they are growing. Once Matt got to us we got the cameras set up and carefully lifted the common out of the water, we rested this big common down on my cradle and the owner told us this fish looks like Bullion which is a very rare

fish to catch like smudge which I have had 2 or 3 weeks prior to this. We weighed the fish at 29lb 5oz meaning I've now had 2 near 30 commons in the space of a few weeks. When I picked Bullion up for the photos it was just such a long fish, and I could tell why this was a target fish.

Such a unreal experience and a huge reward to be had for a quick night session. ■



Exclusive

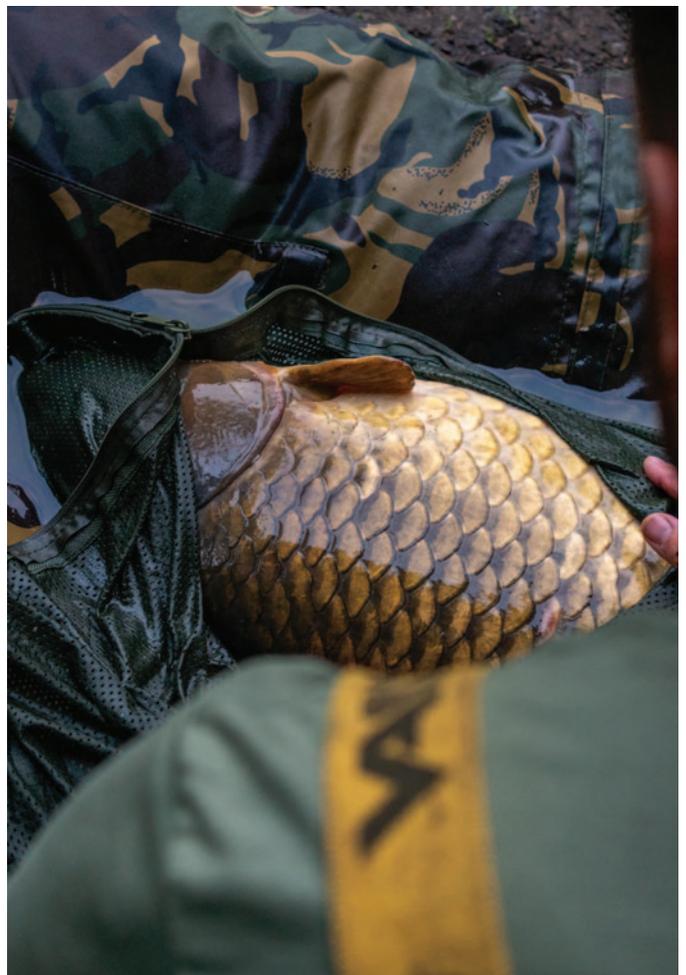
Time for Change

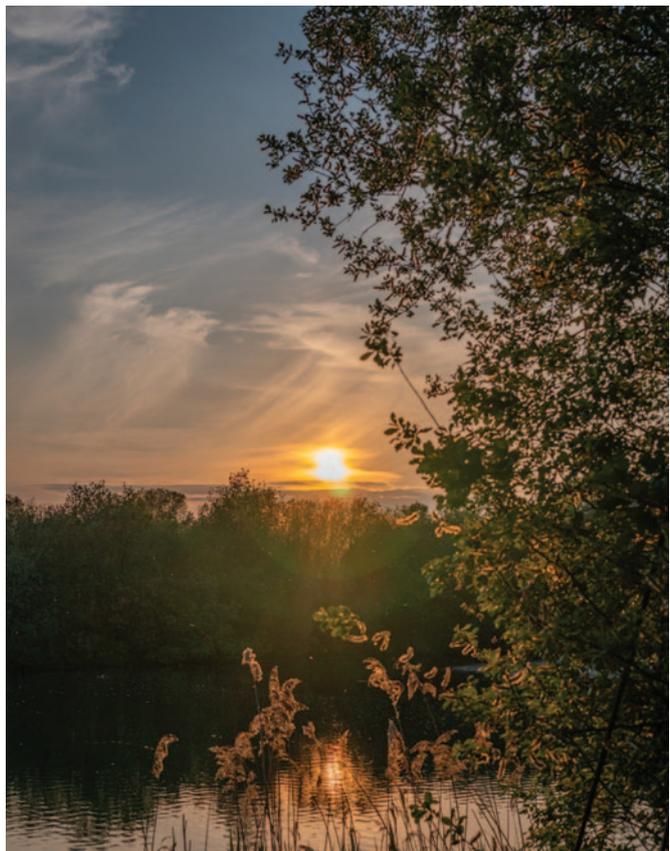
Autumn / Winter by Richard Shenton



This year I've had great success on my syndicate water by staying mobile and adapting a stealthy approach to catching fish. This is generally how I'll always approach any water and how I will continue to approach my autumn angling with slight tweaks along the way. I'm not one to 'scale down' in the cooler months when it comes to the bait that I am using. I will always fish with a size 4 hook, strong line, and a strong hook link as this setup seems to work for me. When I'm fishing for the biggest fish in the lake, I want to make sure that if I encounter one, I'm landing that fish no matter what. Over the last eight months, this has accounted for several captures and I'm keen to keep this run of success throughout the autumn.

Autumn for me is my favourite time of year to get out on the bank, the crisp cool air, the crunch of leaves under toe and most importantly the carp are in prime condition at their heaviest weights, perfect for hitting





Carp Humour



Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack Competition

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

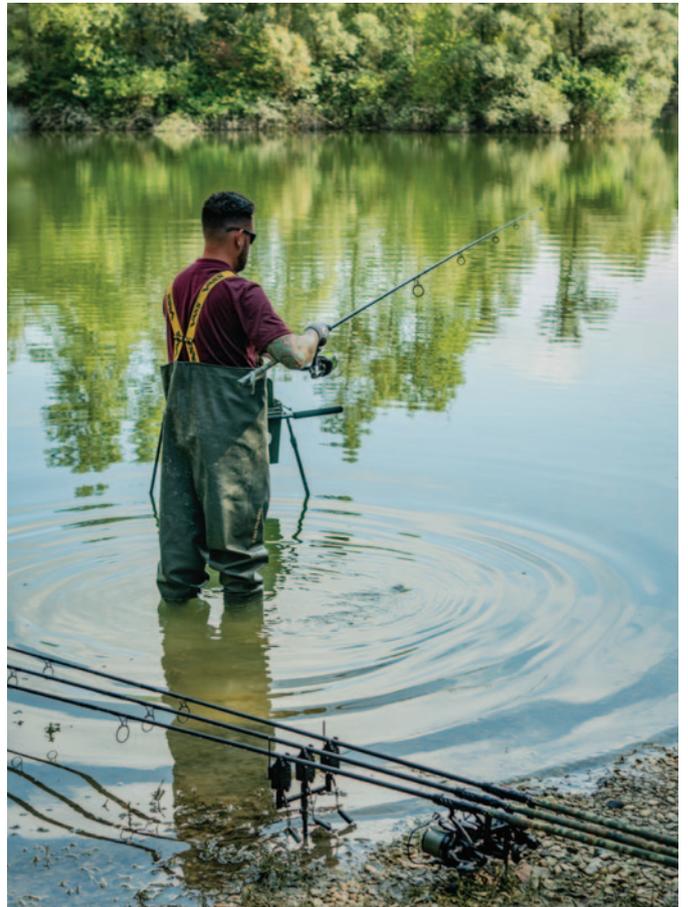
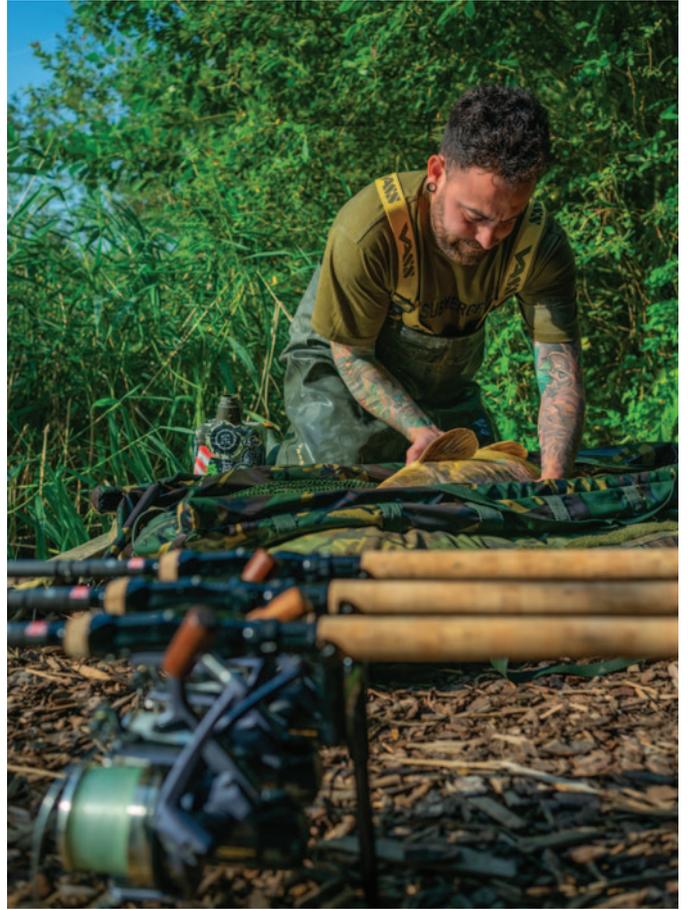
And it could not be easier to win this fantastic **Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack** which contains **5kg of 18mm Nutcracker Boilies** (RRP £37.50) and a tub of **Nutcracker Pop-ups** (RRP £6.49), perfect for an early season session.

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

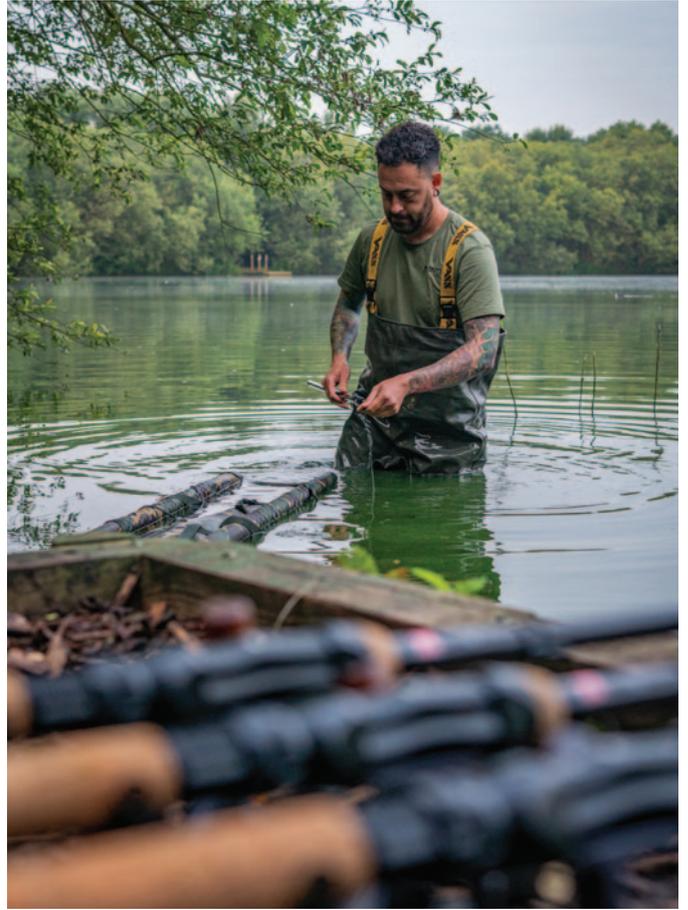
Closing date is 1st June, 2022

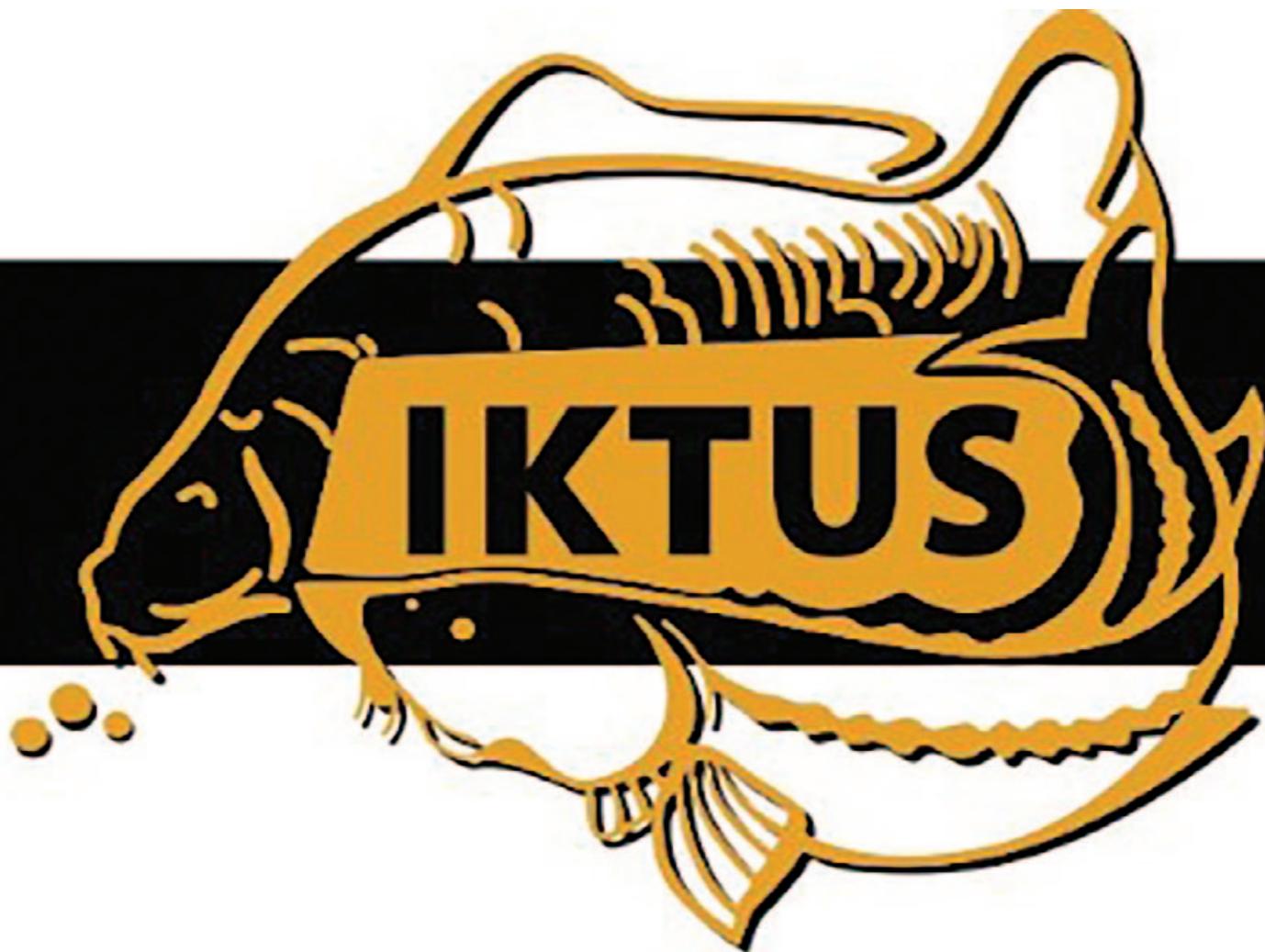
– SO GET LIKING!











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those new PBs. I've always been a strong advocate of predominately using a fishmeal-based boilie in autumn, I tend to use the Krilla flavour simply because it's a high protein fishmeal bait that the fish tend to home in on.

The Krilla has the perfect blend of Robin Red and Scopex which gets the fish feeding and regularly revisiting areas that I have baited. Given that most of my angling is short sessions or overnighters, getting the fish to visit these areas is key. This is where I tend to use a mixture of liquids and powders to help draw the carp in and ensure the maximum amount of flavour within my bait. I tend to find that adding Green Lipped Mussel and Liver Powder to my mix helps enhance the attraction and get the fish feeding. At this time of year, the fish are looking to put weight on in preparation for their winter slumber, making it the ultimate time to get picture-perfect fish.

I'll always try and pre-bait as much as possible when heading out whether this is in the margins or at range. I simply arrive at the lake with

a spod set up, bucket and catapult and get to work baiting before casting my line. I always try and get down to the lake at least every other day and trickle the bait in. If I can do this without spooking the carp too much or introduce it with a baiting spoon I will. However, I don't want to just throw boilies in the lake straight out of a bag, as much as I'm sure that would work, I want to put everything in my favour. This is where the liquids and powders I use come into play, this helps draw the carp in and encourages them to feed aggressively.

Depending on the substrate and lake bottom this will change whether I use a heating method or not. This method is just a few simple steps; however, it can make all the difference when it comes to prepping your bait. You start by putting boilies into a bucket and soaking them in boiling water for half an hour. From there, you then tip out the excess water to ensure your bait is ready for the additional flavour to be added. I then rehydrate the boilies with a liquid and then coat them in GLM powder. This helps the baits to have maximum

flavour making them attractive to the fish whilst making sure they do not draw in any silt.

Through the year I have had great success of bright hookbaits, little slithers of foam have proven quite beneficial for me when fishing. However, autumn is where will often adapt my approach. Heading into the autumn months you often find that the fish have been hammered on bright hookbaits through the warmer months, and by now have they have become wary of foods such as this. As a result, I tend to switch over to a match-the-hatch hookbait usually a dark bait tipped off with an artificial grain of corn or artificial maggot. This is just to ensure that my hookbait stands out around the free offerings, this will often be a pop-up or wafter critically balanced to make sure that the bait looks appealing. Winter is a different story; half the battle is finding the fish in the cooler months. Their metabolism slows down, the fish shoal up and generally don't feed as often. The situation, temperature, wind, and fish movements will always dictate my approach when it comes







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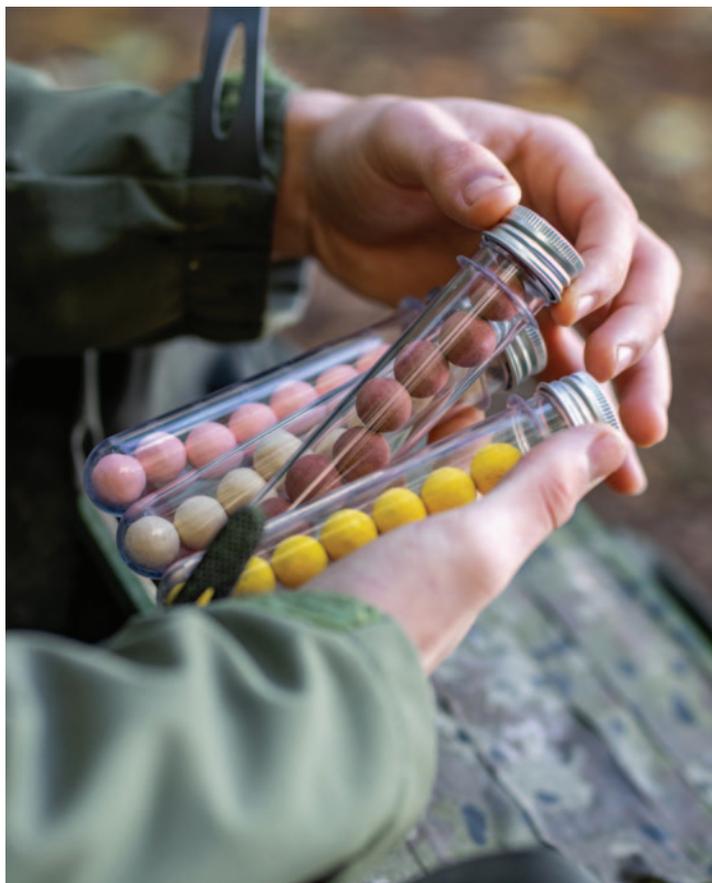
The Governor.



The Governor.

to choosing the bait and the way that I fish. Whether that is zigs, solid bags, fishing over a carpet of bait or simply chuck out singles, I change my approach depending on the conditions when I am out on the bank.

With the fish reducing the amount that they eat during this time, it's key to give them something that is easy to digest and keeps them grubbing around for that short feeding spell. The Banoffee Krush is perfect for that, it's a milky based protein that is easy to digest and keeps them grubbing around for that short feeding spell. Alternatively, I also opt for a solid bag – a small parcel of attraction just enough to nick a bite. Winter fishing will see me switching back to fishing with a bright hookbait in the winter, the carp have peripheral vision, and they can't see as clearly in the winter months. As a result, using a little something extra by tipping off hookbaits with an artificial bait or a cluster of maggots is a great way of enticing a bite. Though adding additional flavouring is great, I don't like to use too many liquids in the cooler month as I don't want them to congeal. Corn is a classic winter bait and has always served me and most seasoned anglers well, it is a classic winter bait. It's all about using what you are confident in, so get out there. You won't catch them sitting at home. ■



BIG CARP TOP TEN

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Five Memorable Captures from Five Decades of Carping

By Scott Rodgers

The 80's and Tigers

Living around the North-west Leicester area like so many areas in the Midlands a 20lb was a good fish then, one a year was a result, particularly being a young lad, they were thin on the ground.

I think this would have been my third or fourth 20, so I'd had a few, this capture from Heather brick pit near Ibstock.

A deep lake, very match oriented controlling club water with a reputa-

tion of being hard. I'd just got on the tiger nut approach and boy was that a game changer, there's few things that make carp fishing ridiculously easy in fishing, but back in the day if you could get a water that hadn't seen tigers it was like flicking an electric switch on like a lot of older carpers will know, I'm sure. I'd already had considerable success and I remember I used to get every Monday off during the summer (come September I had to work Mondays, making faggots) till May, you see I was & still am a butcher by trade so retail hours can

be restricted.

Anyway, I settled in the on this Sunday evening on the brick pit 3 rods, 2 on tigers with my weapons of choice, my old north westerns carbon Kevlar's 2lb test.

The deep old clay pit didn't give its prizes up easily and was well known to be the hardest lake in the area.

Open bail arm, slack lines, clipped up above the spool, the Gardner clear wind beater monkey climbers with the, was it the 300 power isotopes in them. Anyway, the most powerful isotopes you buy anyway. They lit up like



Heather brick yards eighties.



Savay nineties.

Blackpool illuminations.

I remember the take on the Monday morning, the blur of that isotope bobbins like a sparkler raging up on down manically, as the fish bolted out into the deep water from the 3ft deep margin feeding spot. At just over that magical 20lb mark I was a king for that day.

As your carp fishing evolves picking a single fish out of 10 years is a bit of a task but here's my 90's one. Bloody hell which one, my first Trent 20, the Stowe pool biggie, Milly's, Savay, Fletchers, Branston

90s travelling

Gotta be Savay, I'd grown up reading so much and collected so reading material on Savay, all I ever wanted was to catch one.

1997 and I'd had a few different jobs still in retail butchery, even less hours now, with a 58-hour week normal, and I had that desire to travel 125 miles to try and catch a special Colne

valley inhabitant.

I'd travelled on a July evening, the hour and three-quarter journey on Saturday evening with my mate Richard, we'd meet up at the M1 service station, dump a car, and travel down together. He lived in Newark and I in Burton upon Trent. Just entering the lake gates used to give me goose pimples, the prizes that swam in the lake, the scene of many a story id read, it was uncanny, like playing the lottery, pick a combination, the right one and you'd be making a life-long memory for yourself, what a great opportunity, the lake was/is big, plenty of space, just had to get it right and that's the tricky part, we'd often walk around the lake, up to as far as the syndicate gate, maybe fished for a couple of hours but in general get the heads up between ourselves where to head at 6am the next morning. Often at the pub for a bit of food, we'd sleep over night in car park up near pit 4, Harefield and

then someone (Dougal, cough cough) gave us the gate combination for Korda which gave security whilst we popped in the pub.

So back to the capture, we'd driven down and as I recall, we'd only checked out the cottage and North Bay area, the weather was warm, weed up and fish were seen in the cottage, no syndicate lads about in that area at all. We started on the bottom, me in the point swim & Richard on the road bank fishing till the sun rose and with it the carp enjoying the warmth of the rays. In my day I classed myself a good floater angler, with limited time, floater fishing could soon get the carp hitting the spreader blocks a lot quicker than static fishing. I hardly ever floater fish these days! So, I was on the point swim feeding these Savay carp the old mixers, they were having them too. Size 8 super specialist Drennan hooks, 10lb big game line, Shimano Airlex reels and 2¼ Diawa dictator z rods, which



Local 40 – naughties.

to be fair where broom handles.

Double super glued mixer, 7-8 ft hook length & the lightest Drennan surface float, those clear ones, maybe 5 grams, got a little white cap where the swivel is. A take and battle commenced, and that Daiwa rod bent like a wand as a long fish twisted & turned. A proper battler, gave me a beating but everything held firm ...

I had my first Savay carp that morning & I lost one in the weed too are short while later. Two bites in a morning, if only I lived local!!

Big long lean Savay carp 29.4, what a beast. Id caught bigger carp locally, but this was my carp fishing coming of age fish.

2000's local

I had 3 years on the days & 3 years on syndicate at Savay , id brought my own business (butcher shop) got married ,2 kids the usual stuff .id had a Elstow ticket were id caught a few not many but up to over 40lb.

Tickling away locally was a gravel

pit that had had a few Leney carp dropped into it, 9 I think some years before, late 80's., 7-8 acres no night fishing, depths averaging 16-17 feet and a fish topping 40 lb on my doorstep, a 40 lb'er. I know had moved house closer to my business and was surrounded by Derby County fans, me being Forest, plenty of banter on the bank & at work.

It's funny how things evolved I heard of this off the radar lake in the early 90s, mentioned it to my friend "Andy" who mentioned to a mutual friend "Brian" who then recycled it in the summer for the potential pike fishing, he's mad for his pike, but carp too.

Any to cut a long story short Brian put the lake on the map being the first one to proper catch these Carp.

Within the space of a few years the lake and membership moved quickly into the then juggernaut of modern carp fishing. The match fishing club didn't know what had hit them.

Id been a member from 95- 96, it

was a cheap ticket, I didn't really get stuck in until 2003 when I concentrated fully, fishing mainly evenings, I had a respectable 5 that first year. The stock had risen to around 17 by now as a few other fished had been dropped in, gaining weight incredibly,

The big old Leney had been out at 40 & my partner in crime over on the pit Martin had managed her in the spring at 44

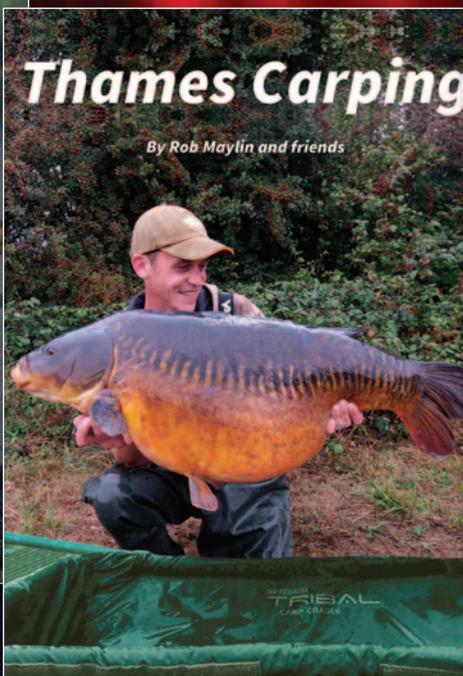
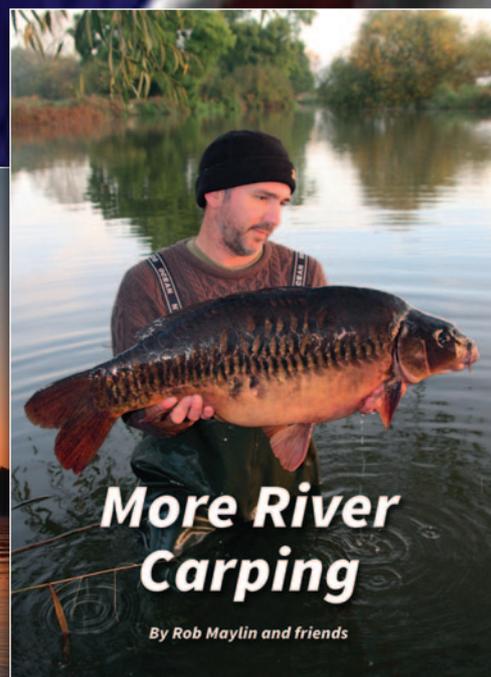
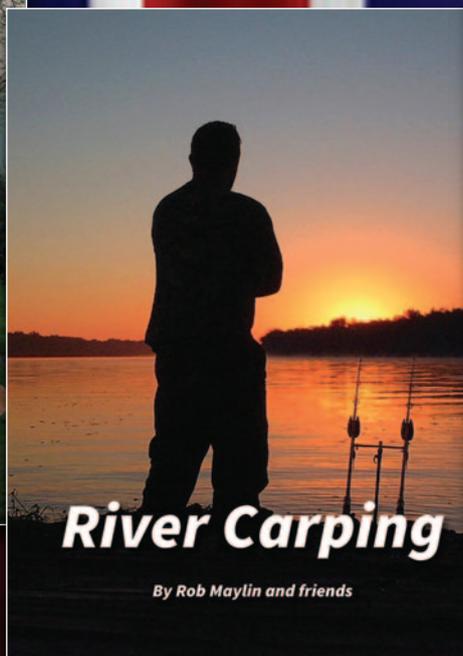
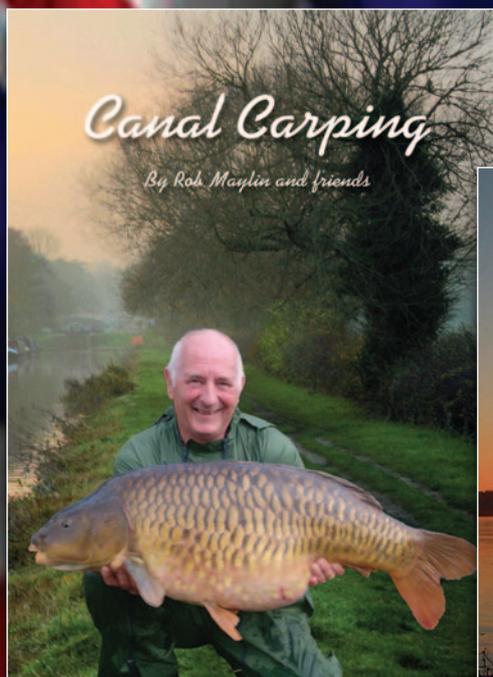
Being thought of as a once-a-year fish the angling pressure wilted away somewhat after that capture.

