

# JULY ISSUES OF **BIG CARP** AND **FREELINE** MAGAZINES FREE HERE