Time for me on this my second year was seriously restricted as my wife becoming seriously ill & needing dialysis treatment 3 evenings a week, the carp fishing addiction was going to be hard to keep up. I decided to bait up every evening with 10kg thereabouts of bait. One spot in the edge, a neglected swim, for 22-day days (missing only two evenings) i baited the Fook out of it.

Id put a kg out at 40 yards of boilies (Key Baitsolutions ASM) & the rest in

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2010s Lincolnshire .

particle close in. Any afternoon or opportunities i got I'd fish the 40yard spot whilst the close in spot was fermenting away being bombarded with bait.

I had a scaley at 27 on the boilie rod one Wednesday afternoon and then the big girl 1st time on the margin spot the following Wednesday morning 40.6! Twenty-one days of heavy pre- baiting had done the job, one proud angler, one of only seven anglers to hold her, a remarkable tricky fish, fortunately greed got the better of her! Balanced tiger nut on this occasion

2010's – Lincolnshire pub chucking

I'd joined a Lincolnshire Lake in the 2010's, a big old rectangle shape lake where I'd been lucky enough to be given a ticket via a chance French trip with the lake owners, luckily for me,

someone had last minute dropped out the trip and new friends were made. A great set up of a lake, car park, toilets, fence plenty of boxes ticked.

The jewel of the lake, although not the largest was undoubtedly the big linear named the big troutie

The fish loved being at range, and it was fair to say not everyone had the kit and desire to be able to get out there in the 'singles' at range proved to be the most consistent method.

On a big new westerly one evening, with white caps hitting the margins the butcher was lucky enough to have a few fish on an overnight session collimating in the big Troutie.

I'd been using the ASM boilies, with one rod on a roving (pub chucked) pop up at range, 2 on a bit of bait closer. The 13 ft 3/4 Diawa rods hitting the mark despite the wind hammering in. with only light silk

weed on the bottom of the pit and pretty uniformed bottom the roving tactics used to work perfectly, pub chucking with a withy on.

It always seemed ironic travelling north for big carp, the carp world was changing very fast.

This big girl taken on a withy pool rig, randomly hit out but everything falling right over the light silk weed, pub chucking rewards when your lucks in!

2020's Lockdown

Having only had a very short period to choose from in a year with lock downs I must admit I've got lucky a few times with all my fishing being very local until August.

I'm going back to the spring when lock down was in full swing & a VERY restricted pit i fished an oversee was my only escape on a Saturday evening/ night. Id drops of a meat

order to the lake owner every Saturday & fish his pit overnight so in my mind justifying the essential travelling. My gear was left in a unit close by, I was literally working my balls off during this time 65/68 hours a week of intense work keeping things going.

I've had some real beauties this year with couple of very big fish, but this one is a looker for sure. I'd fished the previous Saturday night on this, 1 fish an acre pit & thought I'd got done. A few liners in a swim on the back of the wind. There's 17-18 fish in

here, a few pike & a handful of tench likey 2-3, stocking over the years had been done by a few happy go lucky fish lifters and that's putting it very politely. So, there was very little in there to worry about in regards as nuisance fish. Feeling sure I'd been done that trip I fed a couple of kg of bait & hoped to be back down the following week. With essential travel only I'd got the lake to myself on a Saturday when I could have a day off before back at work on the Monday.

On arriving & setting up I noticed a fish roll, pike or carp I'd no idea, so one

rod went there, 2 on the more likely areas that had received the bait the week before.

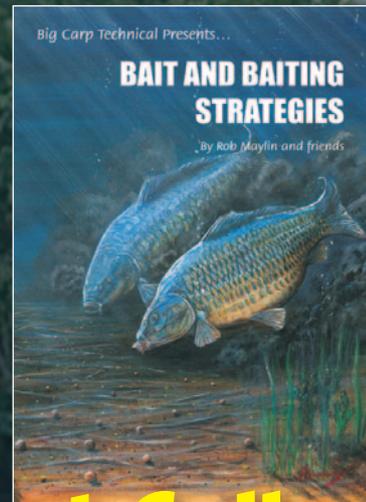
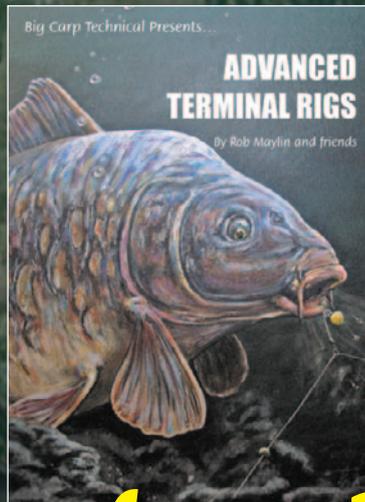
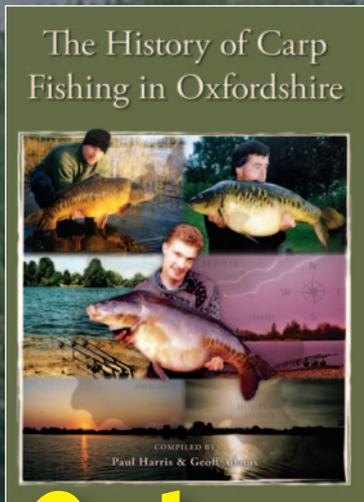
First light & the right-hand rod had pulled round & a low double was had, flicking the rod out once again the bottom bait (ASM) was picked up a few hours later which resulted in this minter of a mirror 28.14. The difference in my mind was obviously a bit of prebait and I'd switched from pop ups to bottom baits.

So that's kind of cherry picked five captures from the 5 decades of my carp angling, tight lines! ■

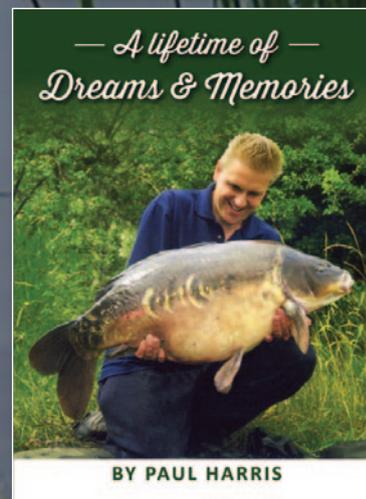
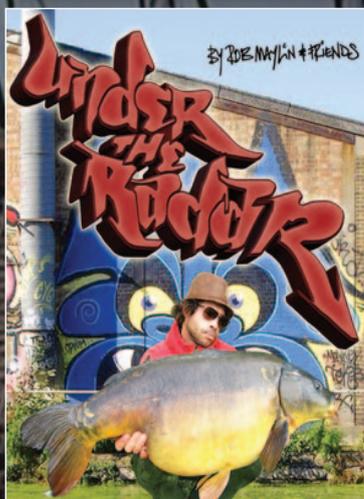
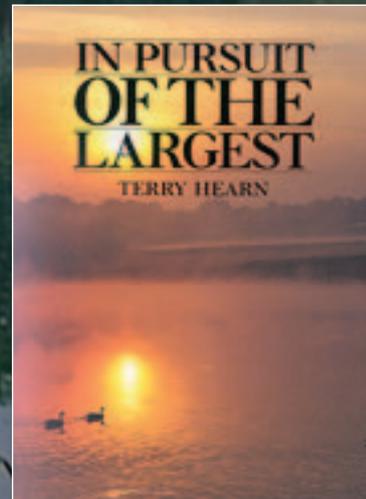
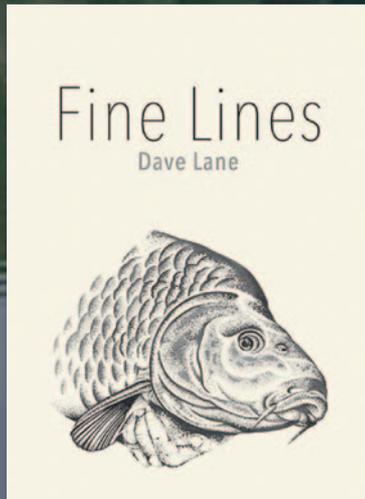
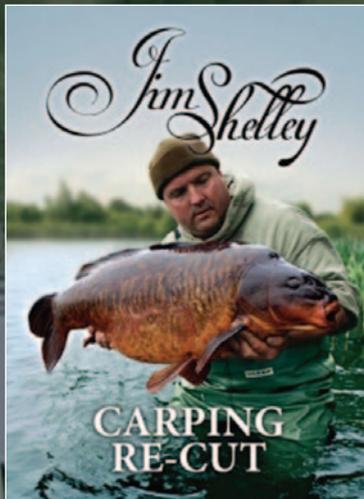


2020s lockdown

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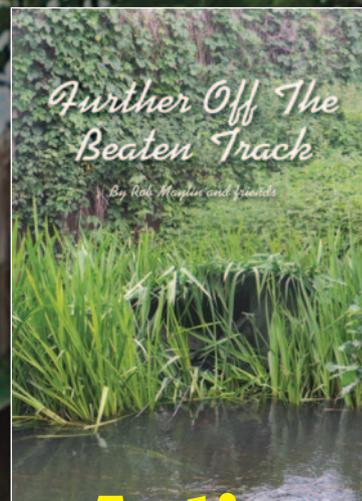
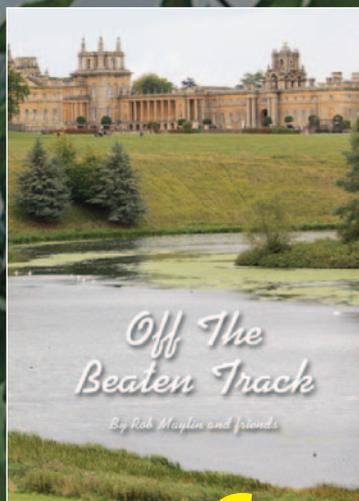
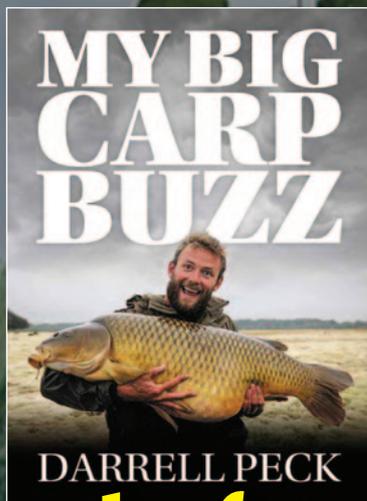


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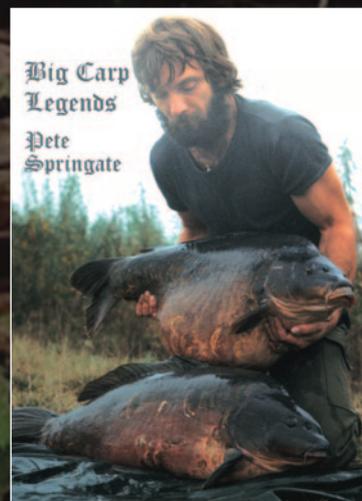
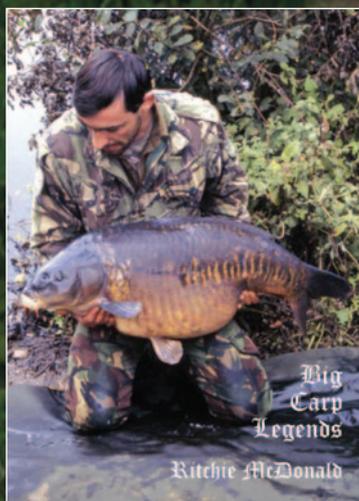
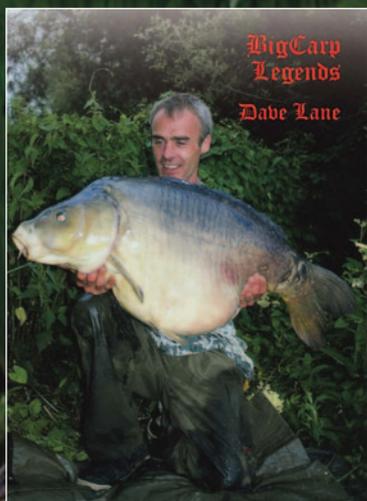
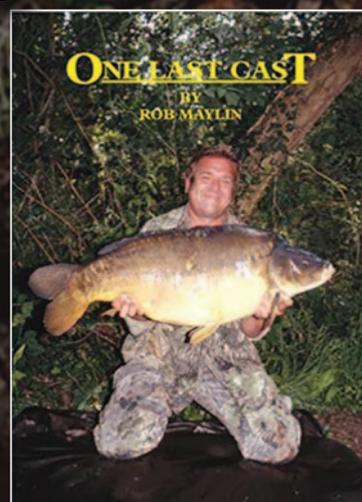
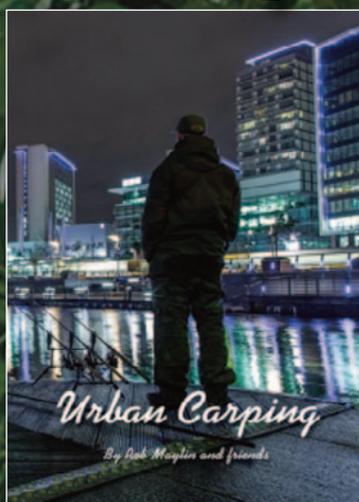
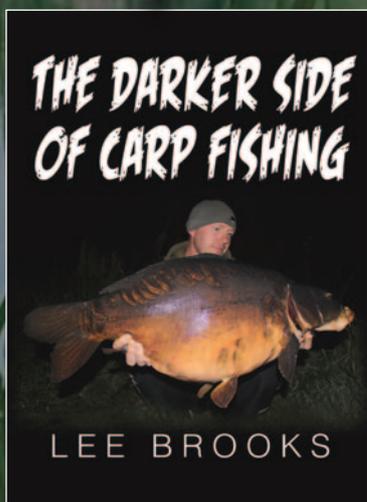


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The River Campaign

By Florence and Craig Sansom

We started fishing the river in 2020 but due to covid didn't get to much angling

done but the walks most days was the key to our success for 2021. We had 6 out in our first season the koi being ne of them that Florence caught after school.

This is a tidal river and therefore we found that the carp tended to keep 2-3 miles upstream and liked to hold up on the first s bend.

We baited heavy with maize hemp tigers and CC Moore bait Pacific Tuna and Live System. Baiting three different areas we would bait regularly. Fishing full moons and low pressure was the key as with Florence at school and covid I like to give her the best opportunity to catch fish. I fished the opening night 2021 but had no luck. The next time we fished due to lock downs and the river being overgrown in the summer months also very weedy was October and had 2 out. We still walked a lot a pre baited





lots over 500kg (lots of bream in there) through the summer and autumn months.

Next session 19th November full moon. Me and Florence went to our local tackle shop and got some essentials. Florence chose her 3 pre tied Korda rigs as she does. 1 multi rig and 2 spinner rigs size 6. We used white cc more tuna pop ups over 2 kg on each spot.

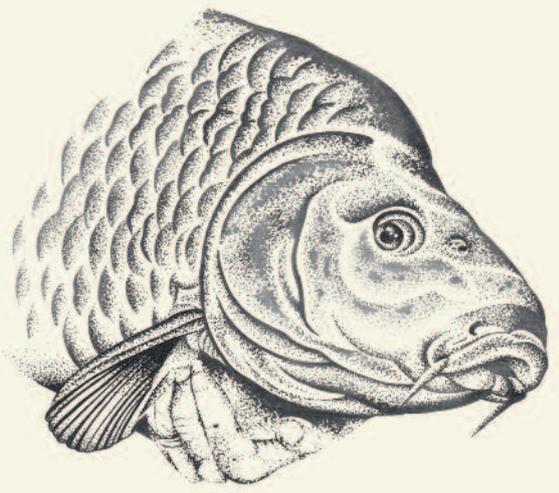
We arrived in the new van that we converted into the fishing camper driving to our spot on the bend, just got the rods out and the rain was in all day.

We had just laid our heads down for a nap and her alarm screamed off, Florence was into a fish first, it was her right had rod. The river was starting to flow fast, and the carp gave up a good scrap. I netted it for her, and she had just landed a beautiful river common. Weight was bang on 12lb. Florence was over the moon, and I was so proud of her. The smile on her face when she is holding the fish in the torrential rain not a care in the world. After weighing and slipping the fish

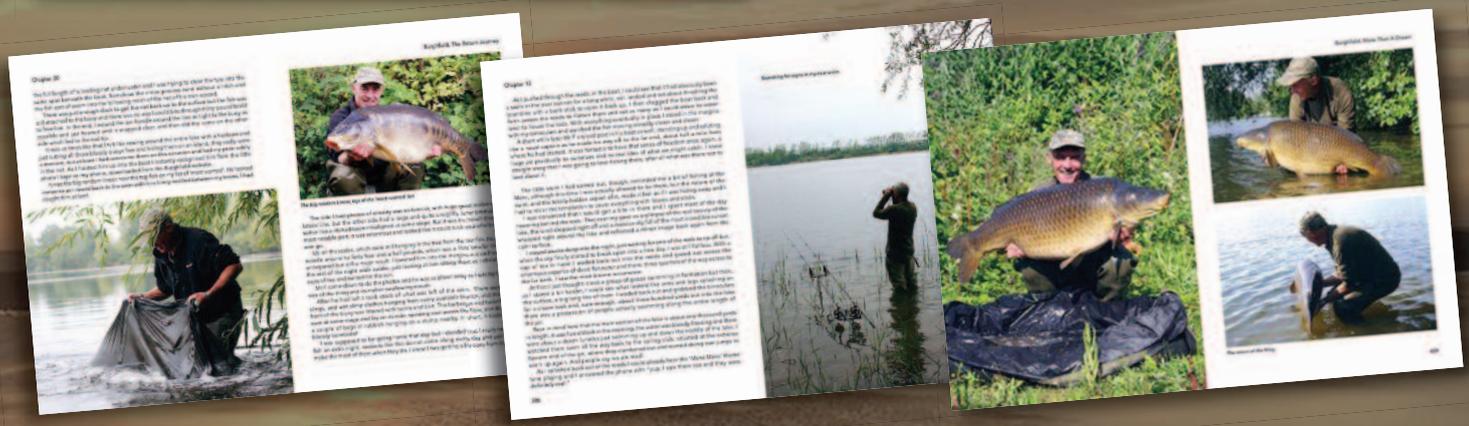
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Fine Lines

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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back we got the rod back out there. Slipping our waders or we hit back in the back of the van had a hit chocolate to celebrate. We hit the sack not long after and woke up with no more fish.

I changed my left hand rod to a snowman using Korda wide gape size 6 and dark matter hooklink. Around an hour later my wife and 1 year old son came up to see us to have a cup of tea, and within 10 minutes the left-hand rod ripped off and headed round the s bend.

I could tell it was a decent fish and got glimpse after gaining some yards back in the reel it was a mirror and I have only seen 2 in there and had caught





that last season. So, I knew it was what we call the big river Bessie.

We weighed her at 32.12lb and was amazing to share it with my daughter wife and new son.

The star of the show though is Florence, she had walked the river so many times with me and learnt how fish behaved and really enjoyed it. Also being outside with nature is what she loves doing since the age of 3 she has been night fishing with me.

Florence Sansom age 7 new PB 12lb.

Craig Sansom new river PB 32.12lb. ■



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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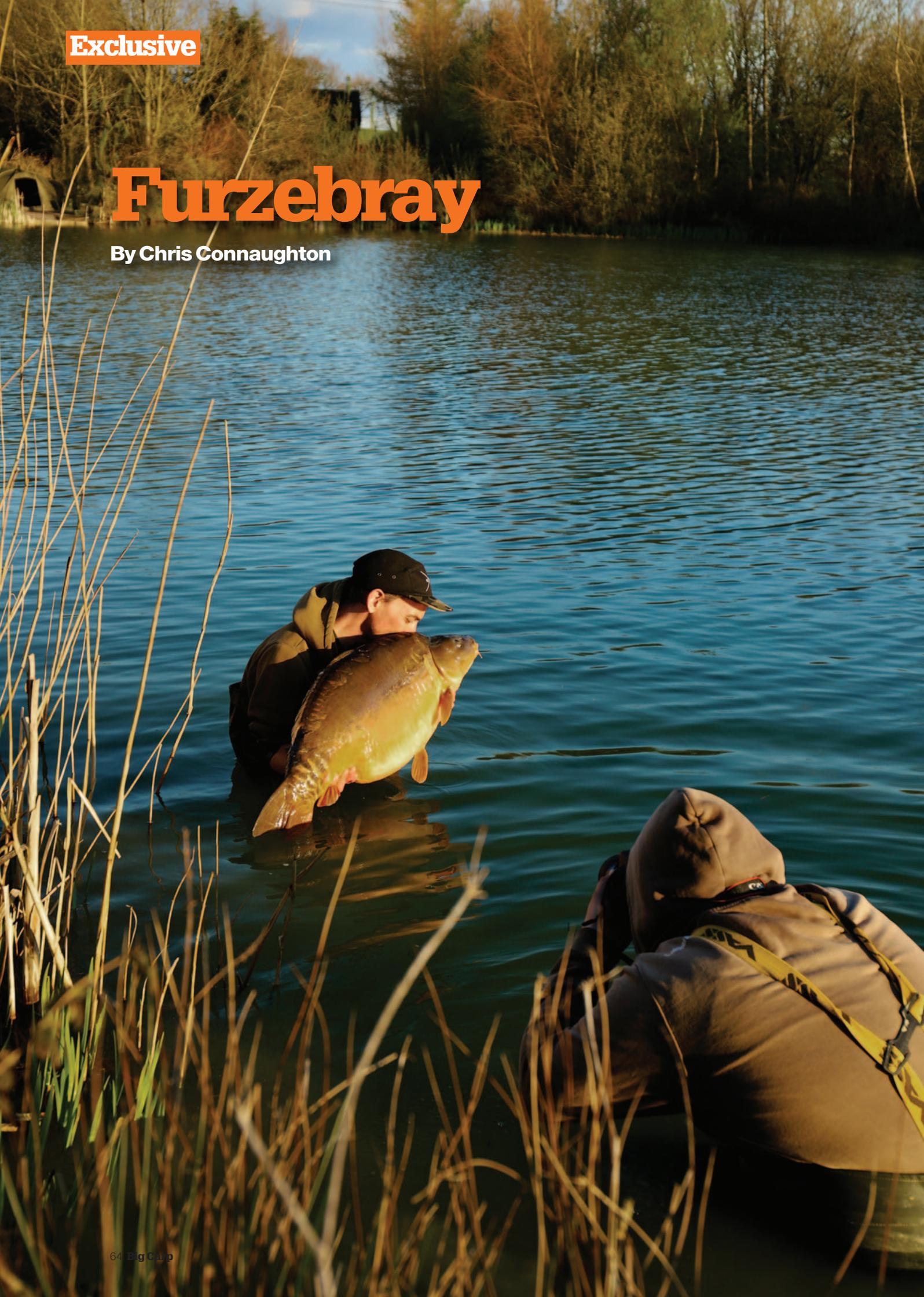
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Exclusive

Furzebray

By Chris Connaughton



After not being able to fish our winter syndicate due to Covid restrictions I jumped on a friend's trip that have had the lake booked for around a year (Furzebray has now changed to exclusive week bookings only from a day ticket water, with a syndicate in the winter for locals).

The trip looked like it may not happen, but we were lucky enough for lockdown restrictions to be lifted and our trip still to go ahead with night fishing resuming and our trip booked from the 10th of April 2021. We turned up to the lake around 9am and drew for swims and I gave everyone a pot of my Remix Baits - Secret Wafers.

I have always made my own hook baits as I have worked for several bait companies and always had better success this way. During the first lockdown my friends encouraged me to launch this as a business, using Mainline baits products (Very supportive as I am a team member) as well as my own combination of feed





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stimulants I have not looked back. With the draw I always had Lifebuoy (Peg 10) in my head even though this is the deeper part of the lake and not the best for this time of year, this is the swim where my target (Clover) usually gets caught, I only had one fish in mind and was hopeful as she had not made an appearance for 5 months and would be over the moon with just that one bite.

I have fished Furzebray lakes for several years and 'Clover' was the first 30lber I ever saw on the bank over 7 years ago, I said then she is the one I want and typically have had several of the other A-Team members as repeats but could not leave without this part of the puzzle complete. After a real hard start and friends catching from the off I thought it was not going to be. On the second night my washing line pinged out of the clip and I landed a fish known as '2 scale' and a lovely fish. The next few nights passed with little action for me. On the second to last night, I was sitting reading my book when my snag rod went into absolute meltdown. After playing the fish in Gin Clear water for around 20mins and being an absolute mess due to seeing her early on she finally went over the net cord and the target was mine!!! CLOVER at 43lb and one happy chap.

For the week between myself and the lads we managed 40+ carp on my Remix Baits Secret Wafers, which for Furzebray Carp Lakes is absolutely insane! 6 Nights, 5 People, 3 x 40s, 14 x 30s 25 x 20s 4 x doubles with 10 being named fish!! THE SECRET IS OUT!

Massive shout out to the lads Steve, Jack, Harry, Elliot, Alfie and fishery owner Tony Kingdom who has become a great friend over the years and been a tremendous help. ■

Carp Humour

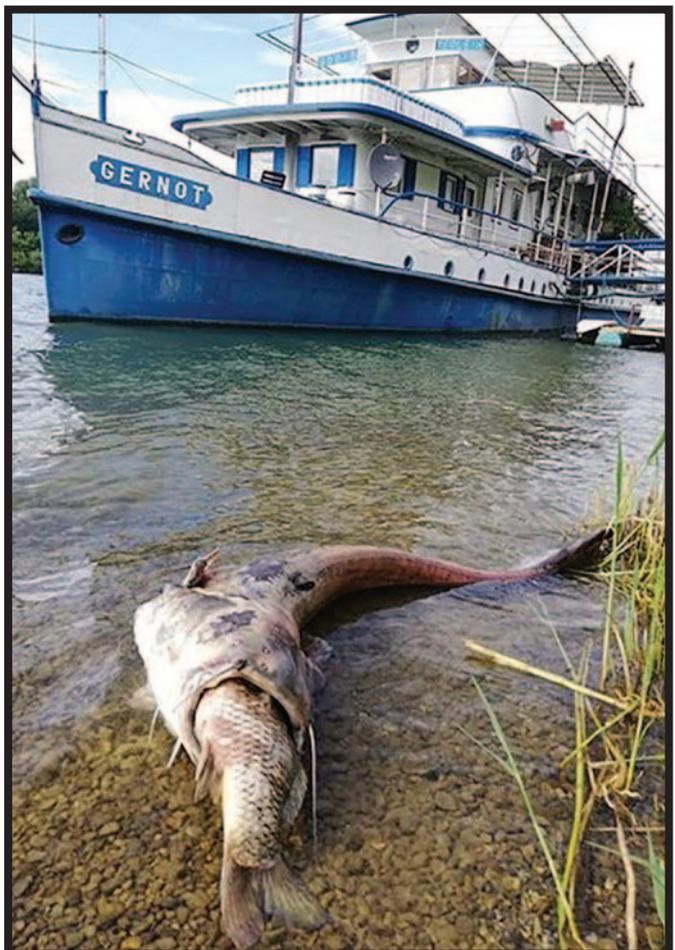
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Stoneacres Spring Success

By Sam Causer

I joined stoneacres last year and due to lock downs, work commitments and the birth of mine and my wife's little boy, I done really get a lot of time on the bank and we completely missed fishing the spring that year. Although I did manage to catch two on that first year I ended up working all over the place and struggled to put any consistent time together. So as you can imagine I was buzzing for a fresh start this year.

I planned to start early on there this year, but then we were put into lockdown mk2 and those plans were put on hold again. Towards the end of the lockdown I had a lot of work coming up around the Oxfordshire area (this doesn't happen very often), so when the 29th march came I was buzzing to be able to actually do some consistent fishing something I haven't done in a long time. I decided to fish the

nights between working in the day. I started baiting a spot with some urban baits 2mm nutcracker pellet and a few other particles. I decided to fish big point a peg in the centre of the lake that commands a lot of water. The first week we were aloud to fish again I booked it off work so I could fish the four nights. I decided to just put a single over the baited area and three rods out on zigs as id seen fish long that looked a bit ziggy. The week couldn't have started any better it was only a matter of 6 hours and the rod on the baited area was away. After a short tench like fight a ball of weed appeared with a gold flash behind it I got in to get closer to the fish and she went in with no trouble, a shout down the bank to Scotty in the next peg who come up to see me soaked and freezing cold confirmed it was the "The Upfront Lin" @35lb on the nose and what a mega carp to

start my year and on my first session back. I phoned my good friend Ryan on church who come over to help with the pics and for the typical celebratory BBQ.

The next couple of days were quite and the fish seemed to be held up further down the lake to my left. I didn't really see any more carp in front of me until my last morning when there was two shows around the range of the first gravel bar about 110yards so I cast one of the zigs where I had seen the fish. About two hours later just as I was packing up, the rod I cast at the fish was away the bobbin hit the deck, I took up the slack line the fish had managed to bury its head in some weed so I got in the boat and headed out over the fish and like textbook up she come into the net. I couldn't quite believe it, a repeat already in the shape of the Bearded Lady, but WOW did she look good, so





a few quick photos and we slipped her back.

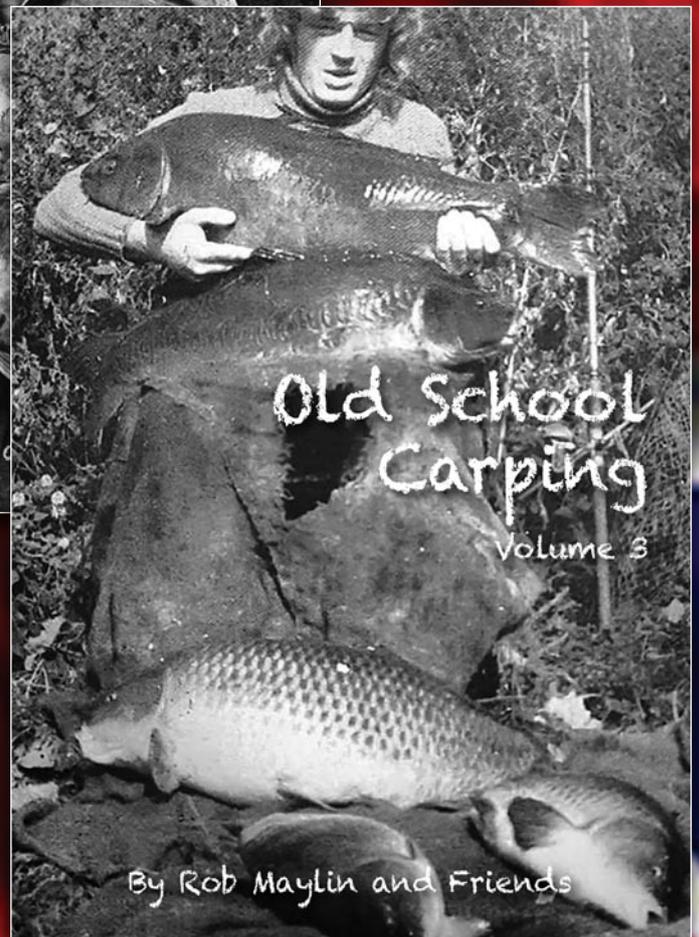
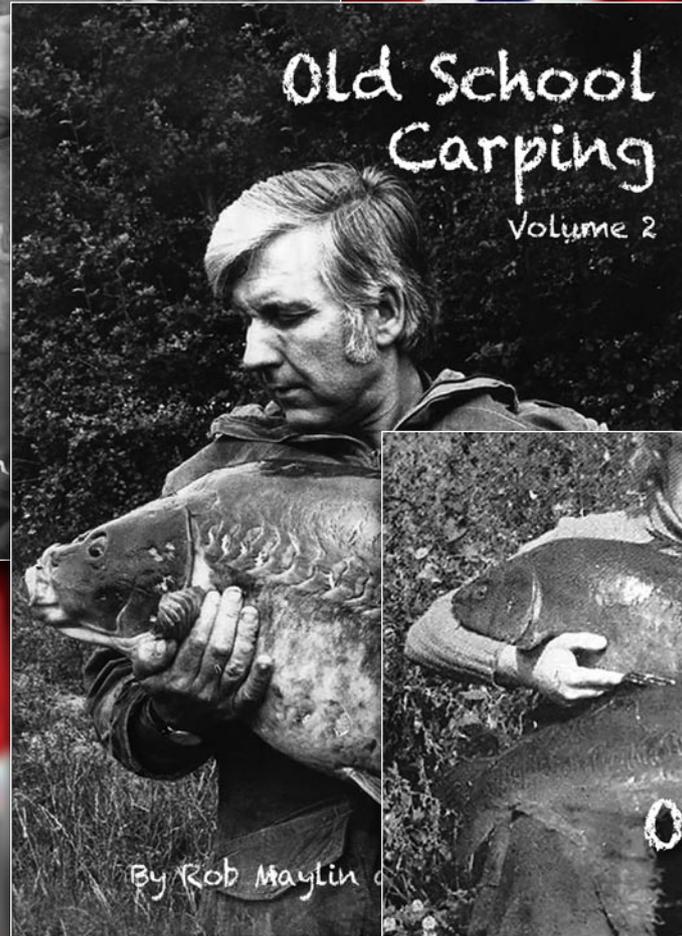
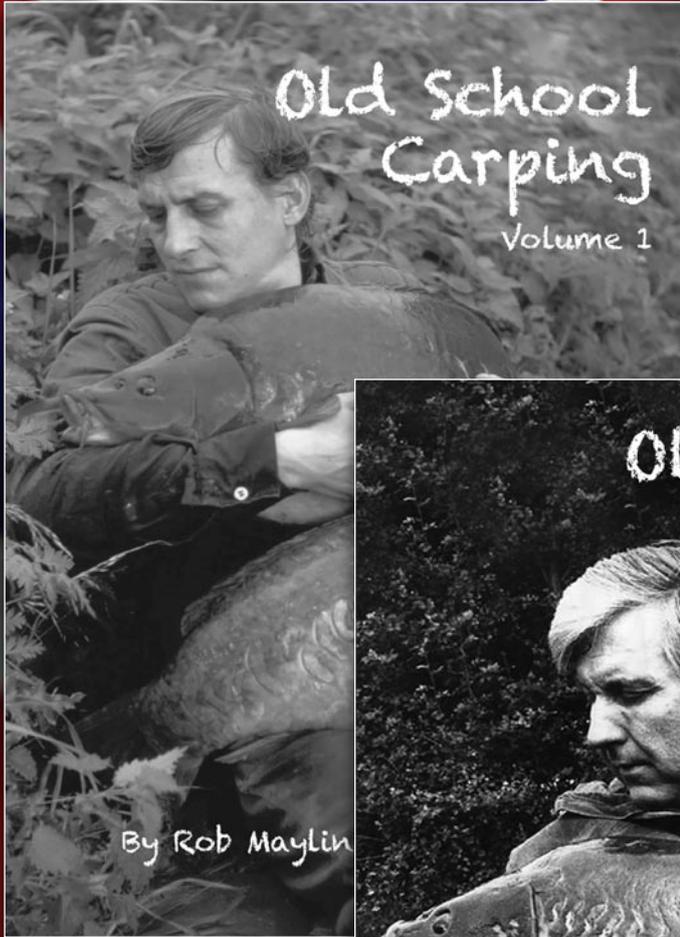
The following week was quite, the weather was so up and down and one thing after another at work meant that it was late by the time that I had got to lake and was leaving early in the morning. This wasn't ideal as the bites that had come from the lake including mine the previous week were all in the day. The fish were turning up most mornings but weren't hanging around and were getting in the same zone near a boui out in front of peg 4 and the house, And I would have to be getting away to work when most the activity would be in front of me. I caught two tench from the baited area that week but there was no other action.

The following week the alarm was set for 03:30am Monday so I could get down and get set up before heading to work in Oxford as I knew I was going to be having a busy day and wouldn't be getting back to the lake until late. I woke up that morning and it was freezing cold, I had to drag myself out of bed and give myself a kick up the arse to get going. When I was driving down I got to Birmingham



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The Bearded Lady.

and it started snowing, by the time I got to Oxford the roads were white over, it was at this point I began to question my sanity. I arrived at Linch and it was hammering down with snow. I parked up and went for a

brew with one of the lads and then sorted my gear out back in big point and off I went to work. The fish seemed to be turning up in the same zone in front of me every morning around the same time between 6am

and 7am just as I would have to start reeling in for work. The fish had been doing this for a few weeks now same place same time like clockwork. The first 3 nights between work were quite, but the fish would still turn up



The Bearded Lady.



The Upfront Lin.



The Upfront Lin.

every morning just like the previous weeks.

on my last night I decided to do some admin work from the bank on Friday that I needed to catch up on and this would give me the chance to see that morning period out where I thought my best chance of a bite would be that id missed the previous mornings. I set my alarm for 5am woke up and had a brew or two looking over a very cold stoneacres (it dropped to around -2 that night). It was around 06:15am when the first one slotted out amongst a little mist on the surface shortly followed by another and another slightly left of where they had been showing. So I reeled in a rod on a 6ft zig and cast to the back of the second bar at about 150 yards right in the rings of the shows. I sat back down and had another brew and it was no longer then 40 minutes after the recast that the bobbin hit the deck. I wound down the slack and as soon as I made contact with the fish it felt very heavy, it kited left and found some low weed between the bars and went solid. I grabbed the life jacket and jumped

straight in the boat and began to pull myself in the direction of the fish, I got above the fish it then freed itself and I got my first look at what I was attached to. Looking down through 12ft of vodka clear water at what you know is defo one of two possible fish, it was at that moment my heart fell out my arse and it began to drag me slowly from one side of the swim to the other and then plunge itself into the low lying weed and do the same again two or three times. She just wanted to hug the bottom and when I did finally get her up I managed to let her get out the net twice before finally landing her. when one of those really special ones goes over the cord there isn't any words to describe that feeling when you look in the net and see them.

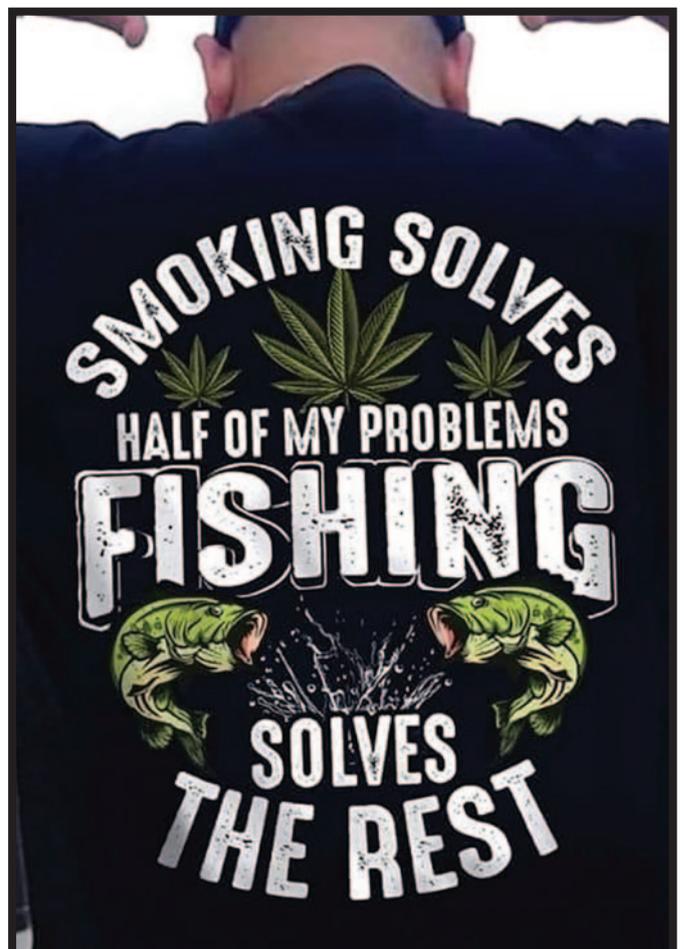
I gave terry from the next swim up a shout to come and help me secure it in the retainer to rest whilst we got everything sorted. When we lifted her out to transfer her to retainer we realised what fish it was. The mighty "NO NAME" second biggest in the lake and in my opinion one of the best looking fish around. We secured her in

the margin and I phone my mate Ryan who was on his way down to fish the weekend. I couldn't get my words out to him properly and he knew it was a serious fish the moment he answered the phone. He got there about 20 minutes after and we got her weighed up and she spun the dials round to 47lb06oz a fish of my dreams and a new P.B to boot. We phoned Nick the bailiff to come and work his magic on the lens and after a few cuddles I let her go to make another anglers dreams come true. What an incredible moment a buzz shared with old friends and new a memory ill treasure for ever. All of those early mornings, long drives, work in the day between fishing, cold mornings, snowing and -3 degrees at the night thinking to myself I must be mad, was all worth it in the end. We as carp anglers sacrifice so much to be able to go and chase our dreams that none anglers probably look at us for and think why? I know why its for moments like this, the moment that all that hard work pays off and you eventually cradle the fish of your dreams. ■



The Upfront Lin.

Carp Humour



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.

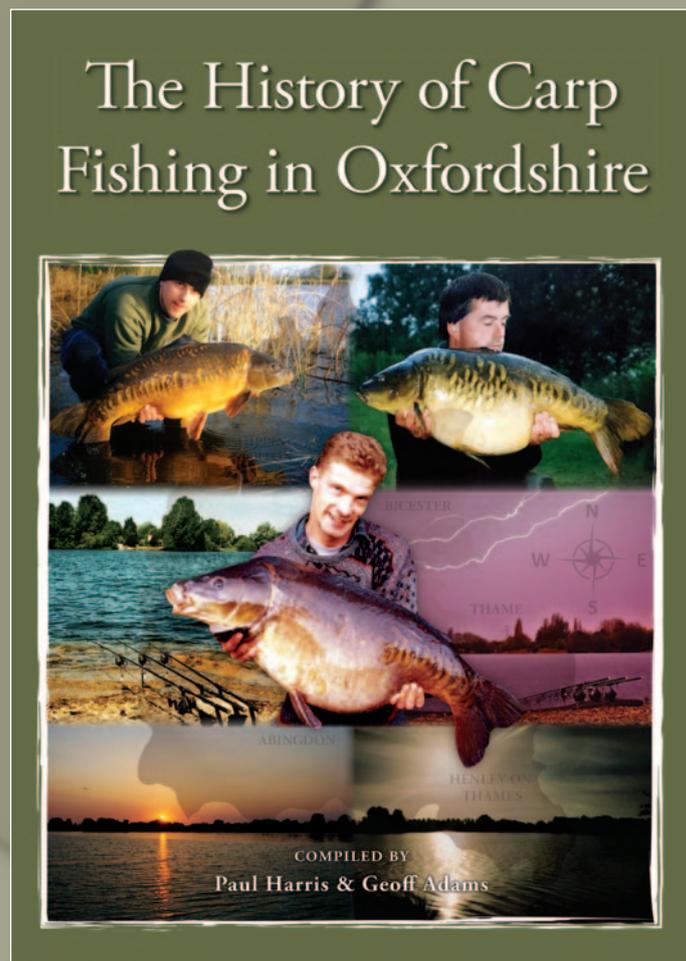
Nick Stansfield is a brilliant young Oxford carper who doesn't shout about his catches. We have two incredible chapters from him from two of the county's most iconic lakes, The Leisure Park and The Big S! Josh Chatfield has written a fantastic chapter which really gives you an insight into how fishing 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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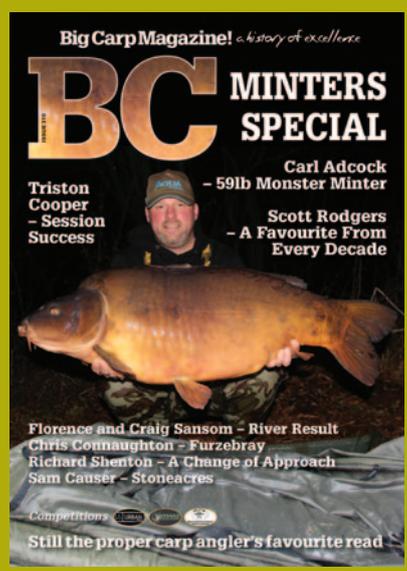
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The Carp Society is proud to announce the purchase of Ashmead Fishery on the Somerset Levels!

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.

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**CARP
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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.



Only available from Rare Carp Books Unlimited

Ebay Shop www.ebay.co.uk/itm/224911045155?hash=item345dbe3223:g:bqUAAOSwpadiQdtr

MY BIG CARP BUZZ

by Darrell Peck

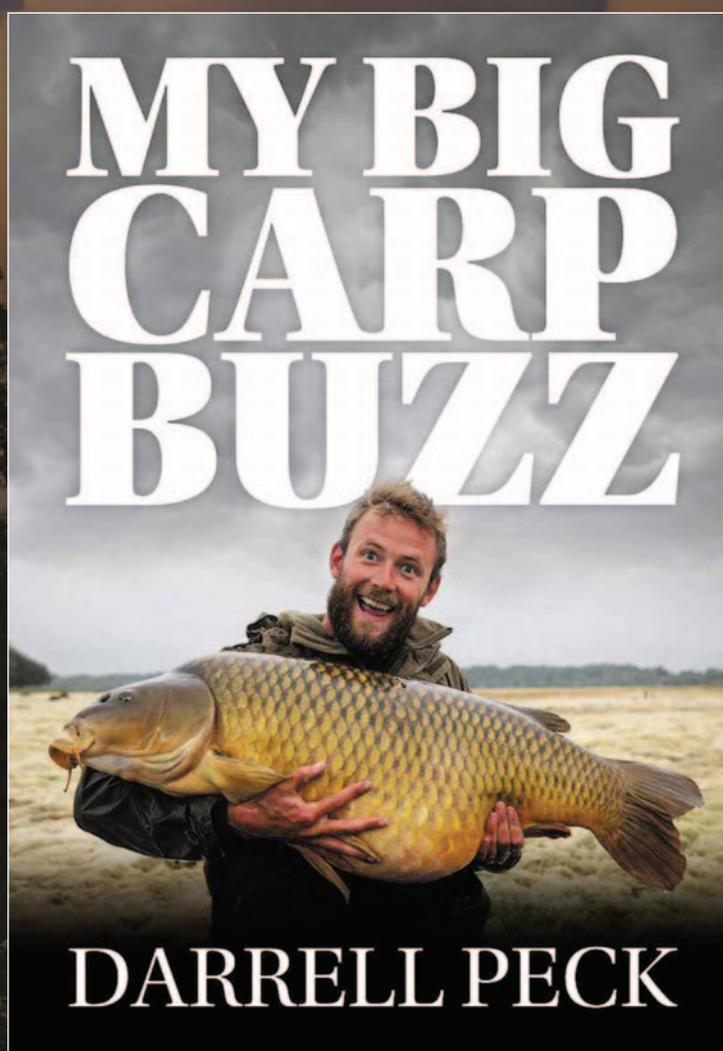
If you have read "My Misspent Youth", then you will know the story of a passionate tackle shop Saturday boy that went on to catch some of the UK's most sought-after carp.

"My Big Carp Buzz picks up from where I left off and covers my fishing through my 30's - from the year 2012, until 2021. Chapters 1-5 take place at some of the UK's most famous venues, before chapters 6, and 7 recount two extremely intensive stints in Belgium searching for a new personal best.

Having now dipped my toe into the European scene the English Channel is no longer a factor when deciding where next.

As a teenager a Rod Hutchinson Carp Scene magazine had been hugely inspirational, and in particular the story of his month-long stint at lac D Orient. Now in my 30s I felt confident enough to fish alone in Europe, and longed to experience a lengthy autumnal stint upon one of the infamous mud beaches of the champagne region of France.

One of my biggest drivers has always laid in progressively testing myself, and at 6000 acres Lac Foret D' Orient was 'my' Everest.



To this day I regard Orient as THE pinnacle of 'my' own carp fishing adventures and I truly believed if I could catch them here, I could catch them anywhere.

The sessions relived in chapters 6,7 and 9 are amongst those I am most proud off and really serve to open my eyes to what is on offer beyond the crowded banks of the UK big carp scene.

The middle chapters cover a mixture of angling from both home and abroad, with tales of a Dutch record carp, two Belgian canal giants, The Coconut Common from Bayeswater, and some forgotten old English leviathans.

The last few chapters then recount two extremely successful

campaigns at Wellington Country Park and The Wasing Estate, and take the total number of UK 50lbbers within this single book to an unprecedented 10!

Ultimately this is the continuation of the same old story really. An extremely single minded, and determined lad that loves to hunt big carp above all else. Join me for the adventure, as I continue to search out My Big Carp Buzz.

Enjoy, Pecky

CHEAPEST PRICE - 1st EDITION - MINT CONDITION - CHEAPEST POSTAGE

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.

THE BIG ONE
SAVE £££s
BOOK ONLINE IN ADVANCE

FISHING SHOWS 2022

See us at
The Big One this year!

FARNBOROUGH NR LONDON 5-6 MARCH 2022
STONELEIGH MIDLANDS 2-3 APRIL 2022

TWO UNMISSABLE EVENTS... FOR ALL ANGLERS!

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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:

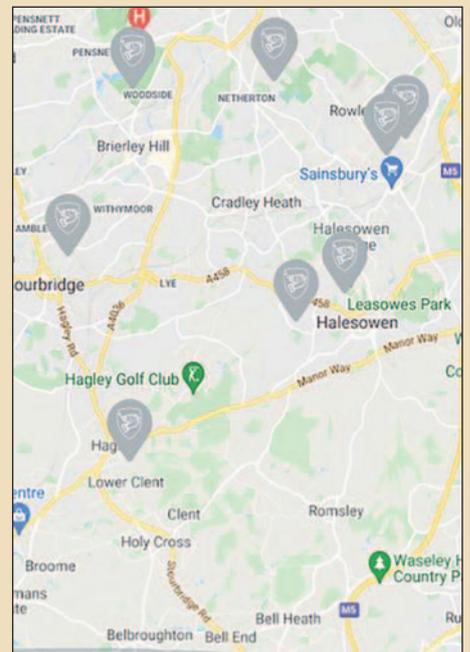
- Pledge to 'Take 5' pieces of litter home with you after you have been fishing
- Organise, or participate in a litter pick and tell us about it. Use the hashtag #anglersagainstlitter
- Recycle your old fishing line and spools through the Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme

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...

		<h1>Angling Trust Coar</h1>	
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

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| Quick set anti reverse roller bearing | Slow oscillation system | 5 ball bearing +1 roller bearing | Fast drag system
| Double stainless steel line clickers | Precision worm shaft transmission system | Rotor brake system | Hydro block water tight drag seal
| With carbon washers | Precision zinc handle arm with wooden knob

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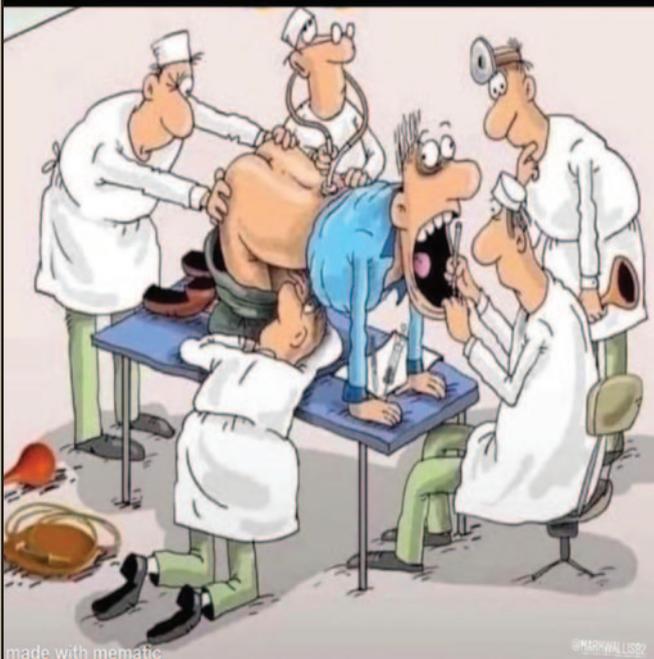
Kaden McCarthy – Dynamite Baits catch report



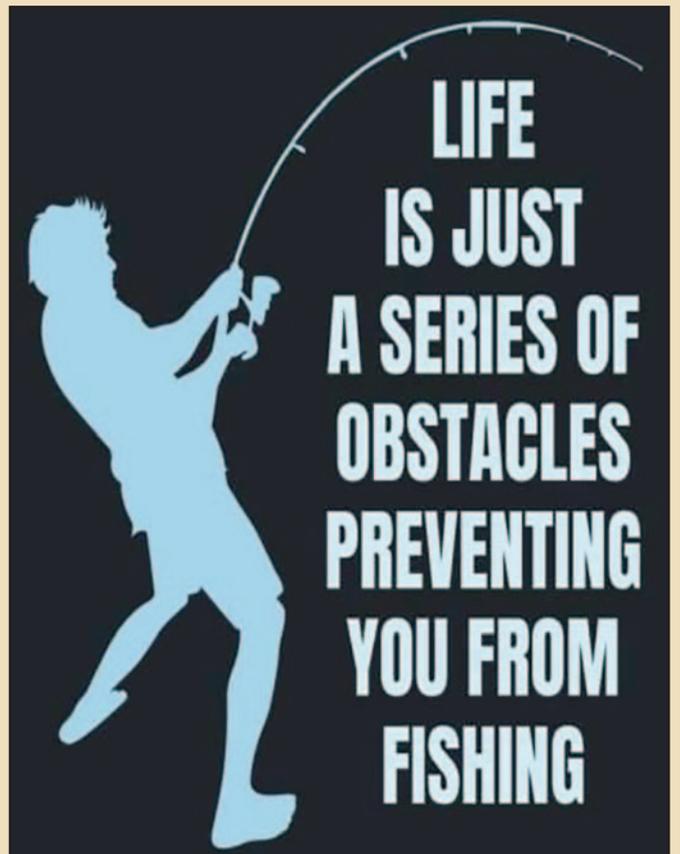
First session out since I had my gear robbed, I headed to Bluebell Lakes. I started the session with eight spombs of crushed monster tiger nut and 12mm whole and corn. Fished over the top as always is hit'n'run pop-ups, it wasn't long till I had my first bite, I ended the session with seven fish nuggets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

Carp humour

NEW CUSTOMS CHECK



FOR BOILIE SMUGGLERS



Baden Hall Common 47lb 2oz

By Darren Bailey

I had three fish in total: the first one was a 22lb 12oz mirror, the second one was a 33lb 10oz common and last but not least the big girl at 47lb 7oz. I caught her using my Shimano 12000XTB Mags loaded with Fox 16lb Exocet and my trusty Century C2s. I had all my fish on a Fox zig aligner and off the middle rod, as it's still three rods on there in March.

The take started with a proper drop back, and I was next to my rods at this point. I wondered if I should I just hit it or not. I did, and at first I wasn't sure whether I had hit into anything or if it was just coming toward me, but then I felt it on. I was fishing at a range of 100 yards approximately, so it did feel like a lifetime waiting to see what I had.



Then I got a glimpse at her, and straight away I knew it was the big girl. My heart was already in my mouth at this point, so the next thing was to get her in the net. My mate Mark Rosson netted it for me, and I

walked forward to have a look at my prize. I was buzzing; I couldn't believe how stunning she looked, so hopefully the pictures do her all the justice she deserves and she lives to be the biggest common in England one day. ■



Give a little Mora this year...

Mora's Companion Knife is the perfect gift

Brighten any outdoor enthusiast's day with the colourful Companion Stainless Steel Knife from Swedish experts, Mora. A family-run company with more than 125 years of expertise behind it, the Mora Companion Stainless Steel is exactly what it says, a trustworthy, reliable companion for lovers of the great outdoors.

Perfect for all types of outdoor adventurers, the Companion Stainless Steel will undoubtedly become a kit bag essential for bushcrafters, campers, hikers and all other adventurous loved ones.

The powerful blade, which travels down the Companion $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way, is made from high quality Swedish stainless steel for outstanding durability and longevity.

The 2.5mm thick blade is complemented by a soft-friction grip handle made from TPE rubber, which means the knife feels safe and steady to work with.

To ensure the blade can be stored safely while not in use, the Companion Stainless Steel comes complete with a protective polymer sheath that even features a practical belt clip for keeping the knife close to hand.

Available in a number of bright colours, the Companion Stainless Steel is a versatile knife perfect for many types of outdoor pursuits but the range doesn't stop there.

The Companion range encompasses a number of different models meaning there is a Companion to suit all types of outdoor adventures. A gift set to last for many years to come, treat the outdoor enthusiast in your life with the Companion Stainless Steel.

Find out more about Mora at www.mora-kniv.se. RRP: £15.00



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Klean Kanteen – Insulated TKPro 25oz (750ml)



Feature-rich versatility in a streamlined form. The TKPro is a high-performance, plastic-free thermal Kanteen. With its integrated double-wall stainless steel cup and 360-degree pour-through functionality, the TKPro features our new TK Closure™ internal thread design which provides cutting edge thermal performance for both

hot and cold beverages. Whether sipping hot coffee miles from the nearest road or pouring ice cold cocktails in the heart of the city, the TKPro is your built-to-last solution.

100% Plastic-Free

Stainless steel and silicone construction. Electropolished 18/8 food-grade stainless steel interior doesn't retain

or impart flavors.

- Stainless Steel Cup and Cap
- Integrated double-wall construction in the heart of the cup. Twist and pour cap with 360° pour-through design.

Cup Capacity:

- 16oz (0.5L): 7.3oz cup (216ml)
- 25oz (0.75L) and 32oz (1 L): 10.3oz cup (305ml)

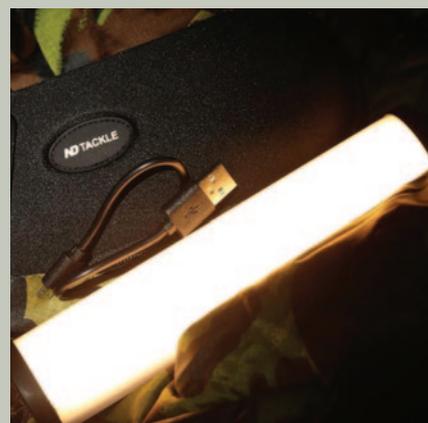


ND TACKLE SMART BITE INDICATOR SYSTEM

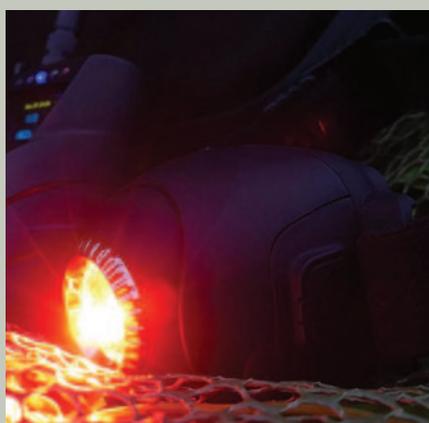


Air light sounder

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. ■



Bivvy light pro



H9 Head torch



Anti theft alarm



H10 Head torch



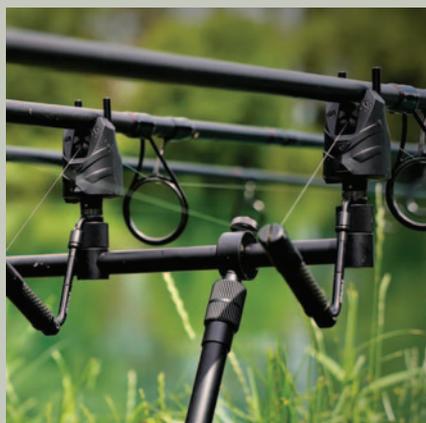
K9s Battery pack



K9s Bite alarm



N1 Bite alarm



S9 Bite alarm



Smart band

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**INCREDIBLE
PERFORMANCE,
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FEATURES INCLUDE:

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- Low battery warning.
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- 2.5mm power out socket
- Protection case included'



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How Anglers Can Stave Off the Sneezes

Angling should be an enjoyable and peaceful pursuit, but if you have hay fever it's anything but. Pollen from the grass on riverbanks, fields, verges and lawns is the main culprit and it affects around 95% of sufferers, causing unpleasant symptoms such as sneezing, sniffing and watery eyes.

However, help is at hand in the form of HayMax organic drug-free allergen barrier balm, which is perfect for angling as it is non-drowsy...

A great way to reduce the severity of your hay fever symptoms is to reduce the amount of grass pollen entering your body.

Everyone can tolerate a certain amount of pollen in their body without reaction. But once this amount is exceeded – known as the trigger level – hay fever symptoms will start to occur.

HayMax organic drug-free allergen barrier balms work by stopping grass and other pollens getting into the body. And they're perfect for anglers because they're drug-free with no drowsy side-effects so won't spoil your enjoyment.

HayMax is easy to use; simply

apply a small amount around the rim of the nostrils and bones of the eyes before going out fishing or outdoors, and as necessary during the day.

HayMax has been proven in independent studies to trap all types of pollen, as well as dust and pet allergens, before they enter the body [1], [2]. An independent study by NPARU* found that when applied around the rim of the nostrils, HayMax trapped over one third of pollen grains [2].

In an independent survey by Allergy UK, the leading national charity providing support, advice and information for those living with allergic disease, 80% of respondents said that HayMax worked for hay fever [3]. Many people report that HayMax works straight away, and in the same survey, 94% of participants found HayMax quick to be effective. 44% said that it worked immediately and a further 35% said that it worked within an hour or two.

Previously in July 2014, almost eight out of ten survey respondents said the balm helped some or all of their hay fever symptoms [4].

HayMax can also be used whilst

driving and operating machinery, and will not adversely affect your performance at work, school, during exams or while taking part in sporting or fitness activities.

It has been used successfully by two Olympic athletes, with many doctors in the media regularly talking about it. HayMax has attained The Allergy Friendly Product Award from Allergy UK, awarded to products that are potentially of benefit to people affected by allergy, asthma, or sensitivity and are unlikely to cause a reaction.

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† National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit, 2012.
* 134 of 166 respondents; Allergy UK Survey, 2015.

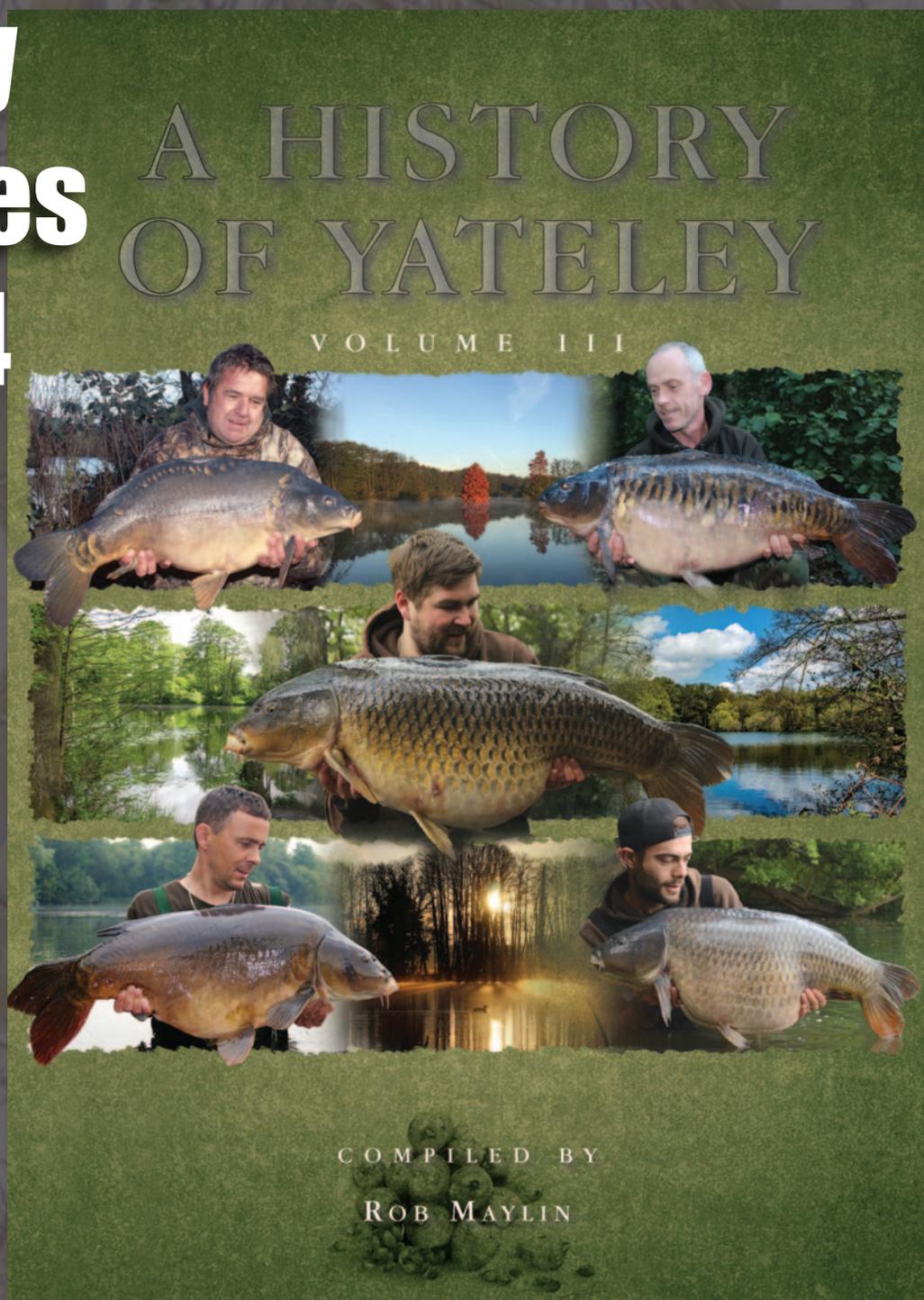
Yateley Volumes 3 and 4

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.

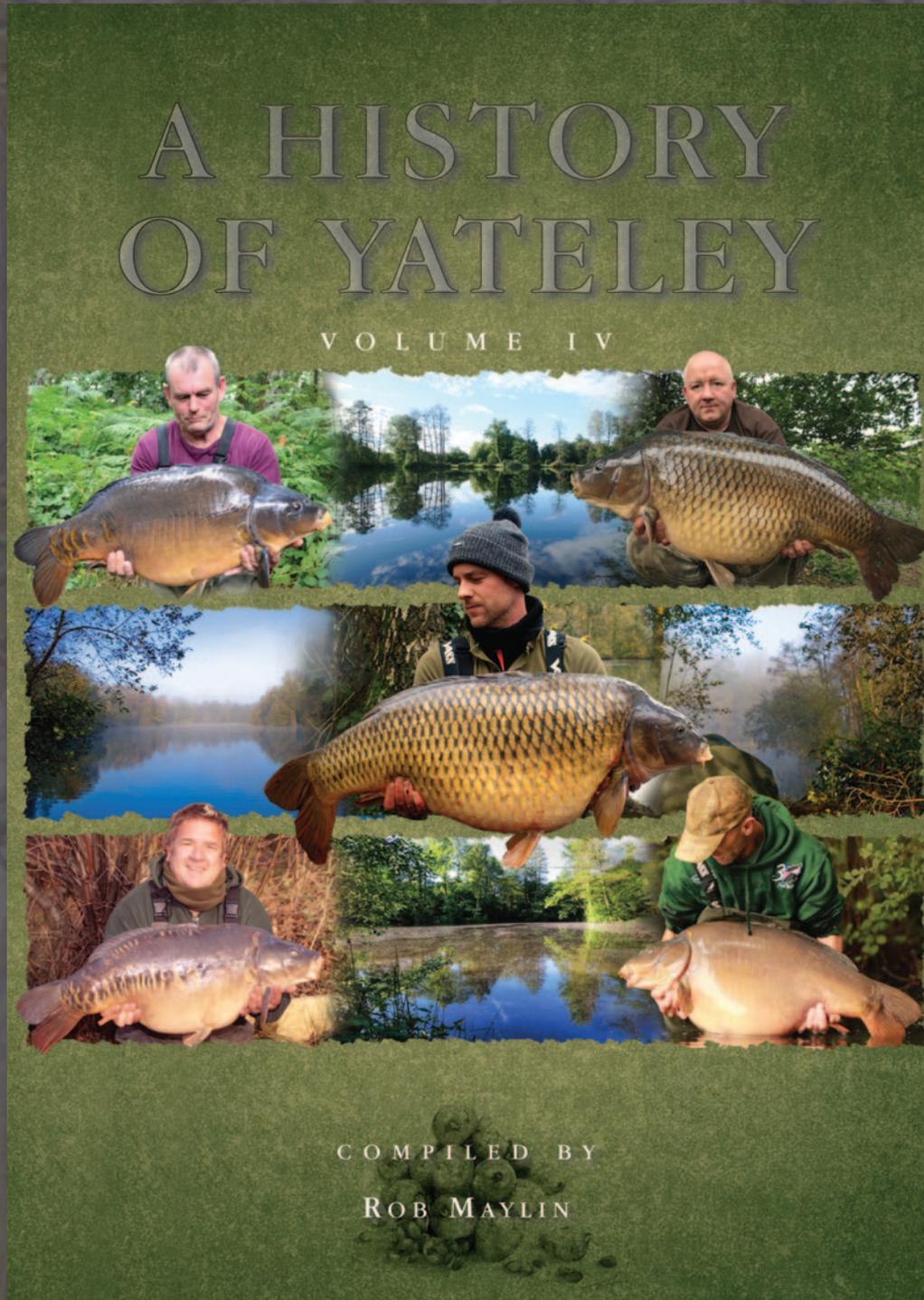
Volume 3 contains chapters on the North Lake, The Split Lake, Horseshoe and Pumhouse. The Pads Lake, Car Park, Moulsham and Mill Lane.

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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Wellington Country Park

By David Gaskin



I was most surprised when I got a phone call from the Wellington Country Park office saying that I was potentially in line to get a ticket for the forthcoming season. As long as I could pay the money in time and have a quick phone call with the fishery manager the ticket was mine, so I begged, borrowed and worked furiously to get the funds together, and finally the ticket was mine. I used to go camping with the family at Wellington Country Park when I was about ten (15 years ago), and the days would often be spent around the main lake fishing with a tub of maggots, catching small perch. Whilst doing this and climbing trees I would often see these mystifying dark shapes cruising along the margins, and these were probably the carp I am fishing for today!

So my ticket arrived, and I felt like Charlie when he found the golden ticket in a Wonka bar. The season began on the 1st June, so I prepared by gathering as much information as I

could about the lake and sorting my tackle out.

The time came around, and as I went through the gate for the first time in fifteen years the hairs on the back of my neck stood up. It was exactly how I remembered, and I knew I was going to love being here. After speaking to a couple of members on my first lap they were more than happy to help give me information on good areas and where the fish had been showing in previous days. I had three days at my disposal, so I had planned to try and fish different swims if I was not catching.

I started off in a swim called Pole Position and fished some naked choddies short range because the weed wasn't too bad and the bait would be presented nicely. On the first night I was woken to what I thought was a carp steaming off, but it turned out to be a tench, but I was more than happy with a fish on my first night. I moved into the Snags swim on my second night to carry on my exploration of the lake and try to get a feel

of what the different swims had to offer.

For my third and final night I moved into the infamous Hole in the Bush swim. The chap in there had had a couple of fish during his session so I thought I would be in with a good shout of a take. He told me that he had put a fair amount of bait out there, so I adopted the classic poacher's approach of chucking three single pop-ups out over the areas where I thought he baited. The rods had been out about an hour when the middle rod ripped off. I knew this one was a carp, so the nerves started jangling, and my heart was racing. After a spirited battle, I had my first Welly carp in the net, and I was over the moon. It was probably one of the smaller residents at around 24lb, but I didn't care about the size. The fish unfortunately appeared to have an old wound that didn't look to be healing very well, so I called the fishery manager, and he decided that he would come and get the fish so that he could treat it and put it in the stock pond to





make a full recovery, which I thought was great management.

Disaster struck on my second trip to the lake, as the clutch on my car had decided it wanted to give up. Luckily I was only four or five miles from the lake, so after a few phone calls I decided to carry on to the lake without a clutch and worry about get-

ting home after I had done my session. I was at the lake, albeit slightly stressed, but that stress soon evaporated, and my fishing head was on. I opted for another different swim selection to carry on trying to get a bigger picture of the lake's features and spots in different swims. By taking this approach and recording my

findings, I hoped it would help me in future sessions, because if I could get in a swim where there are obviously fish present then I would know where the spots are without having to thrash the swim to a foam and risk spooking any fish present. My three nights went by without any activity, and I was firmly brought down to earth that it's not such an easy lake to catch out of as people perceive, and to top off my first blank I had a 60-mile journey home with no clutch!

I was back a fortnight later; thankfully the car was fixed, and I had no dramas in getting to the lake this time. I opted for another different swim choice called Lorries. I found three spots and cast stiff-hinged pop-ups out onto each one, accompanied by a kilo of boilies. I was quickly learning that trying to second-guess where the fish were heading next was not a winning tactic. On this particular session the fish were clearly held up in one of the bays where they were getting caught and receiving angling pressure, so I thought that they wouldn't stay in there for very long and would come to me where I had got some traps set. Well I couldn't have been more wrong!



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To cut a long story short, I sat there for three days watching the gentlemen in that particular swim have a session of a lifetime – the fish just did not move! It was the middle of June at this point, and there was an algae bloom slowly appearing throughout the lake.

The oxygen levels were being closely monitored by the fishery manager and the bailiff, and it was decided that the lake would be closed due to oxygen levels getting dangerously low. By stopping any angling on the lake aerators could be installed and the water quality could be preserved a bit better without lots of bait going in. This closure coincided with a trip to Thailand, so I thought a couple of weeks on holiday and I could get straight back into it when the lake was open again. I managed to do a bit of fishing whilst out in Koh Samui and managed a Siamese carp of between 80-100lb, so that was certainly a PB!

So upon my return I made a phone call to the bailiff and received the news that the lake was still closed until further notice. The algae had turned the water into literally a green pea soup and killed the weed. The

lack of water clarity meant the weed was dead and decaying, so it was also sapping oxygen from the water. It took a monumental effort from the bailiff, the fishery manager and the park staff to remove the rotting weed and install more aerators. Without this course of action and effort there could have been a negative outcome. Six or so weeks later the lake had stabilised and was ready to be fished again.

I returned with a different approach due to what I had learned from my previous sessions, and that was to keep it simple. If the fish are obviously there then I would get on them and not try to second-guess where they are heading next, I had simple stiff hinged pop-up rigs with a pop-up matching my choice of boilie. I headed for the Boathouse next for two reasons: firstly it had been showing good form before and after the closure, and secondly, I could get one rod close to where a few fish had been caught in the last 48 hours. I once again found three spots and baited with a kilo of freebies with a pop-up to match. The spots I was trying to locate were your typical spots, which consisted of nice, clean silt

seams meeting where the gravel began. I wanted to be confident that I was 100% fishing, so getting a good drop on where the gravel began, I knew my rigs were able to catch a fish. On my second night at about 2am I had a take from the area where I had mentioned before where a few fish had been caught previously. I was in no doubt that this was a carp, and after ten minutes it was in the net. At a tad over 31lb I was delighted. I drove home the following day grinning and confident that what I was doing would be a good recipe for success.

On my next session I decided I would make an effort to get in the Hole in the Bush swim, as this was consistently producing fish. Upon my arrival I could see there were fish in the area, so immediately my confidence was boosted. Previously I only did one night in this swim, and I didn't do much leading about, however I was down for three nights, so I had to try and find some features. With two out of the three rods nicely positioned on some gravel and silt seams, I was trying to locate a suitable spot for the third. I was only





using a bare lead to find spots because the depth is pretty uniform, and a marker float would do more harm than good. On one cast of the lead it literally got stuck in the lakebed. I retrieved the lead and found it was caked in clay – bingo!! That was my third spot sorted.

At first light after the first night, I was into another carp, and I had my first Welly common of 29lb 8oz, off of the clay spot! It was a great start to the session, and with two nights remaining I knew I was in with a chance of another. The second night went by without any drama, and by 10am I thought bite time had passed, so I was surprised when my left hand rod steadily signalled a take, and I was into another carp. This was a 'plodder' and definitely felt bigger than the scrapping common the previous day! I slowly coaxed the fish in and I could see a decent mirror sliding over the cord of the net. Nerves kicked in as I thought this could be my first forty. Up on the scales it went 39lb, just shy of the 40lb barrier, but I was so pleased nevertheless. That was the end of the action for that ses-

sion with pleasing results again.

I was back again and decided that I would opt for a swim called Wides to carry on the exploration theory. It was one of those sessions where I didn't see any clear cut signs of where the fish were, and inevitably I blanked. My following trip got off to a better start, as I saw fish in an area, and the swim with access to that area was vacant. This happened to be the Boathouse swim, which was turning out to be one of the most consistent swims for producing fish, so it was a no-brainer. The efforts of finding spots earlier on in the season paid dividends because the rods were out with minimal fuss and disturbance. I was woken at first light by a melting take, and as I played the fish all blurry eyed it was clear it was a big, powerful fish. This fish had was full of beans and didn't want to come in, but eventually I had it in the net. This one was definitely a forty, I thought!

I hoisted her up, and it was a new PB of 41lb 12oz. As I put the carp back into the water in the sling my left hand rod tore off. I was on it in a flash, and it tried to take me round the

island, but I held firm and won the tug of war. I soon had that one in secured in the net and went off to get another sling and some help for pictures. Luckily I knew one of the members fishing close by was packing up first thing in the morning, so he obliged by giving me a hand.

It was getting into autumn time now, and my schedule was getting tighter due to my uni timetable. I was able to keep sneaking down on Tuesday nights because I had no lectures on a Wednesday, so this enabled me to do a couple of nights. I was finding it difficult getting on the fish turning up late on a Tuesday, and my results started to become nonexistent along with a nightmare session where I walked into a tree in the dark and split my head open (nothing that a bit of glue couldn't sort out luckily). To get back in amongst it I decided I would get down on my day off (Wednesday) and skive off lectures on Thursday and Friday! I also was fortunate to get in the Hole in the Bush swim, and although it hadn't done a fish for roughly ten days, I was confident. I knew the spots from previ-



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ously, and they were primed accordingly with a kilo of boilies and a pop-up to match.

First light and I was back in amongst the action. This time my heart was racing. Welly holds commons of either 30lbs or four big ones of around upper forty and fifty pounds, so when I saw the flank of a long common turn over yards out from the net my mind started to wander! With the common safely in the net I could see it wasn't one of the giants, but still a decent fish all the same. It weighed 36lb 8oz and a PB common. The second night went by without action, and I was due to go home on the Friday. However this was one of those times when I was prepared to take some stick from the missus and stay another night. I just felt I was in with a good shout of another fish. Luckily to save my head from the chopping block I had another take at around midnight, which produced a 38lb mirror – happy days, and my reason for staying was justified!

I was back down the lake on a mid-week session in between uni around

Halloween time. I was only down for one night and found myself in the Boathouse swim because fish were in the Arm Bay and have to go through the Boathouse area to go to and from the arm. The moon was as full as it could be and the brightest I have ever seen. It was 11pm, and it was still so light due to the moon. As I looked out from my broolly I saw a big, pale fish leap clean out of the water, I immediately wound in a rod and cast a single pop-up in the remainder of the rings from the aftermath. I couldn't sleep, and the rod was in the water no more than an hour when it slowly ticked off. After a fairly heated battle, I had the fish in the net and could clearly see it was the Big Ghostie! It was massive and tipped the scales at 47lb. I didn't know how I'd feel about catching a ghostie in terms of credibility, but I can honestly say I was blown away by the sheer length and size of this carp, and it was certainly a unique set of circumstances, catching the Big Ghostie around Halloween on a full moon!

I was in full swing at university, and time was getting harder to come by to

squeeze in any fishing. I had planned a 24-hour social with one of the other members, and I ended up in a swim called Grassy. This swim had a swim either side within close proximity so was good for the social aspect, but I also fancied having a go in there anyway due to the island feature in front. I chose three spots along the island and on the end of it at roughly 100yds and baited again with about a kilo of boilies over each rod. Unfortunately the guy had to leave due to an emergency, as I had forgotten my camera on this session and was relying on him for any pictures!

Well, Sod's Law my rod rattled off, and as I played the fish the heavens opened. I managed to land the fish and it was a good one! My saving grace was there was another member fishing the other side of me in the bush, and he was more than happy to give me a hand and sort me some pictures out. The fish weighed 41lb 8oz, and we both got soaked doing the pictures, but we didn't care, as it was a great result. That was to be my final fish and session until the spring bursts the lake into life once again. ■

Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack Competition

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

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Scratching The Surface

By Mike Jarvis

It was the winter of 2009 when I first acquired a ticket to Bundy's Pit in Cambridgeshire, but it wasn't until the third winter, 2012, when I first hooked one of the 'deep pit' residents in the shape of a 36lb-plus deep bodied, golden common. One more winter went by and a couple more commons graced my net when I was offered a summer ticket! It took me all of one second to make up my mind, and bearing a grin ear to ear, I accepted the offer. During the summer I only fished midweek overnights, usually just the one, or two if I could get the time. It really is a special lake, and during the spring/early summer the lake goes like tap water. With it being 65ft deep in places, the margins were deep, so watching your quarry would be very interesting. I was spending a lot of the time admiring them in their watery home. I had managed carp to 38lb-plus during the warmer months, not getting amongst any of the A-Team, of which 15 go over the 40lb mark up to 49lb 10oz, so plenty of good'uns to go for.

As the colder months started to draw in, the carp started to make their way out into the pit, leaving the near



margin spots all polished and not a stone turned over. This was when I started fishing further out, targeting an area only 40 yards out on the back of a steep and sudden shelf, an obvious feature in this swim going down to around 38ft deep.

I went with the approach of giving

them a good amount of boilies, hoping I would catch them on their big feed before the winter, so my first session here I got about 5kg of Mainline's Hybrid out on the spot and put all three rods in the general area. Feeling confident, and seeing a good number of fish showing close to the zone, I went to sleep with confidence sky high. Just before first light one of the Hybrid wafers was away! I lifted into what felt like one of the smaller residents for the first few minutes of the fight. The violent headshakes soon turned into a spirited run, and then it changed the game by staying deep and chugging along. Not long after this a good-sized mirror was slurping ready for the net. Soon, gracing my net was one of the mirrors called the Parrot, and at 35-plus I was well chuffed that the plan had come together.

It wasn't until two weeks later that I was back in the swim, and with the plan already in my head – the same baiting approach and same rigs – it wasn't long until I was sat behind three traps with brew in hand. I had a



(Top) 18lb.
(Left) 26lb-plus.



Petals at 39lb 12oz.



The Parrot – 35lb-plus.

lot of confidence in my rigs; I was using Fox Arma Point SRs in a size 4. I haven't had a hook pull for three seasons now with those hooks; since I started using them. These were incorporated with 20lb Camotex and line aligners with the waffer mounted on a micro rig swivel straight on the shank of the hook.

That night the carp were putting on an incredible show as if they were showing off to see who could make the biggest splash, and it didn't take long for the liners to begin. Not long after midnight the middle rod was away, and another well spirited fight ended with a common of 26lb. Weighed, photographed and let back to the depths I set about getting the rod clipped up and cast back out to the far bank marker. During this the fish were still topping at regular intervals.

I was woken at first light by a vicious liner, pulling the bobbin up to the top to then be dropping back into position just as I got down to the rods. With that, a little one topped over that rod, which got me thinking. Fishing in that depth, over a shelf, did it catch

my line on the way up? I was just walking back to the brolly for the first brew of the day when that rod burst into meltdown, and I was in. It didn't take long to reach the spreader block this one, resulting in a scale and fin perfect little common of 18lb and ounces. I slipped it into the retaining sling just for a few minutes whilst I got the camera and mat ready, when the rod I had the 26 on in the night pulled up tight and started taking line at a slow but steady pace.

As soon as lifted into the fish the 3.5 TC Horizon took on its full curve and instantly it felt like a good fish. Although feeling heavy, she soon came to the surface about 20 yards out. With the lead ejected on the take and the 15mm waffer hanging off the bottom lip, the fish started making way for the overhanging trees to my left, kiting on a tight line. With a bit of steady pressure and some gentle coaxing, the big mirror was coughing water as she went over the net cord. To my amazement I had just landed one of the lake's gems – a good lengthy mirror with scales that look like they had just been thrown ran-

domly over her. With the net secured safely, I popped round to another member just a couple of swims down for assistance with the weighing and photos.

The mirror in question was called Petals and took the scales around to 39lb 12oz – its new top weight. I was absolutely over the moon with this capture and had a few returner shots before letting her go, and she swam off ever so gracefully. With smiles all around, we went to photo the smaller common and I returned it, thinking about how lucky I had been. With the swim looking like World War 3, on went the kettle, and I spent most of that morning drooling over the pictures of a truly stunning carp.

I made a couple more trips during December with nothing coming my way. I decided to call it a day till the next spring whilst the winter ticket members plugged away for the colder months. She is definitely a capture that I will remember for a very long time, and with only scratching the surface on the stock in Bundy's Pit, I'm very excited for the coming season on there. ■

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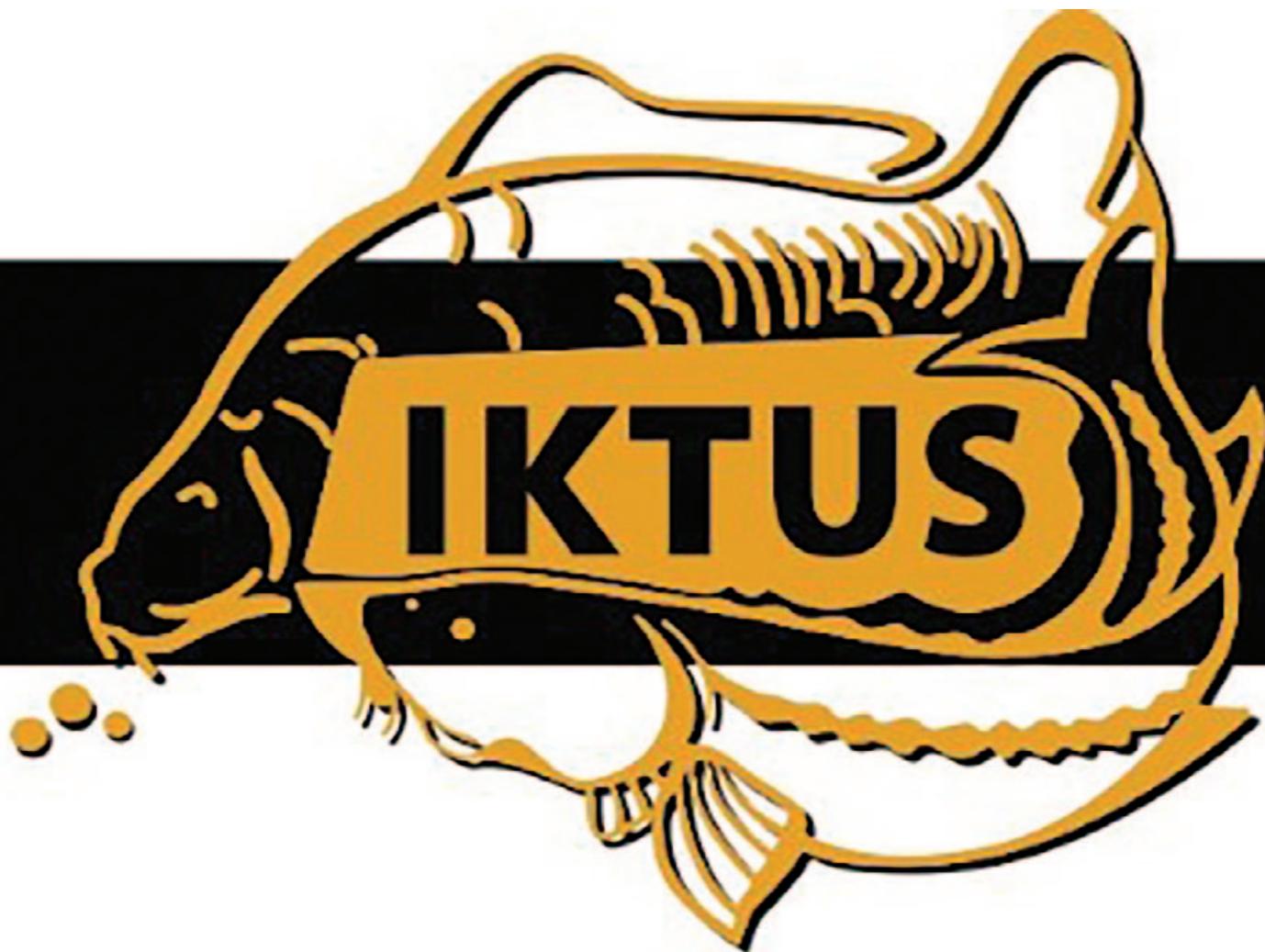
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Free Time

Linch Hill's Finest

By Rob Allen

As I arrived to the lake, I was greeted by Nick the bailiff, who said Church only had four on, so I had picked a good week. So I was feeling good at this point, so up to the lake I went, wasting no time. As I got to Church, the swim I wanted was empty, but I had to have a good walk round to try and hopefully see where the fish were. I made my way round, and only getting as far as peg 5, I was amazed to see so many shows, so I stayed for a good 30 minutes to take it all in. Then I walked quickly around the lake, asking a few anglers if anything was doing, and where the fish were showing, but I was left with only one option, so peg 5 it was.

Off I went to load the barrow and get back quickly to get my rods out. I was soon back to the swim, and the fish still showing immensely, so I quickly got my rods set up – one for the bottom and one on a zig, although I'd heard zigs weren't the best method this time of year, but I had to try it, what with the fish being so high up in the water. Morning soon came round, and not even having had any

indication of a line bite that night, I quickly reeled in and had a walk down to the peg I originally wanted to fish. I found the swim empty and the fish had moved up to this end of the lake, so I dropped a bucket down and quickly went back, packed up and moved swims.

The lake had been very quiet for days if not weeks, only producing the odd fish, so thinking how to go about things was a tough task, trying to work out the best tactic to use. I couldn't help but watch the water for several hours because the amount of fish there was frightening. I was standing with the lad in the next swim for most of the day just watching the water with the fish circling my swim and his in a figure of eight – it was almost like clock work. He pointed out almost all the big names in the lake, with the Box Common and Crinkle Tail almost side by side, and the Scar and another big mirror too, but he wasn't sure which one. It was amazing to watch, and this activity carried on all day.

I eventually got my rods out to a baited spot I'd done earlier in the day, due to finding out that there had been a couple of runs on the opposite side

of the lake over baited spots. So I was happy to sit back and wait, knowing the fish had started feeding on the bottom. As the night went on I had to do something down the margin, where I'd watched all the activity in the day, so I started to look for the best place to put some bait where I could get up the following morning and watch to see if the fish would get down on it. I put half a kilo of bait on a clear spot the size of a dinner plate, or maybe a bit smaller. It was right on the paths the fish was taking, so that was my mind made up.

The following morning I got up and was straight in the tree, only to see the fish

doing the exact same route and the spot where I put my bait looked empty. So I sat and watched the fish for a while, and two big mirrors stopped and went down on the spot. I couldn't make out which they were, due to the heavy breeze on the water and the depth they were at; I'd say 4-5ft under the surface. I couldn't help think it was Scar and the other big mirror from the day before. They had a good feed on what was left and then moved on, continuing their route.

I sat and watched the fish still



swimming this same pattern, but nothing else went down on this spot again that day. I still hadn't had a single bleep at this point, but two fish had now come out on the other side, so I decided to keep my rods on the spot and get my Margin Creeper out to fish this spot. Later that evening I put the bait out on the spot, waddled down the margin and dropped my rig perfectly on the plate-sized spot, which was about 8ft out from where I was stood and 9ft deep. With the same amount of bait as last time, I walked back, keeping my line tight with the lakebed... trap set and alarm clock set for 6am the following morning to get up and watch. It was 8:30am the day before when I saw the fish feeding on the spot, so I wanted to be on the ball this time and see as much as I could.

At 1am I was awoken by a run on my margin rod. As I got to it, I heard a coot and some splashing. Yes, the dreaded thing had happened: my spot had been invaded and I had caught a coot! All the hard work of placing the rig inch perfect had been destroyed. I

went back to the bivvy with my head in my hands thinking what to do now – whether to attempt the same in the pitch black, and not only that, but run the risk of being done by a coot again. So I opted for a zig 4ft below the surface where I guesstimated the fish to be at, and I knew I could lower this down right in their path, and not worry about it being on the clear spot and the coots attacking it of course. The zig to me was the safer option, so a zig was made and put out.

I used something different to what I knew they had seen before, which would give me the advantage over these very tricky carp. Because I new the fish were swimming in this direction, I almost new my zig would be seen, so I had to do something that was new to them. I was woken at 6:00 by my alarm, so I got up and put the kettle on, then out of nowhere at 6:03am the margin rod ripped off! I couldn't believe it had actually happened! My friend Andrew Weston was there almost as I hit the rod. I was extremely happy to be in contact, and straight in the water I went to net

the fish, which didn't give much fight at all, and I was shocked to have it in the net so quickly.

I was over the moon to see that it had smashed my PB, but as soon as I lifted him out I knew this was something special. It was very heavy, and I knew I'd just caught my first English 40lb-plus carp! I could not believe it! I was eager to find out whether it was the mighty Scar or another mirror that is very similar. Nick, the head bailiff, was soon on the scene and confirmed it was the mighty Scar, the king of the lake, weighing in at 47lb. I was shaking like I'd never had carp shakes before. I've had endless 40lb-plus carp in France, but this one beats them all.

It was a catch of a lifetime and I was a very happy man. It was an epic moment. Unfortunately the last few days I was unable to put any more fish on the bank, but I left a very happy man. This place is truly magical and has some fantastic rewards! An a big thanks to everyone at Linch for making my week one to remember! ■



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The Mighty Slate Grey from Linch Hill Christchurch Lake

By Mark Litchfield

The weight was 44lb 8oz, and it was the Mighty Slate Grey from Linch Hill's Christchurch Lake. I caught her on the bot-

tom on an Oxford Baits Boilie, which is rare, as she normally comes out on zigs and floaters. I also caught four more carp including the O Fish (my hardest fighting fish to date) on the same session.

Good luck with your new book! I'm old enough to remember the days when BC & Carpworld were the only magazines from select tackle shops, and Richworth's Tutti Frutti the only boilies... Those were the days. ■

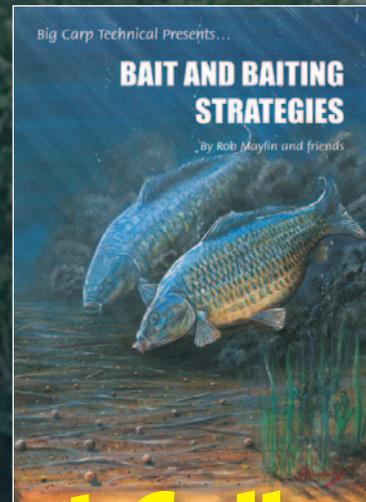
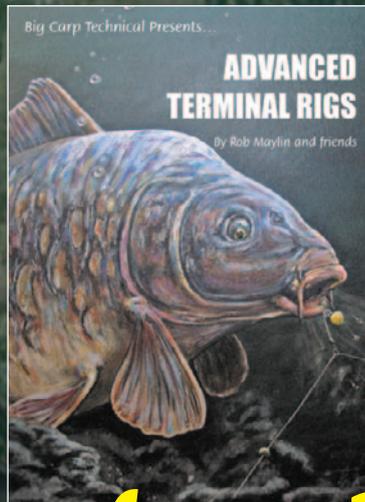
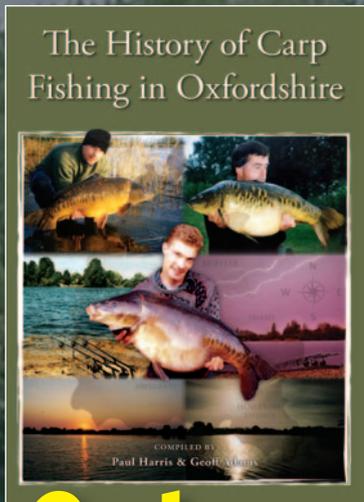




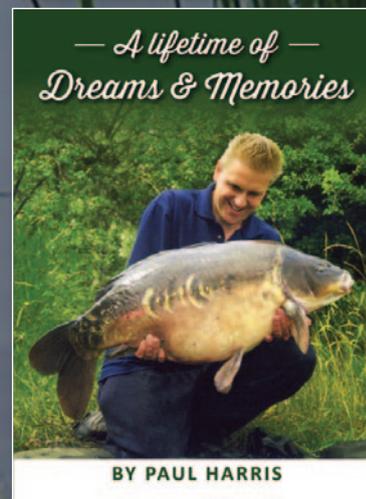
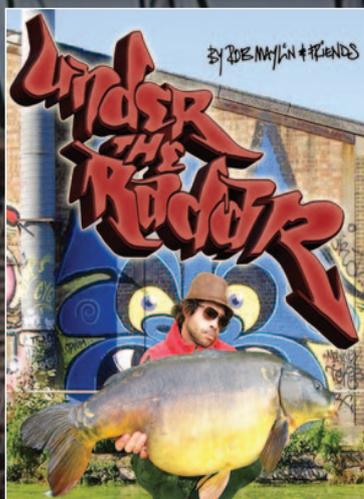
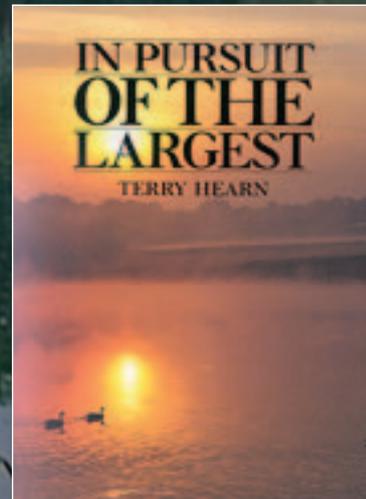
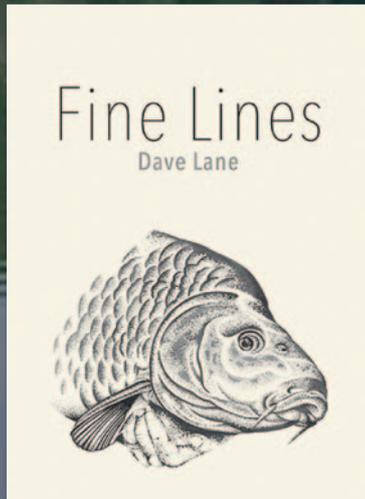
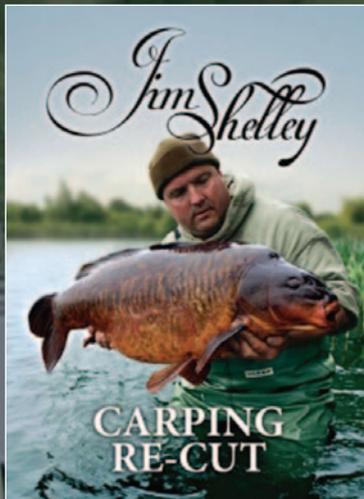




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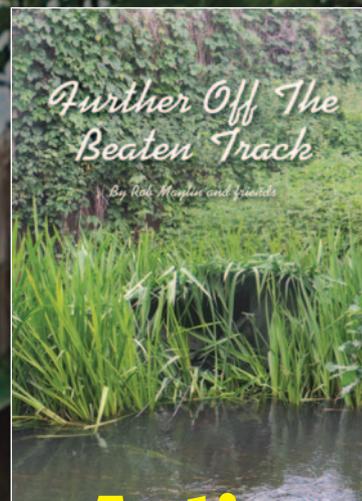
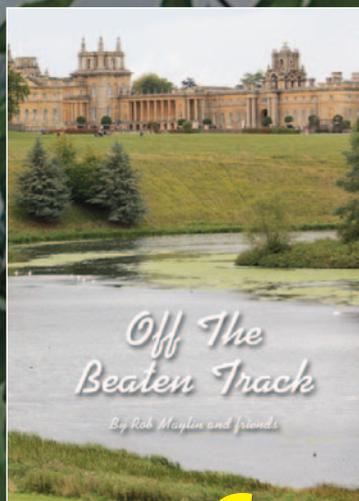
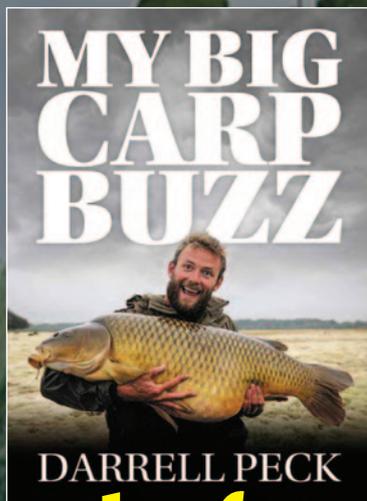


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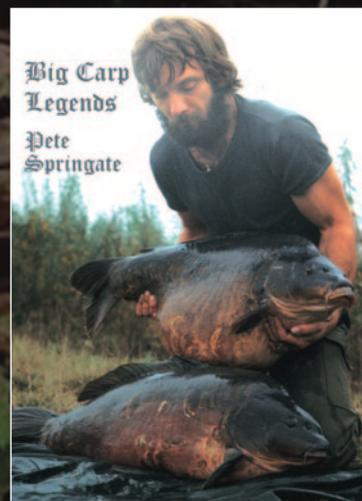
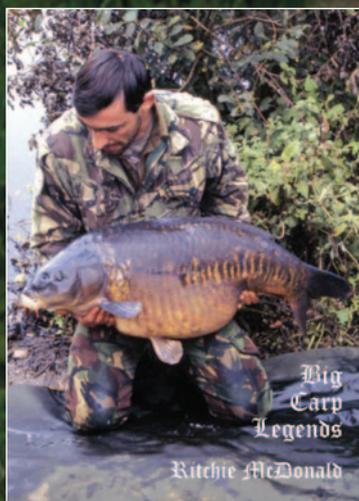
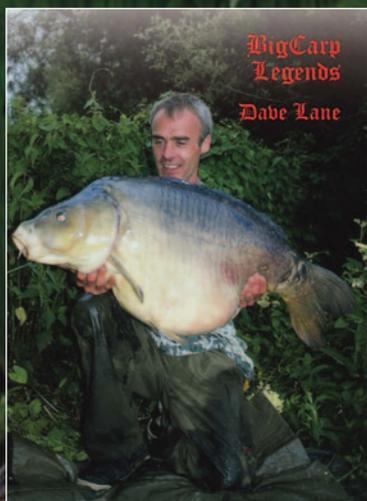
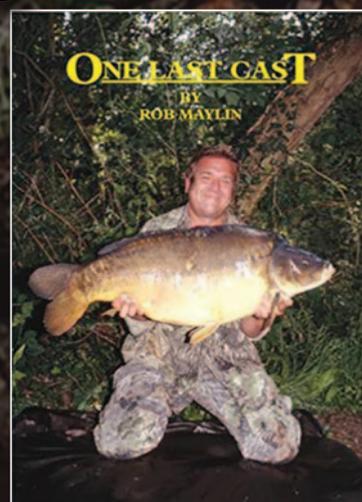
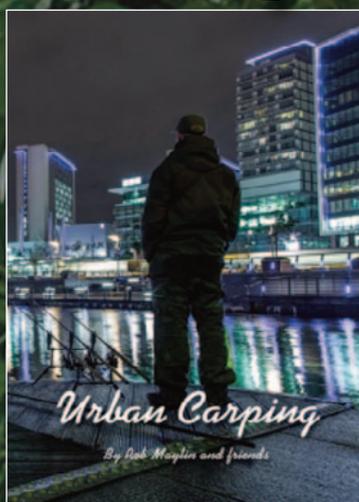
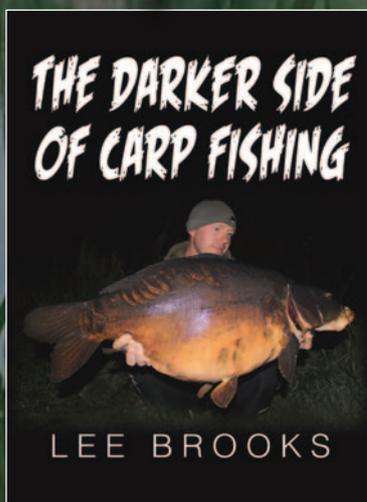


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A Night I'll Never Forget

By Jonathan Krol

I got down the lake on Friday (24/04/15) to start a 48-hour session on the last weekend of the 2014/15 season, choosing a peg called Elliot's. As it was the last weekend of the season, the lake was packed with two free pegs, the other being in a cornered off area of the lake. I thought open water was my best chance to fish, as I was told fish had been seen cruising though the middle of the lake. After an hour of the rods being out I had a 22lb common tight to some lily pads at roughly 65 yards.

After this I didn't see a sign of a fish so moved my middle rod to a small patch of silt that rarely gets fished, as it's fairly shallow. After sticking out some boilies and particles over my new spot I sat back waiting for a bite. As the weather turned that night to strong, cold winds and being the last night this year my confidence dropped for another bite, and I retired to by sleeping bag.

At 2am my bobbin started to slowly rise and drop down, which at the time I thought was a liner, but after a few more seconds I realised it was a fish

and struck into it. After playing the fish for roughly ten minutes it glided into my net. Once I looked down I realised it was Big Common. I started to shake thinking it was Kitch, and when it was on my cradle a big smile came on my face, as I knew that after three years I'd finally done it and caught Kitch. Being over 50lb made it more special and a night I'll never forget – one, for bagging this amazing fish and two, using Sticky Baits for the first time after using Mainline. Needless to say I won't be going back ! Kitch at 50b 3oz from Northey Park! ■



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.

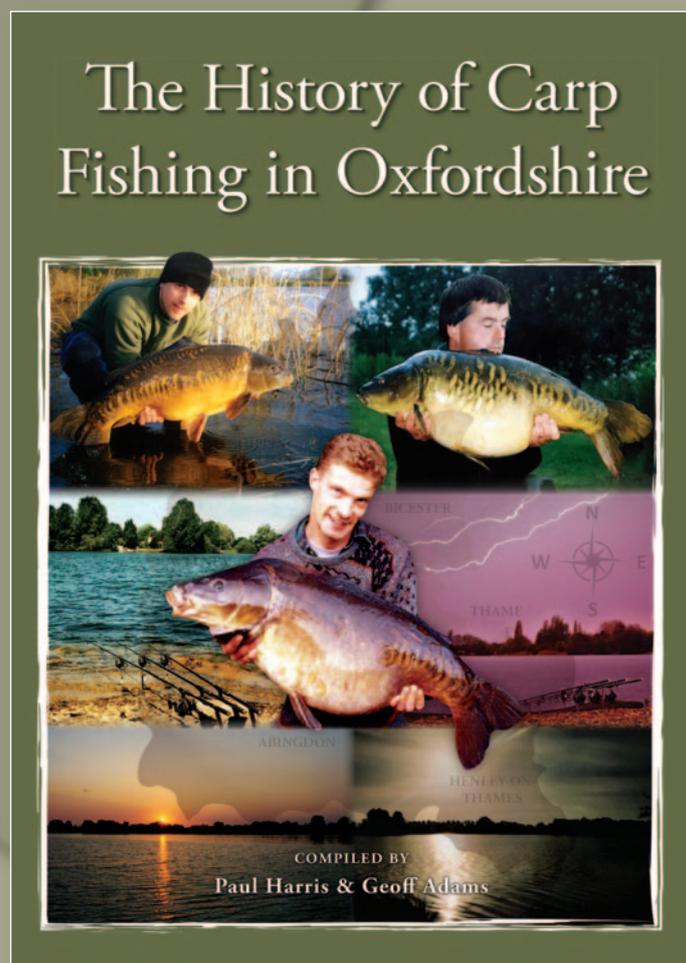
Nick Stansfield is a brilliant young Oxford carper who doesn't shout about his catches. We have two incredible chapters from him from two of the county's most iconic lakes, The Leisure Park and The Big S! Josh Chatfield has written a fantastic chapter which really gives you an insight into how fishing 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

Cut Tail Common at 44lb 4oz

By Lee Upstone

After constantly keeping an eye on the weather and an ear to ground regarding what's been coming out of the syndicate, the day had arrived when I needed to get down to deepest Lincolnshire sharpish.

A small window of high temperatures had opened and wasn't staying long, so armed with 5kg of the ever

faithful Big Fish Mix rolled by Rollin' Baits in Rotherham loaded with GLM and the new Krill liquid and all rods set up with the Ashima tackle, off I went, setting up at the back of the wind. 20 casts later I found some spots in the weed.

I put 1kg over each rod, topped with a bright Nutrabaits Alternative pop-up.

Odd bleeps a few hour later made me think fish were around, and

at 5am Saturday morning the middle rod steadily rattled off. Ten minutes later it was in the net!

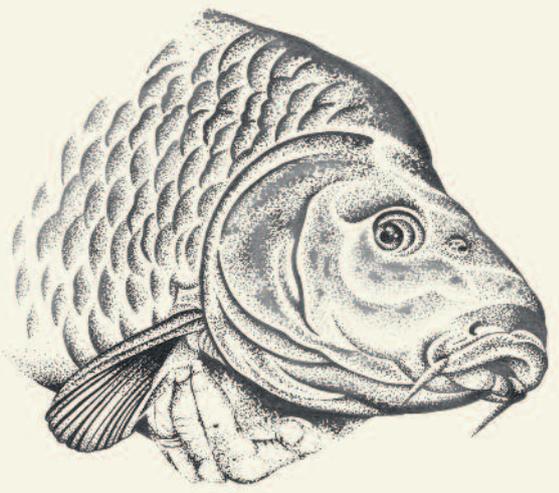
It was one of this year's targets, the Cut Tail Common, and up in weight. The fish looked amazing in its winter colours, so hats off to Mr. Gregory the fishery owner. Emotional? I was as happy as pig in muck as they say. Hopefully this season is going to be as good as the last. Tight lines everyone and good luck. ■



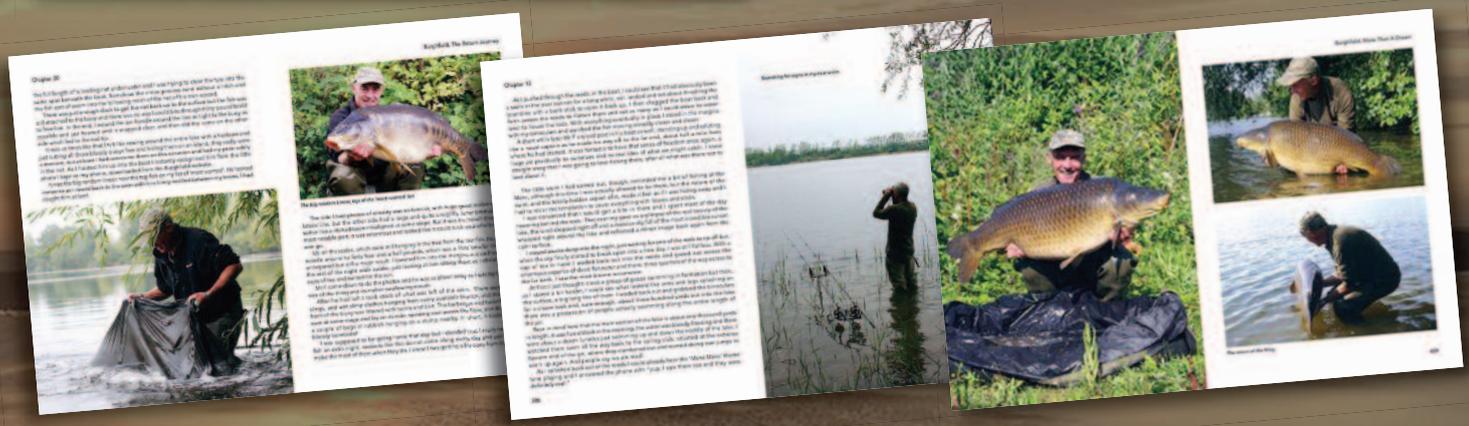
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Fine Lines

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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I'll Be Back, Arnie...

By John Middlemass

Does it get much better than an old proper English carp? For me, no... Hand on my heart I still get excited about going fishing, tossing and turning, repeatedly checking the alarm clock. You get the picture, right? Well, Arnie had got me bad. Queue the big lad! He's a fish that has been around for a long time; in fact possibly a little longer than me (I had a short paper round, ha ha!) and fortunately he lives just down the road. He isn't a countrywide known fish, but around these northern parts he is a bit of a history fish, and that's how I like it. Arnie lives with his mates in Diawa Mantons Old Lake, a stunning lake of about nine acres with an island of

about an acre in the middle.

Weeping willows, sunken snags – it's a text book old, small intimate water where some of the most wanted seem to laugh at your rigs while we sit content pondering our next move. Such a moody lake at times, but if you could tune in the rewards were there and the big'un was on my to do list. He was a stubborn bugger, mind, and I got the feeling it wasn't going to be smooth sailing.

Before I get into the details of current affairs, I'll tell you I did fish a little on there a couple of years ago with some success, but ultimately I got distracted, as you do at times, but I knew I'd be back. I actually lost him that first year, to my utter despair! A boiling hot July I chased him for hours

with my floater rod and had a couple of small chances at him, but he's a cute one and not daft... I found him later that day as the sun was waving goodbye in the near margin of one of his haunts. "I guess I'll fish here then, mate," I whispered as I crawled through for a closer look past the shrubbery.

A night riddled with vicious liners was finally broken at dawn by a shrill cry from my alarm. It was perfect weather; you know those days at work when you look out of the window and wish you were living the dream. Priceless. A light, cool breeze, super fine rain; you could feel the pressure dropping by the minute. Sorry, I was daydreaming...

So, a one-toner, and I hit the rod. The fish kited into open water and



held its ground for a while, so I automatically knew it was a good'un. A steady battle of about five minutes and the fish surfaced. I knew straight away from its tail which one it was, so I was bricking it. The clutch was slackened just a little more; you know the drill, and I tried to coax him slowly. Well, he was coming, until the line parted just in the edge. I let out a few expletives shall we say and packed up immediately, picking my dummy up as I left. Gutted just wasn't enough to describe what I felt, and upon inspecting the line afterwards, it had been damaged during the fight! "Well, Arnie," I said. "I'll be back!"

Last June was when I decided to give it a proper go... The stock of fish are old, leathery mirrors and battle scarred commons. I would guesstimate between 50 - 70 fish, which is more than enough for me to go at. My plan as always was to get as many bites as I could, and if I didn't catch him that way, I would at least build a picture up of where he likes to frequent the most.

June, and what a hot summer we had - long days of watching the fish





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amble around catching rays. I seen a good number of the fish I wanted through those days. To be honest I was often taken aback at where I would find them – so tight into the near margin. A more clumsy person would either spook them, or worse, miss them. I absolutely love this game of hide and seek. My rods would often be found in really shallow water waiting for that chance. In fact through the summer I would say 95% of my bites came either tight to the island or in the near margin. Exciting fishing I have to add, watching the water boil and drop when a take occurred. I had some stunning carp of all shapes and sizes and felt really privileged to catch and hold some of these old warriors.

Back to Arnie... He could be quite elusive, and I wouldn't be able to find him for weeks, but he did like a little swim called the Bay, a tight little number that got he afternoon sun. Now and again I would see Arnie amble up as I watched from a vantage point. I spent some time in this swim but to no avail. It was puzzling to say





the least, as they loved it in there. I could get bites from everywhere else in the lake but not here. I still have never had a bite out of there! The only thing I can put it down to is how deep the silt was, and smelly, but carp love the silt... It was always the harder spots that produced the goods, so that is what I stuck to.

I put a bit of time in from June to October last year, but he hadn't been out since mid-April, so my assault was planned for the spring. I was havin' it! I feel I have to mention the fact that I decided to change my bait for the spring. Now they love a nut in there, speaking from experience, so I wanted a nut-based boilie. I spoke to my old mate Big Dave who was working with a guy called Craig who runs A2 baits.

I really liked the contents of the CT bait, and when I saw the washed-out pink barrels my mind was made up: they looked the one. The fish would see them beautifully in the clear cold water. I'm a big believer that as carp, like humans, grow older, their senses gradually decline, not to mention the



cold winter we had come out of, so the little colour would surely make them notice. Salt cured and glugged up, my ammo was set... Big thanks to the lads at A2 baits!

The spring for me was going quite decently, and I ticked along nicely with fish to over 32lbs. The carp were regularly passing my bait on the mat, which I think you will agree is always a smile raiser. I was concentrating my efforts on a swim called the Point – very popular among the regulars, but fate was being kind to me, as I was getting in there quite a bit.

Thought I would mention that I'm not sure what weather you guys have had this spring, but the weather up north has been disturbingly bad. Cold winds, cold days... but forward in the pursuit of the largest, so I'm not one to moan. A slight change in fortune was coming though; I could see the weather was warming through the days, and a week of fairly strong westerlies were en route. Round to the Pump House swim I went to fish the slack water up tight to the island. My thinking... Carp are sensitive, cold-blooded creatures, and they crave the warmth in the spring. The morning sun hits this area bang on, so I knew they would have to be there. A little bait was applied into the right places a few times, and it was game on!

My first attack resulted in a brace of 30s, a lovely mirror and a battle-hardened common. I also lost one – gutted! I hate losing fish, especially when



they are due out, and Arnie hadn't been out for over a year now, as it was late April. Anyway, all the same, I was happy with the result. I baited lightly but accurately, smiling knowingly as they both had passed my bait on the mat again.

My next session was planned for the Friday evening after work. Now I don't normally fish on Fridays, as it can get quite busy, but I took what I could get, as I truly thought it

couldn't be long before he was hitting the bank. Well, you know which swim I was in, and my mate Andy was in there leaving as I was pulling up, so result. I'm not one for jumping in behind people either, but I was 100% confident it was the one!!

Well story goes that he went, and I got my rods out. My Pot Noodle was about ready when the middle rod ripped off! The fish hit the snags before I could get there, and I was sat next to them! I eventually coaxed the fish out with some serious pressure. Out in the open it felt a really decent fish, confirmed by the sight of its flank as it twisted and turned for freedom. Oh dear... "Please don't come off," I prayed. I tell you, from seeing the fish that first time to feeling it tire had to have been 10-15 minutes – an epic battle. The fish then suddenly popped up, and just as he hit the spreader block I knew it was him.

"Get in there!! Come on!!"

What a carp! – perfectly imperfect. He looked a brute on the mat, going 46lb 15oz and a new PB. Pictures done, and it was time to let him go. He's an old boy and took his time to recover, but what a pleasure it was to hold him while he caught his breath. That's what it is all about... Sharing a personal moment with your quarry. ■



CARPING RE-CUT

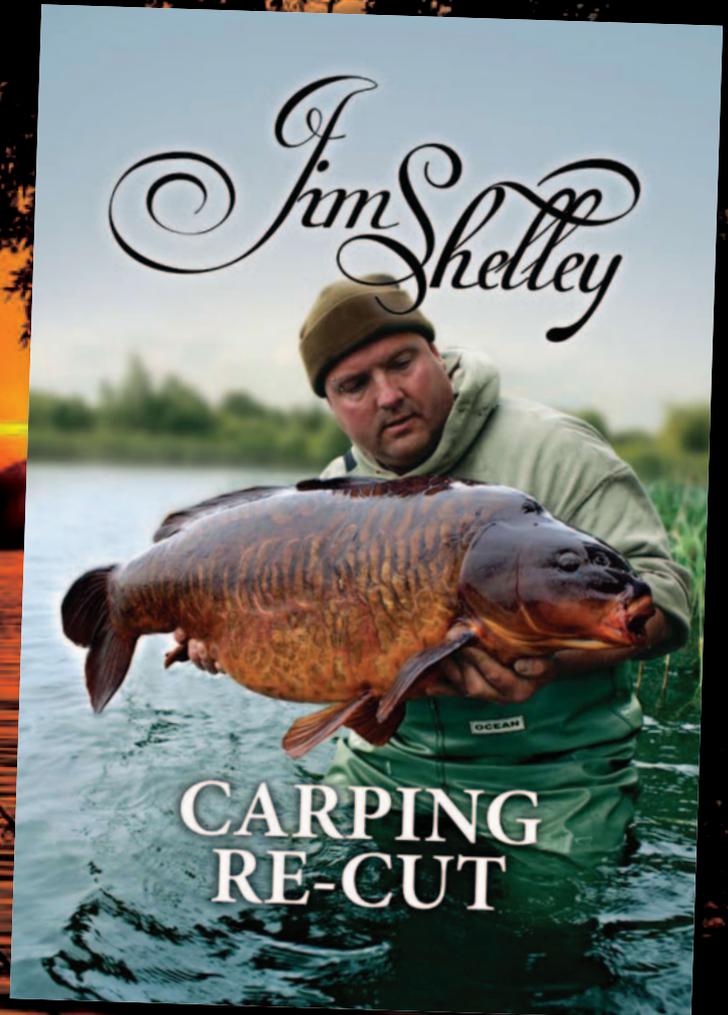
Jim Shelley

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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The Syndicate Lake

By Matt Smith and Micky Cosgrove

It all started back in April 2013 when I, Matthew Smith, and my good friend Michael Cosgrove decided to join a syndicate lake in the Midlands. We have fished together for many years, having fished most of the lakes in our area and a lot in the Lincolnshire area, so we decided to look for somewhere further afield for a new challenge with the chance of a 30 or two. We wanted somewhere with plenty of water to go at, somewhere at least 30 acres, a place where we felt we could get something going, where we could get some spots rocking without fear of people jumping on our hard work the minute we start catching. We wanted a place that would suit mass baiting. We didn't want a bite here and there; we wanted to "smash" the lake just like we have done on some of the lakes closer to home.

We spent weeks trawling the net and making endless phone calls to grumpy bailiffs to try and find that "special syndicate", one that we felt would be perfect for smashing once we got a good bait established and some spots cleaned/primed up ready for when the fish are in the areas.



Off the mark with a 28lb common for Matt.

In April 2013 we purchased tickets for a 40-acre reservoir in the Midlands, a round trip of 220 miles. A long lake roughly 1000 yards long starting only 20 yards wide at the north end and up to 350 yards wide at the dam wall end, with depths start at 2ft in the north going down to 25ft-plus at the dam end. We felt that the fish would be very nomadic, following the

big winds that push down the lake and also due to the difference in depth from one end to the other. The lake was estimated by the regulars to contain roughly 250 carp, around six 30s and a good number of 20s. The lake record was a 44lb mirror, but all the regulars seem to think it has passed away. It was apparently seen getting washed over the dam wall back in 2009 when the lake was hit by some bad flooding. The main targets were a mirror called Unattended that usually weighed around 34lb, the Scruffy common at 31lb, the Big Lin at 30lb, a mirror called Angry Annie at 32lb and a fish known as the Unknown 30, a fish that had only seen the bank twice before I joined and a proper stunner, definitely one for the photo album.

We decided before we even fished the lake that once we had worked out their patrol routes and the areas they were likely to visit during certain weather conditions, we would find some interception areas for when the fish decide to move, we wanted enough quality bait going in to stop the fish in their tracks, to make them hang around till it was all gone, or at least till we caught them all!



26lb stunner for Matt before they did the off!

Our first session was one weekend in the start of May. We had three days there to get as much information on the lake as possible – the depths, the carp’s hideouts, where the sun rose and set, how the winds were affecting the water and what the competition was like in the form of other anglers and of course the dreaded birdlife. That first session taught us so much about the place – number one being that 90% of the regulars didn’t want us fishing “their lake”. A couple of them, the “batty boys” as we later named them, didn’t hold back in letting us know that the lake was very hard and we would not be coming here hauling like we had planned. We were told who fishes which swim on which days and where we would be able to fish as though they owned the place. However, I am not the sort of person who likes being told how and where to fish, and neither is Micky. I could see it in his eyes after meeting the “batty boys” that he was getting agitated, and usually when another angler upsets Micky he responds by dumping copious amounts of bait into the lake to ensure we’re the only ones catching, and boy does it work! Much to our surprise we both caught that

first session – Micky landing a common just shy of 20lb, and I managed to bag a 22lb mirror and a stunning 28lb common. We had made so much noise plumbing and mapping the features, I am surprised there was a fish within half a mile!

Due to Micky being the manager of a pig farm, his time was limited. I on the other hand have more flexibility as I’m self-employed. That first year fishing there I was busy finishing building a timber framed house for my parents that I had been doing for the past four years on my own. I was able to work like mad for a few days then have a couple of days off, so much of the first year was spent on my own, with Micky joining me as and when he could get time off, mostly consisting off the odd weekend here and there, so it was down to me to get most of the groundwork done.

On my second session, at the end of May, I found the fish half way down the reservoir in some slack water at the back of a small island. They were just poking their backs out of the water getting a bit of sun whilst being out of the cool northerly wind winds that were pushing down the lake. The

only way of reaching the fish required a cast of around 115 yards from the opposite bank – not a massive cast, but the side winds made it so much harder. I decided that because the fish were just chilling out in the sun, the last thing they wanted was a Spomb crashing in on their heads, so I went back to the side off the lake that they were at and catapulted 3kg of Trigger boilies over the island into the slack where the fish were. I made my way back to the other side of the lake where I was set up and spread three rods out in the zone, all fished on stiff hinge rigs with pink Plum and Caprioc acid pop-ups an inch off the deck so the hookbaits wouldn’t be sat in any debris on the bottom that had fallen from the trees on the island. All three rigs were fished with a three-bait stringer tied to the lead, not the hookbait, as I like the rig to rest gently on the bottom not to be pulled down with the stringer, a small piece of foam on the hook prevents any tangles and also helps it to settle nice and gently, also helping to kick the rig out straight.

I woke to the alarm on my phone at 5am after a fishless night, wondering if the fish had moved away from



Big Lin, first 30 out of the lake for Matt.



Micky with a yet another cracking mirror.

where I was fishing. It was time to get up and watch for any signs of fish in the area before looking elsewhere. The rain was hammering down, and the pressure had dropped during the night. The lake looked oh so carpy, and I was starting to think the fish might have moved off to deeper water. I was considering a move then out of the blue a fish crashed, then another, then another... had the fish just returned, or had the weather just woken them up? I'm not quite sure, but the next thing I knew one of the Delkims was singing/spluttering away. The fish fought well; they always seem to take longer to get in when it's raining. I was soaked to the skin but was over the moon when a lovely looking linear rolled over the cord. I secured the fish and got the gear ready for weighing and pictures. On lifting the fish out of the water I could tell it was a good one. It went just over 31lb, my first 30 from the lake and a stunner to boot – happy days.

Over the next 12 hours I landed four more fish weighing up to 24lb and lost one at the net. They were queuing up, but the minute the weather

changed the fish left the area. I could see them over 400 yards away only two hours after my last take, which soon proved how nomadic they were. I knew from then on if we wanted the fish to stay in an area for any length of time they would need persuading to stay. I hoped the Trigger I had used for many years would do the job, which it did to a degree, but I had a feeling they weren't going mad for it. Two of the fish I caught were crapping out the Cell all over the place, but I definitely am not one to copy others. It was time to try and find a bait that would compete with the Cell and hopefully once applied correctly would take over as their number one choice of bait. I realise no bait will ever totally dominate a lake, but I know for a fact that the more they see of it the quicker they will get stuck into it, and I am SURE they go looking for it. Whether its an 18mm boilie or the remains of a boilie that the birds are crapping out all over the lake the more times those fish get to taste/smell the bait the more likely they are to accept it. For this reason alone it doesn't bother me if the birds

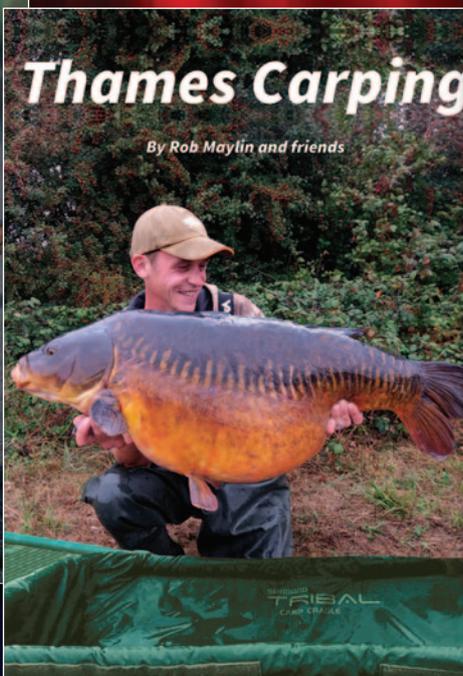
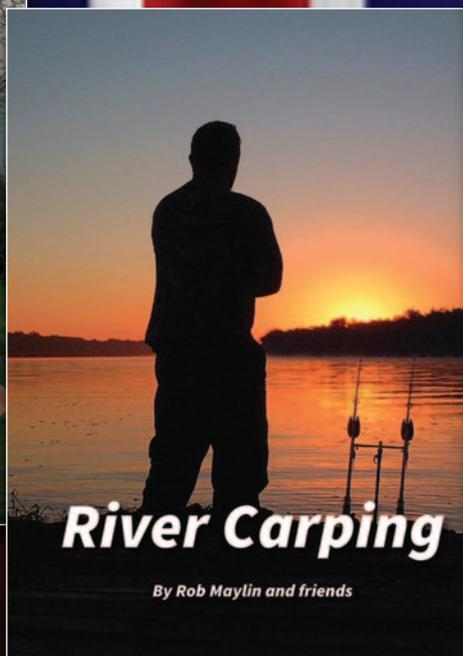
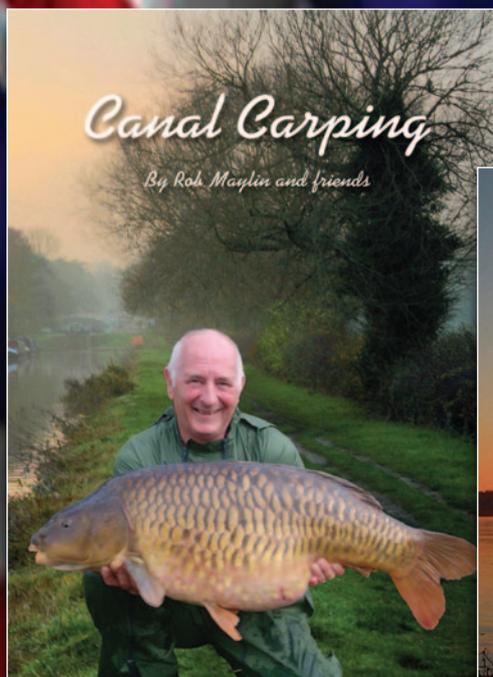
eat 20kg of my bait, so long as they are crapping it back into the lake I am happy.

During the first year we fished as often as we could, catching every trip, and much to some of the regulars' disappointment we had over 100 fish between us, more than some have had in ten years on there! We were getting plenty of runs, up to five a night, catching some lovely fish on the bottom, but once again the minute the weather changed the were off so we would up sticks and follow them. Some days we would set up on the fish only for the wind to change resulting in the fish moving straight away. We would often be pulling the bank sticks back out of the ground literally half an hour after setting up, chasing the fish round the lake hoping to keep the bites coming. We knew we needed a plan once we had some time.

I spent a lot of the summer of that year surface fishing. Many of the members had said they don't take floaters, so to me that means it's time to get the floaters out and prove them wrong! I was turning up at the lake

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with 40kg-plus of floaters, mainly mixers from the Co-op, but also some smaller floaters to mix in if the fish decided to get a bit cagey. I find that once they get used to the suction required to suck a mixer down they will often leave the hookbait if it doesn't react like the freebies, so I try to make them exactly the same buoyancy. Failing that I will then start to feed the smaller floaters to confuse them and make them trip up.

From June until September I had over thirty fish off the surface with minimal fishing time. I was usually only there for 24 hours at the most, or 48 hours if I was lucky, and I was going with the intention of hammering them on the surface during the day and just sleeping on a night. My routine entailed getting up an hour before first light and feeding myself and making a flask, then till an hour after dark I would keep a steady trickle of mixers going in, non stop all day whether the fish were there or

not. The swans, ducks, geese and anything else with feathers would be there all day, but I am sure they were attracting the carp. Not once did I try to scare the birds off – as soon as they starting taking the mixers the carp would turn up and start feeding with the birds. It was as if the carp thought, if it's safe for the birds, it's safe for us!

I really was hammering them – nonstop baiting all day, and it was all getting eaten. I remember one Sunday morning like yesterday... I was talking to one of the friendly regulars, a chap called Bov, and we were saying how nice it would be to catch a 30lb common off the top. It hadn't been done before, and we just joked about it, like you do! It was about 2pm, and I'd been stood in the sun for about eight hours feeding mixers up wind with the Spomb. I was gagging for a drink, but the carp were there, so there was no time to brew up. The next thing I know I am laid on the

floor next to the lake with goose shit stuck to the side of my face. I had my rod in my hand, and there was a carp pulling hard trying to get away.

The heat had been too much for me, and I had collapsed in a big old sweaty heap! It would have been a perfect time to crack the kettle on, but first of all I had to deal with the angry common that was trying to pull me in, as it was now a good 100 yards away towing a load of weed about with my 8lb Double Strength hook link! Don't you just love carping! There was a weed bed going out about 15 yards from the bank that I had been fishing behind, so I jumped in the lake and made my way through the weed with my rod and net to make sure I could land the fish. By the time I got the fish closer in, it had kited around a small island to my right, and I could feel my mainline rubbing on one of the many roots that go down into the water. Luckily I was fishing 12lb Sensor mainline. Many people knock it, but it



32lb common off the top, the Goose Shit Common.



Another minter off the top, about 10pm, last knockings. (Below) Proper baiting up!

really is a good strong line, and it did its job superbly.

Five minutes of bullying and cursing and the fish finally came away from the snag and into the open water in front of me. I netted what I thought was the fish in the middle of a ball of weed, but upon clearing the weed in the net I saw my line leading off to my left to another ball of weed. After a couple more runs the fish just

gave up, wallowing on the surface. I waded a bit further out and scooped it up. I really didn't think I was going to land it. I secured it in the net and ran to see if Bov would take some pics. He had a bit of a social going on in his swim, so we all went back to my swim to check out my prize. I said to Bov, "I think it's a 30lb common," and he laughed away saying, "What would the chances be of that?" With

the crowd gathering we lifted her onto the mat and peeled back the sling, and there she was, 32lb of surface caught common, black as your hat and a stunner to boot. Bov just looked on in amazement. I think he was nearly as happy as me! I know it's no record breaker, but it was just one of those days where effort definitely equaled reward!

It was around this time that I got friendly with two or three of the locals. One of the lads, Mark, was catching well every session making him the top rod. He lived just a stone's throw away from the lake, so he was always popping down, baiting up, seeing what was going on. He had the lake about sussed so was definitely better for knowing. He caught the Unknown 30, and I had seen the pics on the website, a real stunning fish, so I quizzed him quite a lot about it. He said he was once told that that fish will not eat a boilie, and that it will swim around a bed of boilies. Its three captures had all been on tiger nuts, but they are banned. I tried them a few times but I got grassed up one day in the summer. I had left my rods leant up against my bivvy with

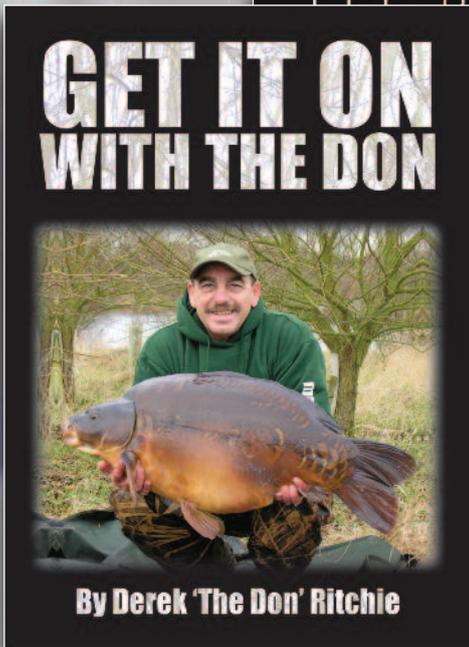
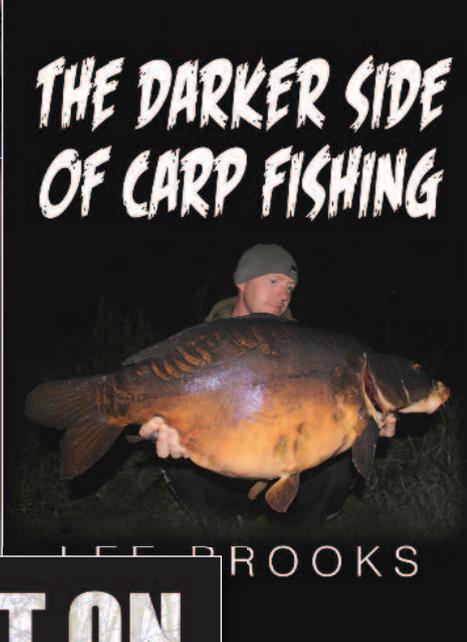
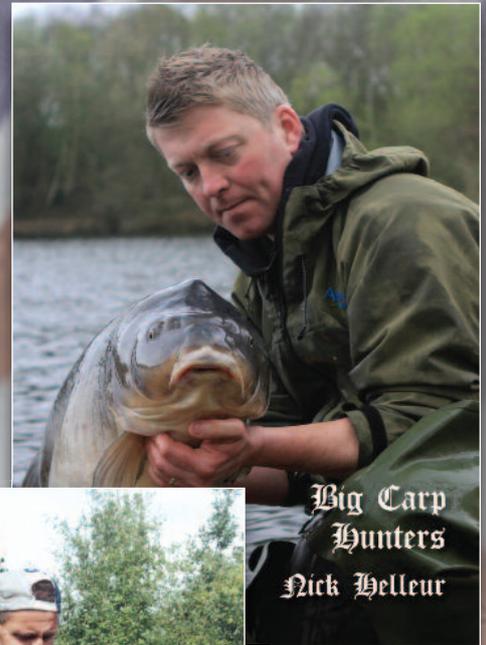
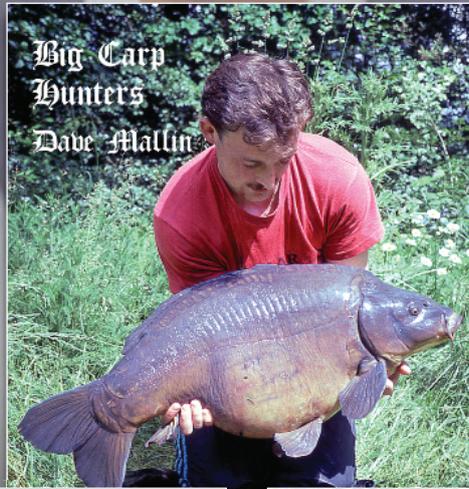
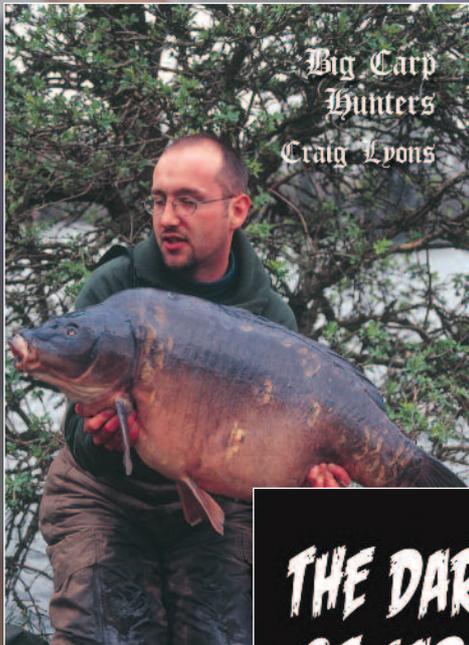




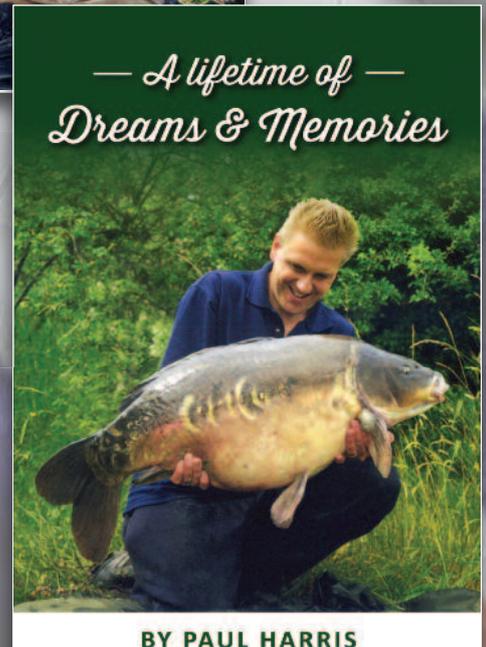
First fish of 2014 for Matt.

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A few fish from our record haul in May, all upper 20s





nuts on the rigs whilst I was 200 yards down the bank hauling on floaters. It was a simply another case of a jealous angler trying to cause us grief. The fish remained in the old memory box though. I added Mark on Facebook so I could keep quizzing him about the fish and kept winding him up saying, "I'll catch it on a boilie; you just watch." Only time would tell.

Micky and I had two weeks booked at La Horre for October, and there was every chance we were going to miss the big feed-up on the syndicate, so we decided now was the time to get some spots rocking, get some areas cleaned up and ready for either a session in November or in March the following year.

For years both Micky and I have been firm believers that mass baiting. If done properly can take most if not all lakes to bits, I am not just talking about boilies but also three or four really big hits of particle in an area over a couple of months can make a massive difference and give you a big edge. We had spoken numerous times about where we should hit the lake; we had watched the fish use the

same route of water about 80 yards out to get from one end of the lake to the other time after time. The lake is well over 200 yards wide, but they seemed to stick to a channel about ten yards wide. We called it the M1, the main road from north to south.

We decided to hit the area really hard with bait, baiting so we could fish two rods each in a line at 80 yards from the bank, an area about 40 yards wide. The bait consisted of hemp, rolled maize, Vitalin and a new boilie we had both started using bait called SS4 from Pukka Squirrel Baits. A good friend Marc Smurf Twaite had started his own business. It is a quality food source bait that for the four seasons it has gone through years of testing. I have spent a lot of time fishing the A1 Pits complex in Nottingham, which is no walkover, but Marc used to fish there, and his results were better than any I have seen on there before.

On one bank holiday weekend alone he had over 20 fish from the only spare peg whilst all the other 30 odd anglers blanked. Granted he is a very good angler, but he had a few tricks up his sleeve, which definitely

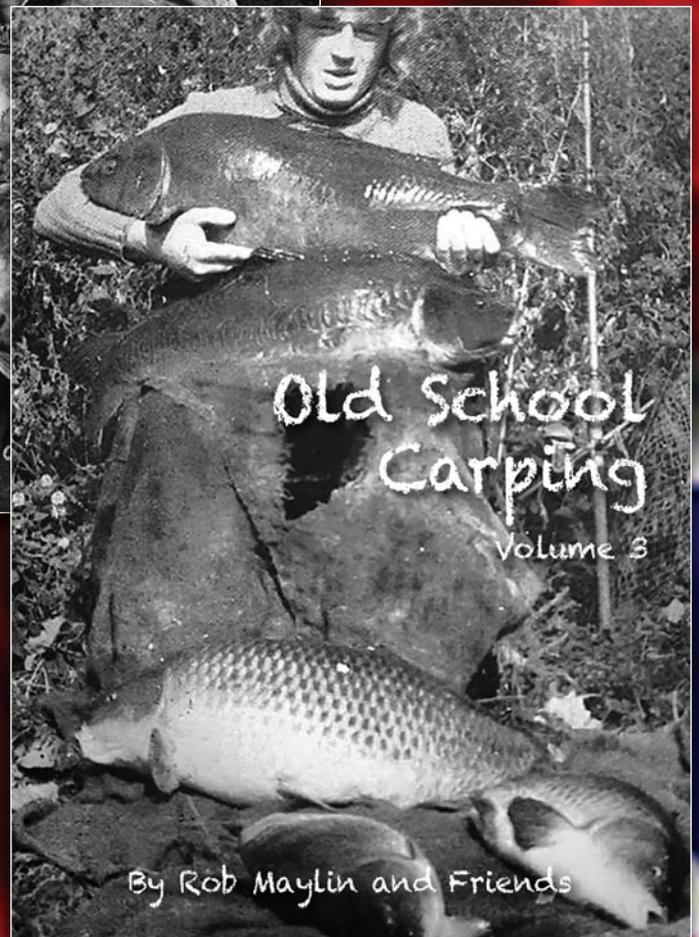
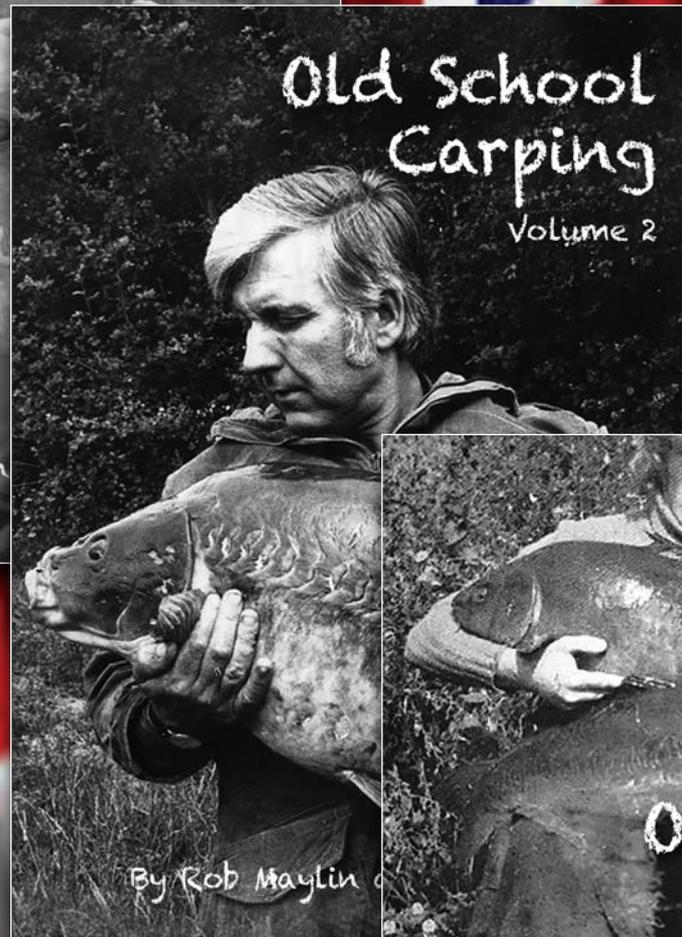
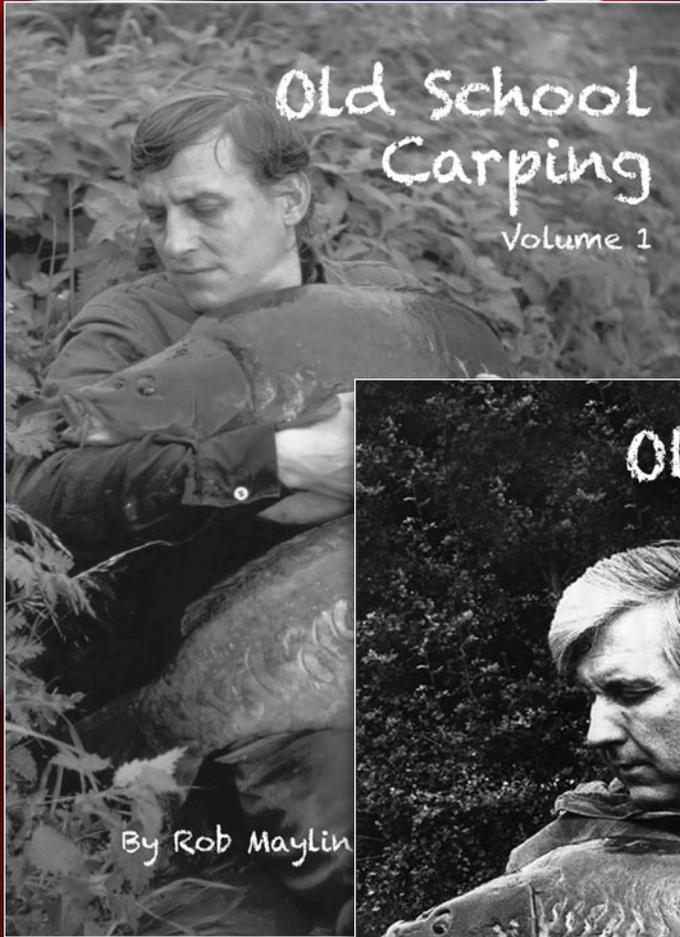
helped, one of them being the quality ingredients he had in his bait. After talking to Marc a few times I had seen he was looking for like minded people to be part of the team, and his bait seemed to be like no other on the market, so we joined the team and got a load of the Secret Smurf SS4 ordered. Upon arrival of the baits we were like school kids; the bait smelled and tasted great and was different to the normal baits on the market. One noticeable thing was how soft the bait was. I am sick of buying boilies that are rock hard, with over boiled skins that don't release any flavour or attraction. The other bonus to it being soft it that the older, maybe lazier carp would much prefer a soft boilie they can eat with ease. The quicker they eat the bait the quicker you will get a pick up.

It was now time to start baiting our areas, 30kg of hemp, 30kg of rolled maize, 30kg of Vitalin and 20kg of 18mm SS4 was spodded out at daft o'clock when everyone was tucked up in bed. We repeated this a few times over the next couple of months, knowing when we hit the area all hell



The unknown mirror at 37lb 6oz.

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Unattended at smack on 37lb for Micky.

was going to break loose!

It was the middle of March 2014 when we got back for our first quick overnighter of the year, there hadn't been any carp on the bank yet, but the weather looked spot-on for a fish – nice warm south westerly winds with some sun and rain and the air pressure was well down. A quick walk round and we soon found them, hanging about where we had been baiting up. Bearing in mind the last baiting mission was in November 2014, four months ago, it just goes to show that they remembered where their last banquet of 2014 was!

It was now time to test their reaction to the SS4. We both decided to just fish single SS4 hardened hookers with stringers and to stick a kilo of bait out between each of our two rods. It was midnight when the first one went, a 26lb mirror for me, the first fish caught on the lake that season, and by late morning I had two more low twenties. Micky had a 22lb common and an 18lb mirror. Now if ever you needed confidence in a bait then there you go – not a single fish caught up until May then we get five

runs in one night. Roll on our next proper session! We went twice in April, catching a few both times and baited our area again big time, planning to return in May for a week's session where we were hoping it was time to put our plan into action.

We arrived at the lake in May with over 100kg of dry hemp and 50kg of SS4 boilies between us. It sounds a lot, but we knew they would eat it, and home was 110 miles away, so we didn't want to be going back for more. Normally we would have a walk around to find the fish, but as soon as we got near our baited area we could see it fizzing and popping away. We stood there for no more than ten minutes, and we must have seen twenty carp in the zone popping their heads up and rolling around. Next thing we knew we were running back to the van like little kids; we just knew a big hit of carp was on the cards!

With all four rods out on double hardened SS4 hookers, dipped in the Secret Squirrel juice it was time for some bait. Even though the fish were already present we wanted to get some bait out to hold them there if it

kicked off. If there is no bait there when they get spooked they might not return for a while, but if they know it's there they will be back, so I don't mind putting it in over their heads. Besides, I am sure the sound of a Spomb hitting the water was like a dinner bell for them. The more you fed the more you caught... simple.

20kg of hemp and 10kg of boilies later it was time to wait for the inevitable – lots and lots of carp, or so we hoped. The bites started for both of us about five hours after baiting up and just kept on coming and coming. We were topping up the swim every four hours or so, even through the night, with 2kg of boilie and 4kg of hemp. We were not worried about the carp getting preoccupied on the hemp because there were lots of big roach/rudd hybrids also gorging on the bait. They were even picking up the double 18mm hookers – roach on double 18mms!

Over the course of eight nights we managed to land 56 carp, a new record haul for the lake. With only four carp under 20lb and the majority being high 20s, we had definitely

done what we had set out to do. We had found out where the carp will be when they really want to feed, we had baited and baited heavily for months, then we had planned our first session on the bait at the right time of year when a big hit was on the cards. The amount of fish we caught and the average size of the fish was just too much for some of the regulars to cope with, and that's when the jealousy started to show.

The bailiff was getting phone calls saying we were breaking this rule and that rule, and halfway through our session one of the lads approached us saying the rules state you can only fish one swim for five days, and they wanted the swim – pure jealousy. It makes you wonder if they would still have wanted the swim if we were blanking? A bit of quick thinking from Micky, and he told the lad that we would move swims first thing in the morning. I looked at him in shock... what was he thinking? Was he giving in to a bit of pressure off these idiots? The lad thanked Micky then walked off fully expecting to get the swim the next day. "Why the hell did you give in so easily, Micky?" I asked with a puzzled look on my face. He looked at me smiling away and

said, in his cheeky Yorkshire accent, "We're just going to swap swims with each other, old lad. That will cap the green-eyed monsters! Wait till you see his face in the morning!" Well his face was a picture! We just swapped our beds and rods over, still on the spots, and not a single rule broken. It even made the bailiff crack his first ever smile too when he found out!

Even though we swapped swims half way through, we both carried on catching till the very last minute. We had rinsed it big time, but the only thing niggling us was that the 30s were still eluding us, so as soon as we were back home we were plotting our return for some of the bigger fish. We would catch them on the bait for sure – never had we seen fish react like they were doing. They were literally hanging themselves. The SS4 was something very special.

It wasn't until mid October that we got back for another proper session. The weather was spot-on again with southwesterly winds and low pressure forecast for the duration of the session after a month or so of high pressure and generally poor fishing conditions. We had a feeling that the fish would be up for a big feed again, not only because of the weather, but

also the time of year, so we went armed with enough bait to sink a battleship. If the fish were hungry they were definitely going to have a feast. We didn't even bother to walk round and look for the fish; we agreed on the journey there that we were going back on the baited spots because we knew that very early on in the session the fish would pass through our swim on their way north or south, and if we baited accordingly we would be able to stop them in their tracks. We just knew the fish would come there looking for food if they got hungry.

We had a few baiting missions in the weeks running up to the session. One of the things that got to us last time was not getting through to some of the 30s over the bait. We were sure they must have been there, but it seemed the smaller fish were picking up the baits first. We decided that one of the things to try would be to fish both our rods just on the edge, or just off the baited swim. This is something that has produced the bigger fish time and time again for us in the past, so that's what we did. We also swapped half the hemp for maize when baiting up, so there would be more bait left for the carp, as we thought the big silvers were smash-



Goose Shit Common, full of SS4.



Angry Annie.

ing the hemp. You could put ten kilos of hemp out and the swim would erupt with silvers then two hours later it would be dead until you put more in. I think they can destroy a big bed of hemp in a short space of time.

We baited heavily again from the off just like we did in May with 10kg of boilies but this time we had 5kg of hemp and 5kg of maize, hoping the extra boilies and the addition of maize might attract the bigger fish and hopefully a couple of 30s. With all of our rods on the hard hookers again, we cast them at least one metre off the bait hoping the bigger fish might be picking bits off from the edges. We didn't expect to haul as many fish as we did in May, but were expecting them to be bigger.

It was the following morning when the action started. First it was the silvers dancing on the top, then one after another the carp were poking their heads out about 20 yards at the back of the baited area, so it was just a matter of time now. Micky was away with the first fish, a lovely 24lb common, then an hour later I was off the mark with a 28lb common, both fish coming from one metre off the

bait. We kept on baiting three to four times a day over the next few days, and the fish kept coming. After three days' fishing we had already caught twelve carp between us, all 20s and mainly high 20s, so the chance of a 30 began to sound possible.

I was sat in my bivvy cooking my tea when I had a few bleeps on my right hand rod about three metres off the bait. I jumped up and crouched down for a few minutes next to the rod expecting a take, but nothing happened, so I turned to get back to the tea, and the rod was away, screaming off on a fairly tight clutch. I could tell it was a good one by the way it was pulling, so I took it steady and let it have line when it wanted it. After a few little runs close in, I soon had it in the net. I put the rod down and rolled the fish over in the net to get a better look. I had only gone and bagged the unknown 30lb mirror that Mark had caught in May when Micky and I were hauling! To say I was buzzing would be a massive understatement; it looked every bit as good as when Mark caught it, but it looked to have put on a lot of weight. I just wonder if it had been making the

most of our baiting campaign and getting some free food. It weighed in at 37lb 6oz meaning it had put on over 5lb since Mark's capture, so it must have been bang on the bait. So much for it not eating boilies! We returned the fish to its watery home and celebrated with a big mug of Yorkshire tea before baiting up again ready for more. I rang Mark and let him know I had managed to bag it on a boilie, and he was well happy for me. It's a shame all carp anglers can't just be happy for one another when they bag a target. Cheers, Mark... Top lad!

After a good tea, we sat and watched the water for a few hours before getting into bed expecting a hectic night. All was quiet until 5am when Micky came and woke me up saying he had a 37lb mirror in the sling. At first I thought he was winding me up, so I politely told him where to go then rolled back over to bed. Next thing I know he is shaking my tent telling me to get the hell out of bed! I got up accusing him of being a liar, but when we got to his swim and lifted the sling out I started to believe him. The sling was bulging under the

Stoneacres

By Leigh Sinnott

I heard a couple of decent fish turn over close in on my first night back from Hungary. Being too knackered to get the rods out after the 1100-mile trip to Linch, I hit the sack, only to be awoken again, twice, by fish in my margin! I took note of the line they were on, zipped up and hit the sack for some much needed shuteye! The following morning, and slightly recharged, I found an area where I'd heard a couple the night before. To my horror the visibility had gone, so it was a matter of getting the prodding sticks and blocks out, finding the area, and working out the detail of this certain feature. After 30 minutes or so I had a detailed image

of the feature in my mind and put a cheeky balanced Krill bottom bait on the edge of my near side slope!

Around 2pm the following day that near rod was away with a somewhat shy bite and only a slight lift of the bobbin! I picked up and wound into what felt like yet another bionic "red eyed monster".

As I slipped the waders on in the margins I began to realise that this was no "red 'un" so reached for my net and made my way, waist deep, to the marginal shelf. As I approached the shelf I could just about make out, through the murk, the shape of a decent sized Stoneys carp, at which point a rather tame battle came to a close as she came to the surface, took

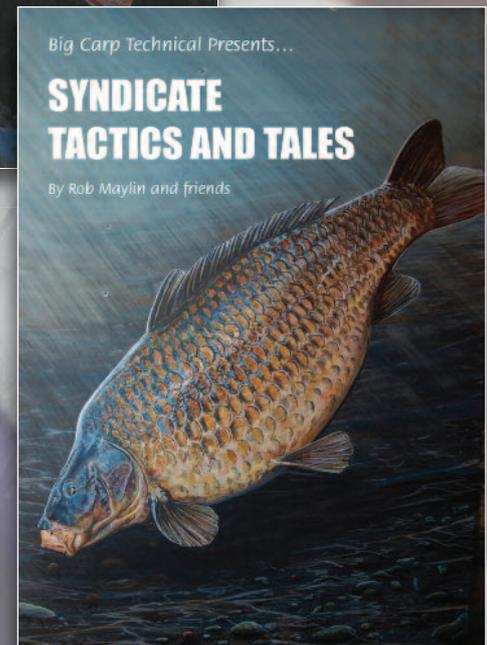
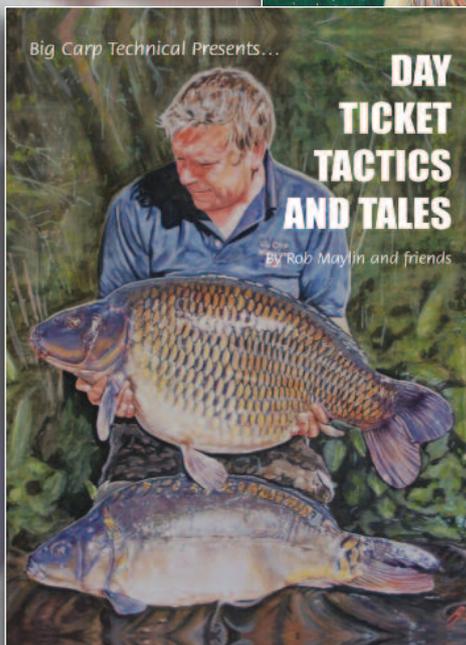
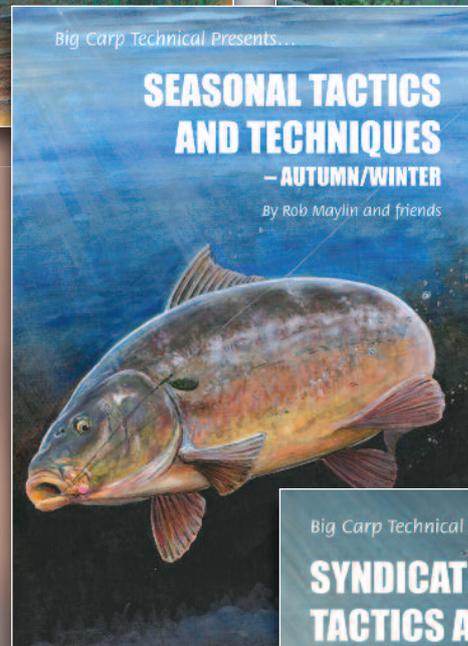
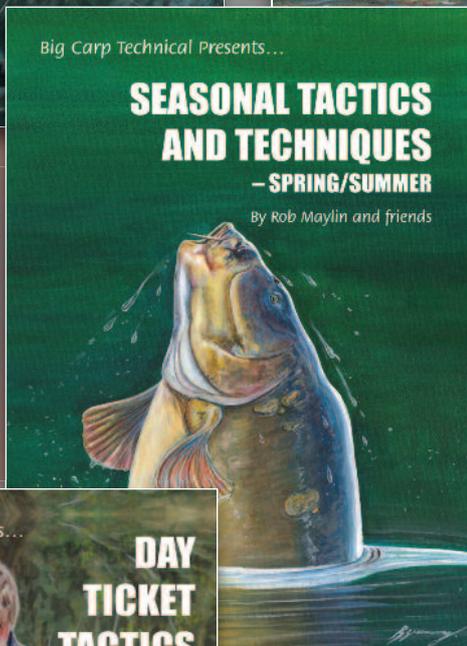
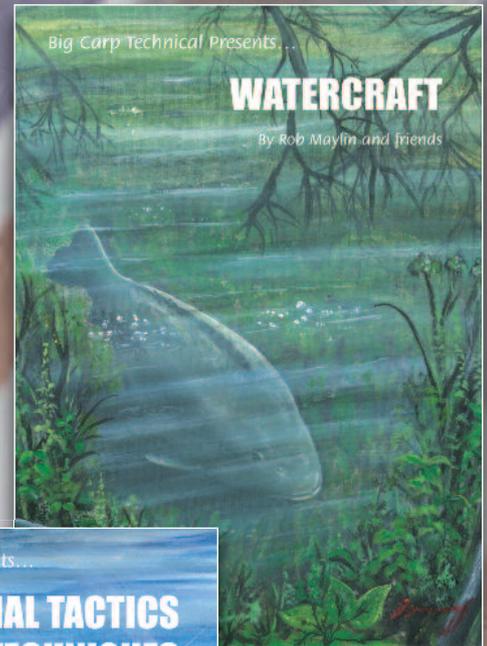
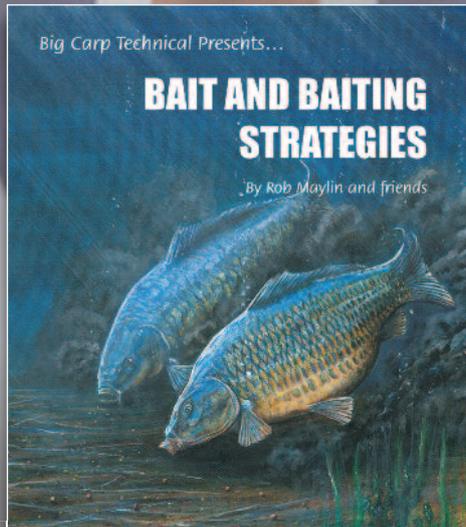
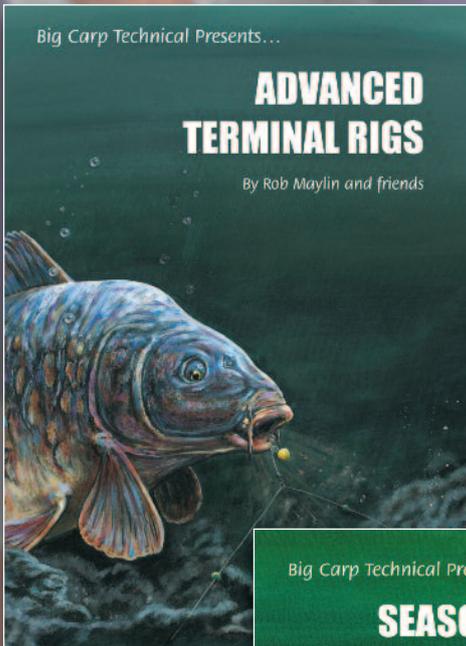
a huge gulp of oxygen rich air and slid over the cord! My first Stoneys carp of 2015 was now safely in the folds of my net!

On the initial weighing she went 42lb and ounces! Although I knew the sling wasn't zeroed, I also knew it weighed around 2lb! This was going to be close... close to a new PB and potentially a new Stoneys lake record common! From that moment on, I lost my tongue as I realised the significance of what lay before me in all her glory! After zeroing and weighing on two sets of scales, the lads and I settled on 39lb 2oz of Stoneys common, a moment I will cherish forever! A new PB common to open my 2015 account on the awesome Stoneacres! ■



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Exclusive Diary of the Urban Myth

Rob Maylin talks with Terry Dempsey – May 2015

Rob: Well here we are. I've met up with the Urban Myth again, none other than Terry Dempsey, for a cup of coffee and a chat about how his season is progressing. It has been a couple of months since I met up with him. You will remember his last diary piece when he was struggling to get out and business was picking up; it was the start of the spring, and I am afraid to say it got a lot worse for him, poor old boy. Well, he is making lots of money, so that doesn't matter. It is very difficult; you might think we have the best jobs in the world, but we are carp anglers at heart and having your own business in this game makes it very difficult to find the time to go out fishing. But Terry's business has gone from strength to strength. I was only in Yateley Angling Centre yesterday and

Ruth was saying to me, "You can't keep the stuff on the shelves – everyone is catching on it!" Fair play to him; I am really pleased for him. Last time I spoke to you, Terry hadn't done much fishing, but I am pleased to say he has managed a few trips and caught some nice ones as well. Without further ado, I am going to pass you on to Terry who is going to tell you what he has been up to in his fishing and about some notable captures on his bait.

Terry: Good to see you, Rob. It only seems like yesterday when we were sitting here having a coffee, although it was a lot colder; it's warmed up a bit now. My fishing over the last couple of months has been very sporadic. Even though I keep getting this idea about going out for a few days, it is getting harder to come by. The bait is going mad; I am getting orders left, right and centre. My phone is like a

hot wire. We have six or seven guys who are hammer and tong making the bait, getting it ready and all bagged, so I am full-on. But as always I manage to get out somehow, and as I tell the missus nowadays, I am not going fishing, I am going marketing. It seems to work quite well for me; she lets me out of the door, whereas before she wouldn't speak to me for days when I got back. Now she is fine about it because she knows it is a part of what I am doing.

My first trip of the year was around the sort of time that I saw you, probably early March. I did two nights on my syndicate, and nothing had been out for about four months. I put lots of bait out, as I normally do, which is probably a bit of a silly move really, as it was a bit early. I fished two different swims but didn't get a fish and didn't see a bubble. It was totally dead. That was right at the start of March. I went



This massive wood carving linear fought like a demon.



This 42lb scaly monster has been on the missing list for the past five years.

back again at the start of April. I did two nights, and I don't know if you remember, but we had really strong winds. I saw these winds coming, and there was a good bit of low pressure. It did look good for fishing, so I grabbed my gear, flew down there, and I had two nights on my hands. With the wind, straight away I realised what I'd like to do. I love using big baits, and the spot that I normally fish from the swim that I chose is about 100 yards out, so it is not easy to get bait out there. I usually use a spod to get my boilies out there, but with the gale force wind blowing over my shoulder I went and bought myself a big Korda throwing stick, a 25mm, and I had a lot of 22mm knocked up in a bag that I always keep handy for when I can stick them out there, when I can get this wind on my back.

I went down there with 5kg of 22mm, all big baits – I love using big baits. The way I see it, what a lot of people don't talk about in fishing is balance of tackle. In float fishing, match fishing, and in all types of fishing, it is so important to balance out your tackle and your bait. I mean, you wouldn't want to put a single maggot on the end of a boat rod and some

50lb line, would you? It just doesn't balance. What I love about big baits is that it balances out the crude methods that we are using. I am using 18lb line all through to a 25lb hooklink, and I am using the big size four hook. If you hook one of those big fish they go like torpedoes, so you have to have the tackle, and if you use big baits it balances it out, and it is something that I love doing.

Anyway, with this wind blowing off my shoulder, I was getting three of these 22mm on a 25mm stick and getting them out well over 100 yards. They were all landing in a beautiful pile. I always feel as if I always over-bait; once I start baiting, I can't stop. It is like something that is programmed into me. I put nearly all the bag out, and in the end I thought I can't put any more out, so I walked all the way to the clubhouse with the bag of bait and locked it in the clubhouse so I couldn't put any more out. I knew that I was going to over-bait like before. With all that bait out there, I felt really confident, but woke up the next morning and it was the same old story – nothing had happened. The bobbin was still in the same place, but I was greeted with the typical sign of 50 tufties diving over me. I thought to

myself, any minute now one of the rods is going to go on one of those tufties.

I sat there for an hour and nothing happened, but then I looked up, and the tufties were gone. I thought, that's a bit strange, because I knew all that bait was out there and they were enjoying it. Anyway, the left hand rod went; the bobbin hit the top, it screamed off, and I was in. My heart was racing because there are big fish in this lake, and you just don't know what you're going to hook – it could be a 20lb, 30lb, 40lb or even 50lb. I was shaking; I got the fish in, and it was the first fish out of the lake all year for about four and a half months, a 31lb common, and an absolute beauty it was. I did a few photos, got him back in the water, and about an hour later, the right hand rod went. I pulled into that, and it took me down the side of a bar and the hook pulled. I was over the moon though; first fish out of the lake and my first fish for the year, so you can imagine I was buzzing.

I did another night... I went to get the rest of my bait out from the clubhouse, stuck all that out on the tail end of the wind and didn't get another fish. For the next three weeks, I was absolutely gagging to go



Urban bait team member and old school carper Bob Copeland had the catch of a lifetime last month using the deadly Nutcracker! This mega mid-40 common was part of the amazing catch on the going bait!



Urbanist Andy Lyon and partner with one of the fish that couldn't resist the deadly Nutcracker, which put them through to the BCAC semi finals at Brasenose 2 in July!



Urbanist Jaye has been having a few over the past few months, but he asked us to keep it quiet so he could reap the rewards from his syndicate lake... that was until now! Here he is with a stonking upper 30 mirror that just couldn't resist the Nutcracker!



Urbanist Jamie Potter is having a few from his Norfolk syndicate including this stunning big common that just couldn't resist the Nutcracker!



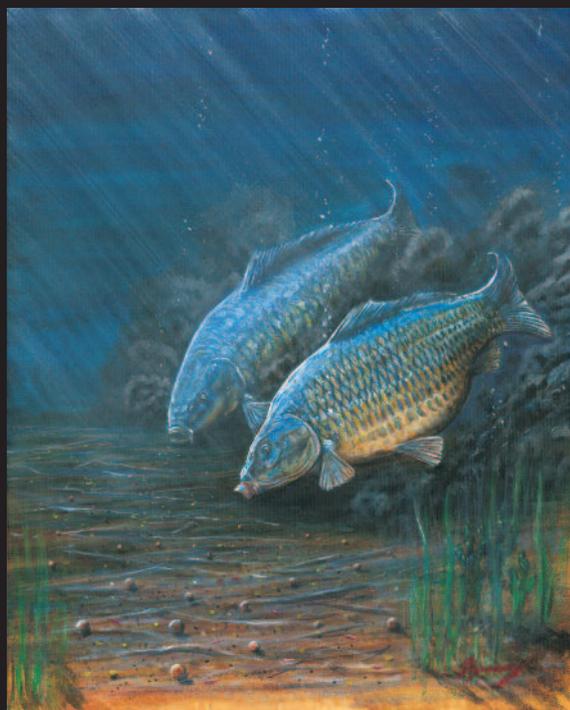
Longtime angler Nick Onslow has managed to catch all his target fish in just one month using the Red Spicy Fish!



Urban Baits consultant Peter Hudd carries on his run of fish with this old warrior. The in-form angler used a pink Nutcracker pop-up, fished on a pop-down rig, over a large scattering of bait!

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fishing. I kept hearing stories about people down at my syndicate; they were there for a few days, and I was so jealous. I heard about a few fish coming out; there had been a couple, two or three good fish, so I was buzzing to get out. Last week was my first chance to get down there in three weeks, and I took it. The thing was, my van at the moment is driving boilies all over the south of England, so there was no way I could take it, so I got one of the lads who was helping me out to drop me down there in the morning.

I put all my tackle in the van, piled it all up, and I was so excited. It is a 70/80 mile drive from my house. When I got there, we unloaded everything, and the fellow who gave me the lift left, leaving me in paradise. It was like the old days Rob, when I used to get dropped at the lake when I was 16 years old. When I looked I'd bloody forgotten my bait! I was sick! I had a big bag of 6 or 7kg of 22mm, and I forgot them. I was nearly crying, and to make it worse I forgot my cooker. So I was down here for three days with no bait and no cooker, so I knew it was going to be another week of dry porridge.

Rob : (giggling) It sounds like the old days.

Terry : Yes, just like the old days... nothing really changes, does it? So there I was contemplating my dry porridge and lake water like the old days. One of the things I was always good at was going around asking for things from people, and within a couple of hours, I had two cookers in my bivvy. But the thing is I didn't want to ask for their bait, because I don't want to use their crap anyway. I decided to fish single hookbaits, not that I had another option. I got all three rods out there on the spots where I had the 31lb'er. I was fishing one in the deep gully, one on the ledge and one on the shallows. It is like a plateau that goes down into a deep gully, so I had all the angles covered. The amount of boilies I had thrown on this spot over the last couple of years is a joke, so I was thinking they had seen enough bait out there; it's not as if they haven't seen any bait.

Twenty-four hours passed with absolutely nothing... nothing at all. I didn't get a bleep. One thing that I have learned over the years is that carp are cagey old creatures. On a



Urban Consultant Peter Hudd with a Stonker of a fish aptly named the "Pretty One" that couldn't resist a Pink Nutcracker pop-up over a bed of Nutcracker!

few of the lakes that I fished the longer your bait is in the water the better it is. If your bait has only been out for a couple of hours there is less chance of it being picked up than if it has been out there for two days. It is hard to sit on your hands because you have to be so confident with what you are doing, but I had caught fish on all of three of the spots that I had fished in the past. I had no reason to change them, so I just left them. I kept having ideas to reel in and to change it, but I was thinking to myself, what is the point? I am only going to cast it to the same spot. I am not tangled, and this time it might tangle, so I left them.

Eventually, it worked... The following morning I saw a big head come up right over my rods, right in the spots. I thought, right they are back; they are not spooked. About 7.30am, the left hand rod was away. It was a powerful fight, and it tried to take me round the island, then round the margins. I netted it, a cracking mirror of 31½lbs. I was over the moon. It was really dark with a big old tail, and it looked absolutely beautiful. I got it back in the water, and I was sitting there on cloud nine, thinking, two trips, two 30s. Little did I know, about one hour later, the middle rod that had been out there for two days would rattle off, and this fish did warm me up. It was dragging me everywhere; I was playing it for about twenty minutes, and when I got it close, I could see loads of big scales on it. It looked absolutely awesome

this fish in the water, and I had an idea that it was a fish that doesn't get caught very often, probably one of the big prizes in the lake.

Eventually I netted it, and when I looked it wasn't that fish; it was another fish that looks very similar that hadn't been out for about five years. It was an absolute beauty of 42½lbs, and it looked like it hadn't had a hook in it. I have seen two or three pictures of it in the past, but that was over the last ten years, so it was a top result. Later on in the afternoon, the right hand rod that had been out there for two days roared off in the shallow water, and I had a beautiful 29lb 12oz common, so now I was flying! I phoned the missus and told her I had to do another night, as Rob is coming down tomorrow to do an article. I said, "He is phoning me and driving me mad. He said he is going to pull the plug on me if I don't do it..." So I got another night, didn't I?

I was on my third night now, and I couldn't believe my luck. I was thinking in the morning I am going to spank them. I didn't spank them, but I did get another fish. It was a beautiful 33lb common just after first light. So four fish on the bank in three nights and all good fish – what a session! Straight from there I came back to all the pandemonium of my phone going mad and people driving me crazy, but it was a good trip, Rob, and I really enjoyed it. Hopefully, I will get back down there soon for some more.

Rob: I am sure you will, mate. Back



Urbanist Lee Henderson with an absolute 'cheese' that couldn't resist the Tuna and Garlic!



Ross Mark Scally with a stonking common that couldn't resist a Tuna and Garlic pop up!



Darren Constable with a Sundridge Syndicate common named Charlie's Common, 6lb up in weight since January that couldn't resist the Nutcracker!



Urbanist Peter Hudd, who also just so happens to work here at Urban Baits, is pictured here with a beast of a common at 39lb-plus that broke his PB and broke the lake record in the process! Peter used the deadly Nutcracker and added a 33lb and 22lb for good measure.



Check this bad boy out at 37lb 8oz for Urbanist Ryan Hindley that couldn't resist the Nutcracker!



Urbanist Rick managed a brace of 30lb-plus mirrors recently including this 35lb 4oz and a 33lb 2oz on the deadly Nutcracker. Awesome!

to reality... it's bloody horrible going back to work. I am just gobsmacked sitting here listening to your story – four fish in that session with the smallest one a 29lbs 12oz common! Terry is going to sort us out some photos of the captures, including the front cover shot. I can't thank him enough, and while I am on about thanking, I have to thank him for running those subscription deals with us over the last six months. It really has taken off in Big Carp. I have never had a deal like it in the mag; it has been brilliant. It is coming to an end at the end of May, but not for good though. We are just going to let Tel have a little breather and catch up with all his orders, as he is really busy at the moment. Then we are going to come back in a month or two with a different Urban Bait subscription deal. We have done the Nutcracker one, but we will come back with a new one in a couple of months.

For those of you who have not taken advantage of this, and you have to be crazy not to, it gives you a chance to try the bait without any financial outlay whatsoever. The subscription for the magazine is £60, which is £5 for a magazine for 12 issues, only paying face value for the magazine, and you'd be getting £100 worth of bait free, and not only the bottom baits, but also an array of pop-ups as well. This gives you the option of trying the bait on a few sessions before ordering more. I know from some people I have spoken to on the

phone that they have been ordering 20, 30 and even 40kgs of this Nutcracker bait, as it certainly looks to be the most successful bait in the UK this year. So with success in mind, who else has been catching on the bait, Tel?

Terry : It's really hard to list everybody, because we get so many pictures come in every single day, but obviously some of them can be singled out. Colin Woolfall is our big fish expert, and he's been over to France where he had a big string of fish well into the 70s. There is another lad who has just gone over to Dinton. He just had a load of fish out – the Triple Row Linear and a couple of other big'uns. I know Jim Shelley has still been catching, and he took a lad out on a tuition session who had a 40 on the Nutcracker last week. He said that is the second 40 out on a tuition session on the Nutcracker. I mean, that is incredible isn't it? To be honest everyone has been catching really well. I know Peter Rudd has just come back from Fishabil, and he just had an amazing catch. He just said that he couldn't keep his rods in the water all week. The more bait he piled it the more the rods were flying off. It is just constant the amount of fish that are coming in every day to us. It is really hard for us to keep up with it. The Sundridge syndicate in Sussex – lots of big fish have been coming out of there this year. Everyone over there is using the Nutcracker, and it has really been emptying it. Some of the fish in

there are absolute beauties, so that is great to see. It is really hard to single anyone out at the moment because there are hundreds of people breaking their PBs on the Nutcracker every day.

Rob: It's great how it attracts the bigger fish as well, with a lot of personal bests coming to it. As Terry says, keep the photos going to him, though. We've got Leon Bartropp on the case now, sorting the photos out and getting them all over to Big Carp, so in our catch reports there will be loads of photos coming up in this month's mag and next month's mag. Leon has been doing a great job there.

Terry: What I would like to say as well, is that at the moment it isn't just the Nutcracker that is catching – the Red Spicy Fish is absolutely tearing some lakes apart at the moment, and it is outfishing the Nutcracker on certain lakes. It has really taken off this year. Last year we would sell 10kgs of Nutcracker to 1kg of the Red Spicy Fish, but now the Red Spicy Fish is holding its own and catching a lot of fish out of hard lakes. What I have always said is mix the two together – fish them alongside each other and see which one takes off, then you know you are on the going bait.

Rob : You heard it there from the man himself – get on the going bait. Thanks ever so much Tel. We will meet up again next month, and it goes without saying you would have had some more big'uns. Until then, thanks a lot, mate. ■



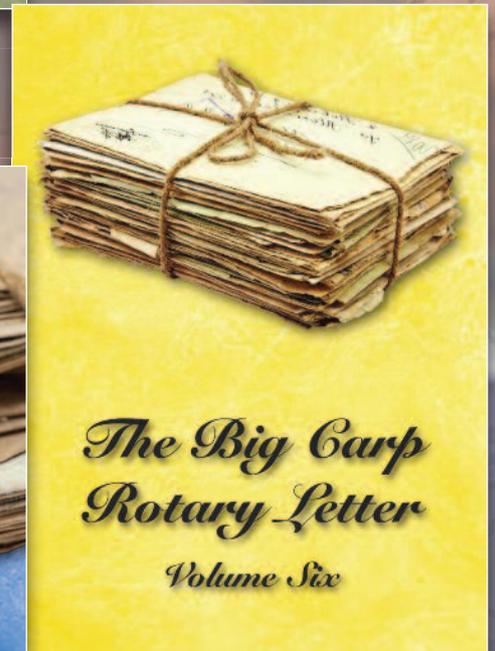
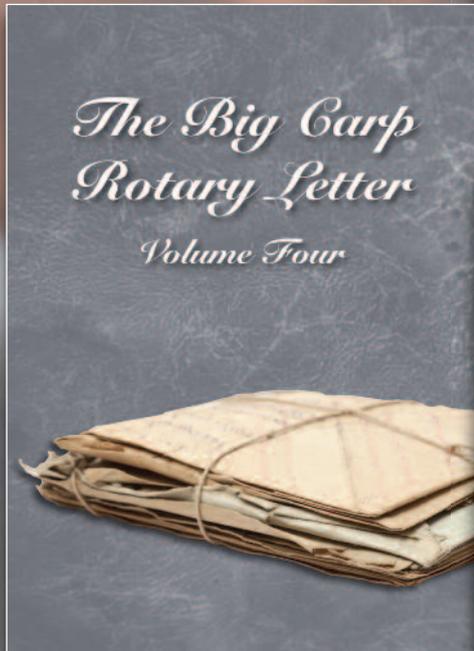
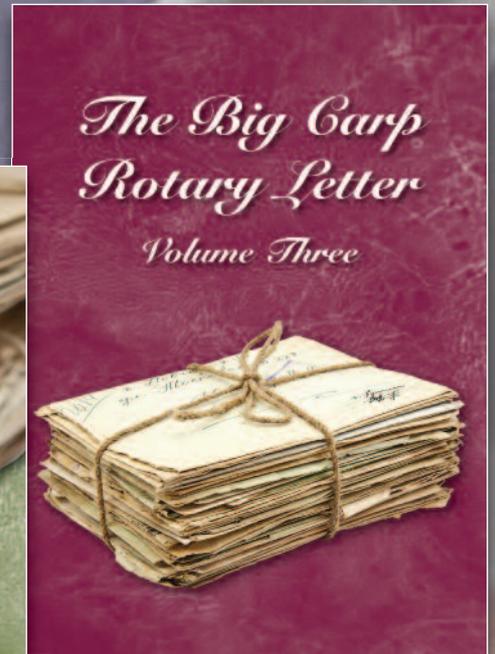
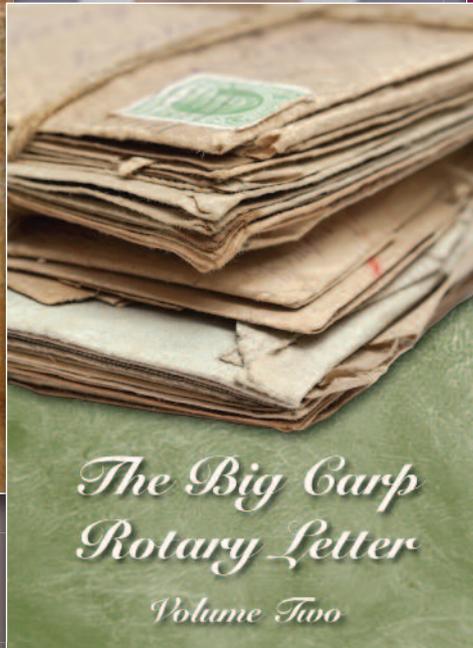
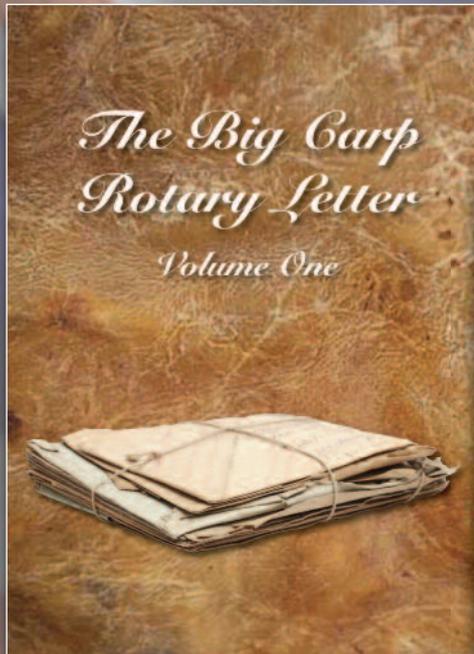
It's the awesome catching machine Jim Shelley with a 33lb mirror from the Bayeswater syndicate! Snowman darkside rig, 15mm Nutcracker barrel with a white 12mm Nutcracker pop proving the downfall of yet another stunner for Jim! Jim cast to showing fish and spread 100 15mm Nutcracker boilies in the zone, and 90 mins later it was in the net!



A stonker for Adam Francis from the 2/3 reservoirs that couldn't resist the Nutcracker!

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St Ives Meadows and Fjords

By Liam Duncan

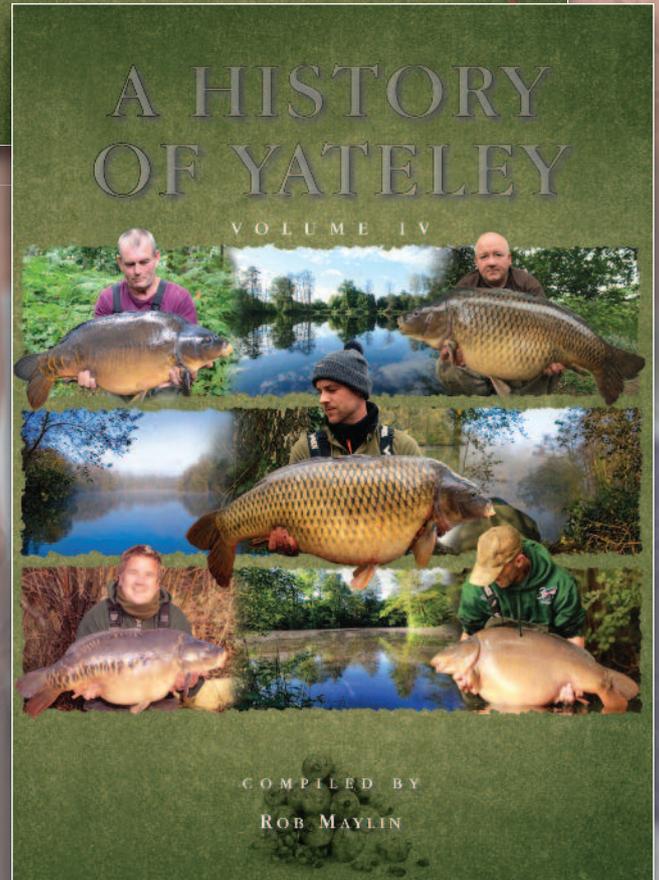
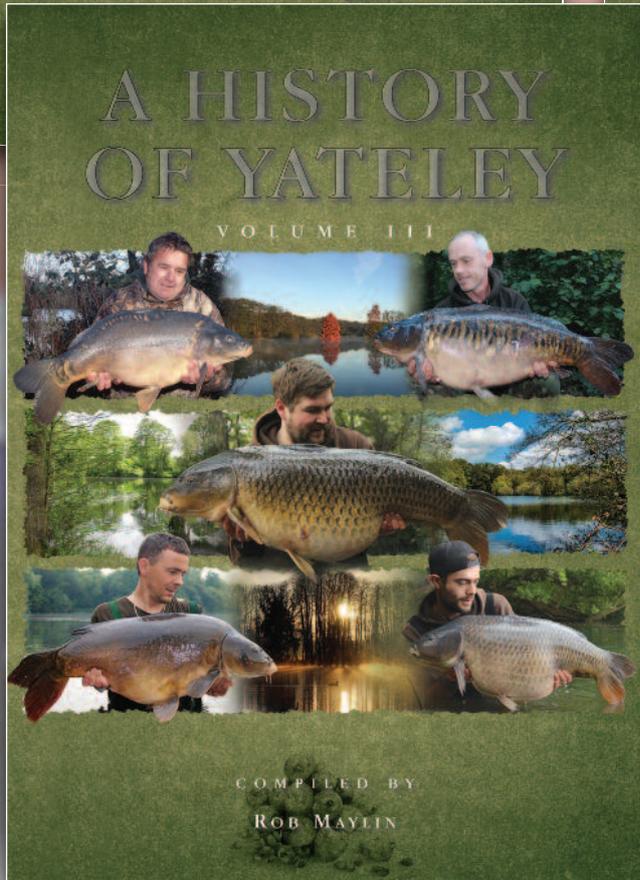
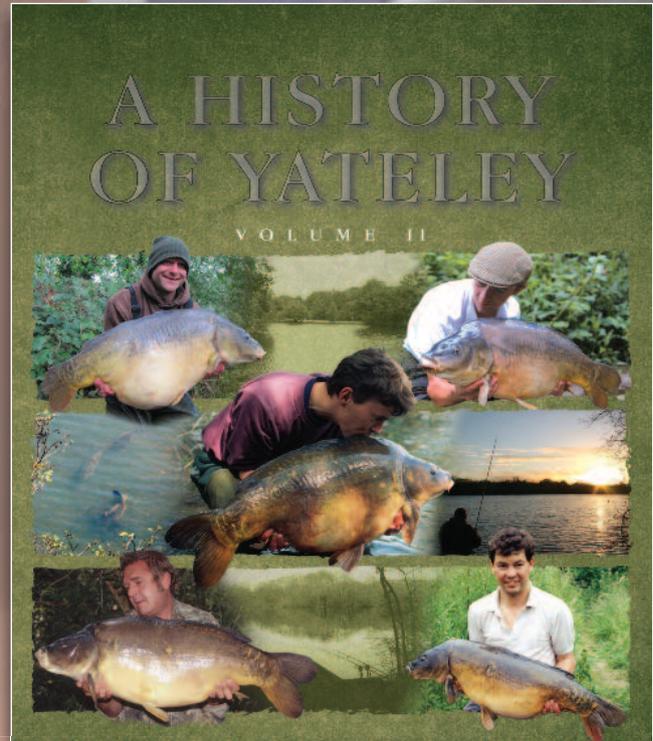
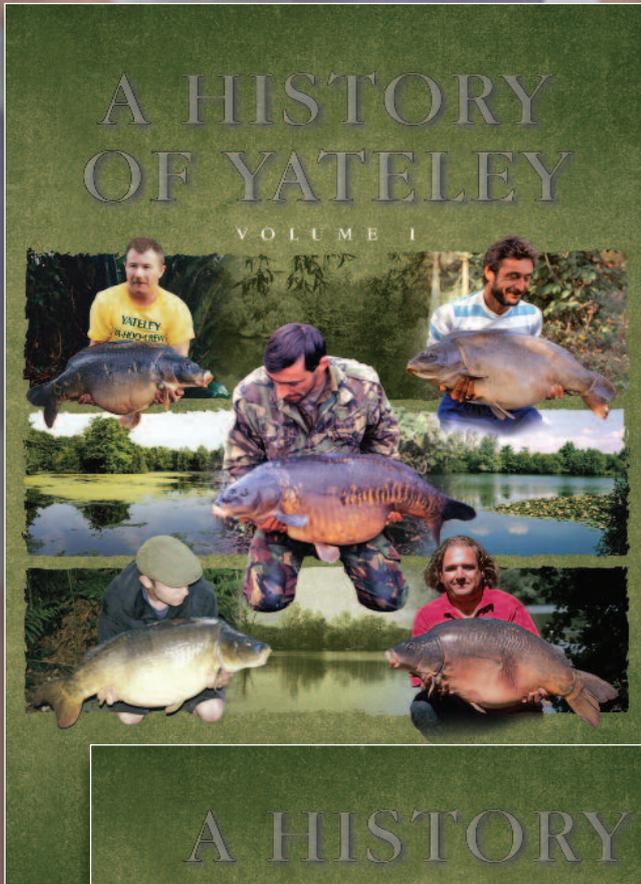
It was my 35th night on the lake and I had been baiting and fishing a flooded spit of land for a couple of weekends with Krill freezer baits. I even drove the 180-mile round trip down to Cambridge midweek on a couple of occasions to prebait the spot. The totally wild nature and huge size of the lake make it very hard fishing, and the area that I wanted to fish meant that I had to broolly up on a flooded spit with water under my bedchair. Not comfy!

It all came good after six nights in the peg (two different three-night sessions) when my 14th bite from the spot happened to be the Round Brown, my target fish at 43lb 15oz. Absolutely blown away. I'd also like to add that the 31lb 12oz mirror was uncaught for over 2½ years and is one of the really old originals in the lake.



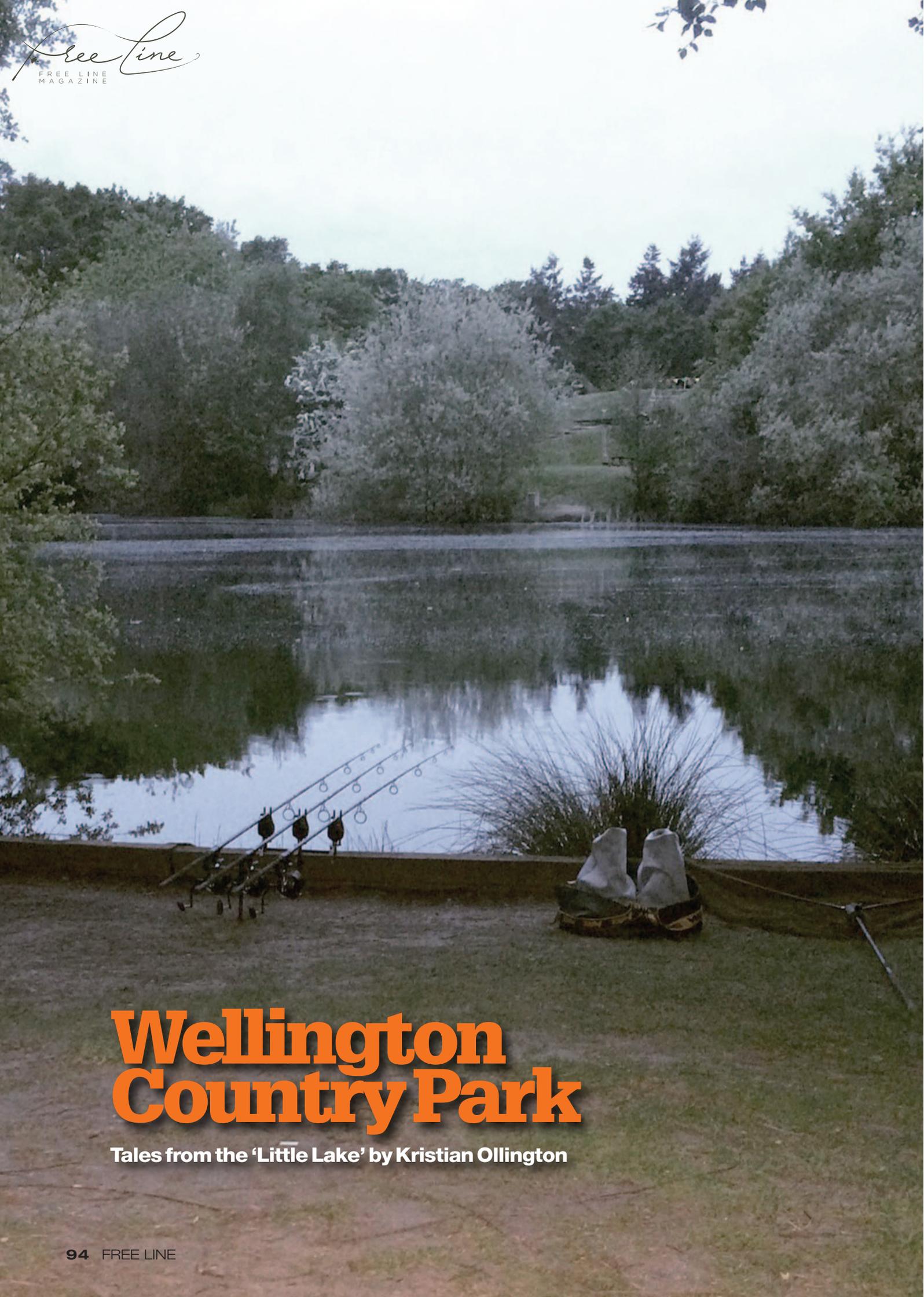
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Wellington Country Park

Tales from the 'Little Lake' by Kristian Ollington

This is a totally new experience for me – writing an article about my recent fishing adventures. When I say adventures, fishing this particular lake they really are because you don't know what could be on the end of your line if you're lucky enough to get a bite. I am not for one second saying this lake is rock hard, but it certainly has its moments, leaving you scratching your head time and time again as to why you haven't had a bite, but when you get it right the rewards are enormous. I really feel that the lake is in its golden era; the fish in this lake have always been large, but in the last few seasons they have really kicked on again, and we really are privileged to fish for such enormous and beautiful carp.

It's mid May, and I've been doing two nights a week without fail for the last five weeks, bearing in mind I work five days a week and have a beautiful one-year-old daughter at home. I think myself lucky to have such an understanding partner. My

spring fishing hadn't really got started and ten nights without as much as a bleep it was really getting to me. I just couldn't work out why I wasn't catching. The lake itself was by no means fishing well. It was doing fish here and there, but not to the extent that I think everyone had been expecting, considering the time of year. This is with the exception of one particular angler, Ronnie, who had been rewriting the book and really smashing the place to bits.

It was late Thursday evening, and after sitting in hours of traffic on the M25, I was driving through the big green gates. I loaded the gear on the barrow with just enough time for a quick look round before it got dark. The lake wasn't particularly busy with eight cars in the car park. After doing a lap of the lake and having a very quick chat with a few of the members, I decided to drop into an area called Animal Farm. It's an area that does its fair share of bites, and with a strong breeze hacking down that way it looked as good as anywhere. I'd never fished this swim

before and wasn't entirely sure where to place the hookbaits. It has a very attractive snaggy tree line down the left side with the main body of the lake out to the right. I decided on fishing very little bait in an attempt to keep disturbance down to a minimum, flicking four-bait stringers out to three chosen areas.

The night passed without disturbance, and to be honest I wasn't surprised I hadn't seen or heard a thing. I received a text late morning that Clint had a fish that night, and then another at 2am. I literally couldn't have been any further away from the fish. I packed my gear down in record time and got round to an area of the lake called the Little Lake, a small bay of around three acres, which offered snags, lily pads and sets of rushes. It's a lovely place to fish; the only downside with it being a public park, so it sees a lot of human traffic, and the weekends they can really test your resolve.

Three rods were placed into likely looking areas in the bay and the traps were set. At 2am the right hand rod



38lb common.



Chestnut common at 52lb.

pulled up tight. I was in, and after a dogged little fight the fish was in the net! "Thank f*** for that!" I said, as I really needed a fish! On the scales he went 26lb – nothing to write home about, but very very welcome all the same. The rod went back on the spot and was topped up with just a handful of baits. At 6.30am the same rod was away again. This fish felt instantly better, and after some coaxing away from bushes and branches she was in the net. I quickly slipped the fish in the retainer and got the rod back out on the spot. The fish was 38lb, and was a gorgeous dark common. As I was returning her, the same rod wrenched round again – I couldn't believe it. 11 nights for no fish, and then three bites in matter of hours! That just about sums this place up!

Anyway, after another dogged fight I slipped the net under another decent looking fish. Upon opening the net it was clear it was one of the lake's ghosties at 35lb. I was over the moon to be off the mark for the spring with three fish in a session. I left that

morning feeling that I had turned a corner, and a plan was hatched for my next visit.

The week at work seemed the longest ever, as all I could think about was about getting back to the lake and hoping that I could get back in this area. Friday afternoon arrived, and once again I was sitting on the M25 for another two hours. On pulling into the car park there were only a few cars; I felt confident that the area would be free, so the barrow was carried round in record time. As I came round the corner and looked down the path I could see it was free. What a relief!

After having a little nose around the snags and lily pads it was clear a few fish were still in there. The rods were still clipped up from last week, so with a minimum of fuss they were sent out to the desired spots. A handful of bait went over each, and the traps were set. I stayed up till the early hours in anticipation but it didn't happen.

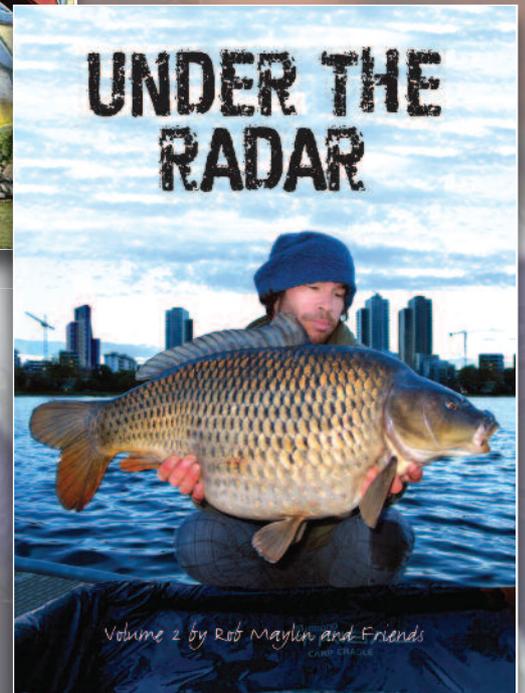
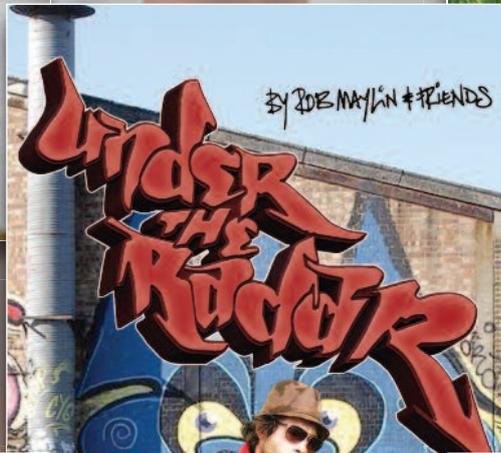
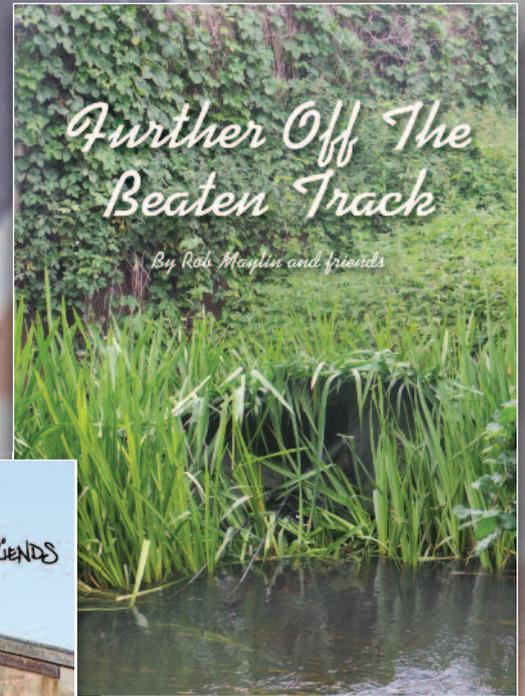
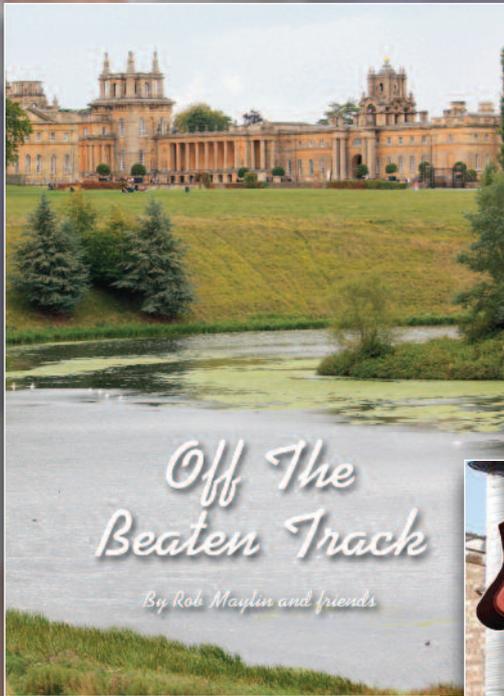
Waking up around seven-ish, I couldn't believe I hadn't had a bite.

The day passed without any disturbance, so I decided to have another look around. The rushes spot around 60 yards up to my right where I had the three fish from the previous week looked devoid of fish, but on reaching the pads, which is down to my left, I could just see a few telltale signs that carp were in the area. I climbed a tree around the back of the pads and looked down, and to my amazement there were two 'proper ones' just sitting there as happy as Larry, and when I say proper ones for this lake, that is 45lb at least, like breeze blocks across the back. I skipped back to the swim full of confidence. Once again I topped up the spots again with just a few baits and some halved baits, and the traps were set.

That night was different to the previous – the area was alive with carp rolling and crashing, and then at 2am the middle rod pulled up tight, and I was in. At first I was convinced it was a small one – constant head shaking and not really putting up much of a fight until it got under the rod tip – but then all hell broke loose. It must

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have gone on ten runs of up to 30/40 yards trying to seek sanctuary anywhere it could. 30 minutes passed, and I still didn't feel in control. The fish just didn't want to know, and then finally, after what seemed like hours, the long runs got shorter and shorter, and then it broke the surface. The moonlight offered me some clue that it was a common of some sort, but I was convinced it was a large ghostie. The fish went on one last run, and on turning it this time she knew the game was up. It was clearly a good fish as it slid over the net cord, but I had no idea just how big.

I passed the rod to my dad who was with me, and my friend Jamie who was fishing next door. I climbed back onto the bank, popped on the head torch and opened the net to see my prize. There was a moment's silence as we all looked in amazement at the size of the fish lying there, and I said, "That's a lump!" I made a quick phone call to a good friend, Liam, who was fishing just behind me to come and help with photos and

weighing as we got her on the mat. There was some deliberation as to which one it was, and this went on for a few days. It turned out to be the Chestnut Common in my net, one of the real treasures and rare ones of the lake.

Scales and cameras at the ready, we hoisted her up, and the scales swung round and settled on a massive 52lb exactly. To be honest I wouldn't have cared what it weighed; to catch such a stunning carp was a real honour, but at over 50lb I was blown away. Photos were taken, hands were shaken, and after giving her plenty of time to revive herself she swam off safe and sound.

The morning came round, and with the phone calls and texts of congratulations coming through it was time to wind in and head home. As I drove home all I could think about was when I could get back to try and catch some more. My confidence had gone from zero to through the roof in a matter of a few weeks. Carp fishing is such a fickle game.

So once again the trip was planned for the following weekend, as like every other week it seemed to drag forever until that Friday feeling comes and the car is packed ready for fishing. On arriving this time it seemed very strange.

There was one car in the car park on bank holiday weekend! I couldn't believe it, so this time at a very leisurely pace, the barrow was pushed round to the swim. Doing a quick lap of the bay, it didn't look right, and I didn't see a thing. I left the gear and went and had a look around the main body of the water. An area of Bramble Bay had been doing a fair few bites in recent weeks, and it looked really good when I stood in there, so I got the gear round and plotted up for the night.

To be honest as the evening went on, I knew I had made the wrong decision. The fish that I saw on arrival just seemed to vanish, and the night passed without seeing or hearing a thing. I was convinced they had gone but where to was the question? I



Clean Fish, 53lb 12oz.

wound the rods in, and the first place I looked was the Little Lake where I had fished the previous two weeks. As soon as I walked round to the rushes it was obvious carp were present. The rush stems were being pushed around, there was fizzing, and they were back in there in numbers. I nipped back, got the gear and got plotted up for the night.

The rods were clipped up to the usual spots, and once again just a few boilies were dispatched to the chosen areas. At 10pm the pads erupted, and it was clear a very large carp was in the bay. The ripples seemed to hit my bank like small waves, and I was super confident that a bite was imminent. At 2am on the dot, just like the previous weeks, the middle rod was away. As the fish hooked itself, the water just erupted, and it took off on a long run down to my right. I struggled to get my waders on and keep the fish under control at the same time. I'd waded out about ten yards, just to the top of a small shelf before it dropped off slightly to make landing the fish

easier.

As the fish kited right it started to come back towards me, hugging the tree line. As I reeled frantically to keep up with the fish, I flicked my head torch on to try and see the line, as the fish was making a beeline straight for me. As I followed the line down it was 2ft right in front of me, and then this enormous carp came in to view; I could see it as clear as day. I could see my snowman hook bait hanging from its mouth.

It didn't even spook as it swam past me; it just carried on going as if nothing was wrong, and the fight continued for another 35 minutes. It really was the most epic battle I've ever had from a carp – relentless surging runs, and the power it possessed was immense! Every time I gained yards it would take double back until finally the runs turned into circles, and then I knew she was close to being done.

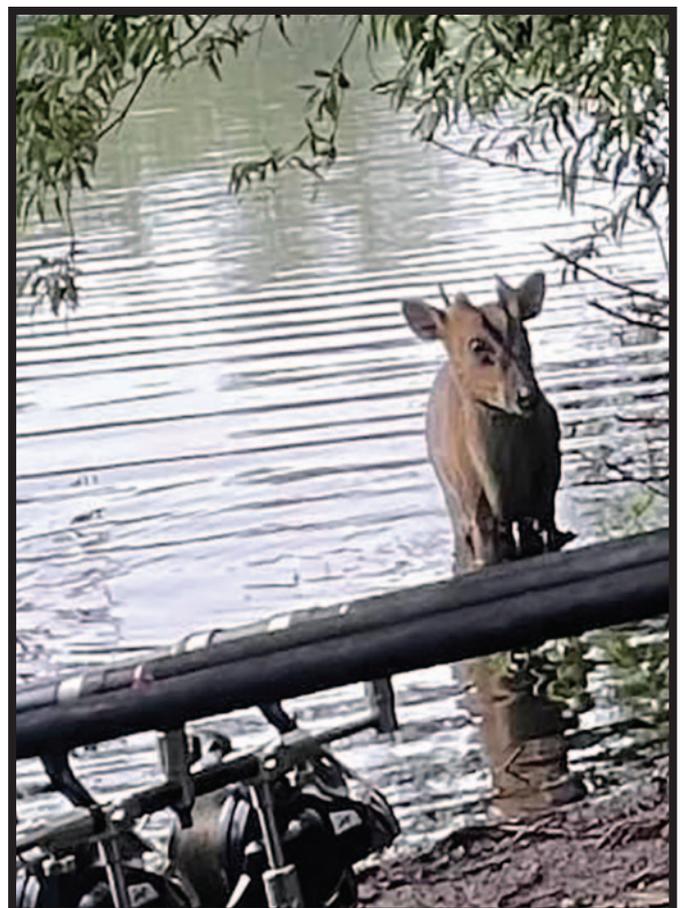
Finally she broke the surface, took a gulp of air, and I made sure she was in the bottom of the net. The relief to get her in the net was huge after playing

a fish for that long, and knowing what you are attached to from the start is something I've never experienced before – not something I'd recommend if you have bad nerves! I gave Stotty a shout to come and give me a hand. As we opened the net up on the mat, it was obvious it was another 50 – it was huge! We lifted her onto the scales, and after some arm shaking we settled on 53lb 12oz. I couldn't believe it – two 50s in two weeks from the Little Lake. We took some snaps and slipped her back. Fish of that size don't come around very often, and I feel honoured to have caught such creatures. I did have another low 20 that morning to top it all off but packed up mid morning a very happy man.

I'd like to add that fishing this syndicate is a real privilege. We have a group of anglers that show nothing but happiness for other people's success. It really is a pleasure to fish, and if you ever get the chance to get a ticket, grab it with both hands!

Until next time, be lucky... ■

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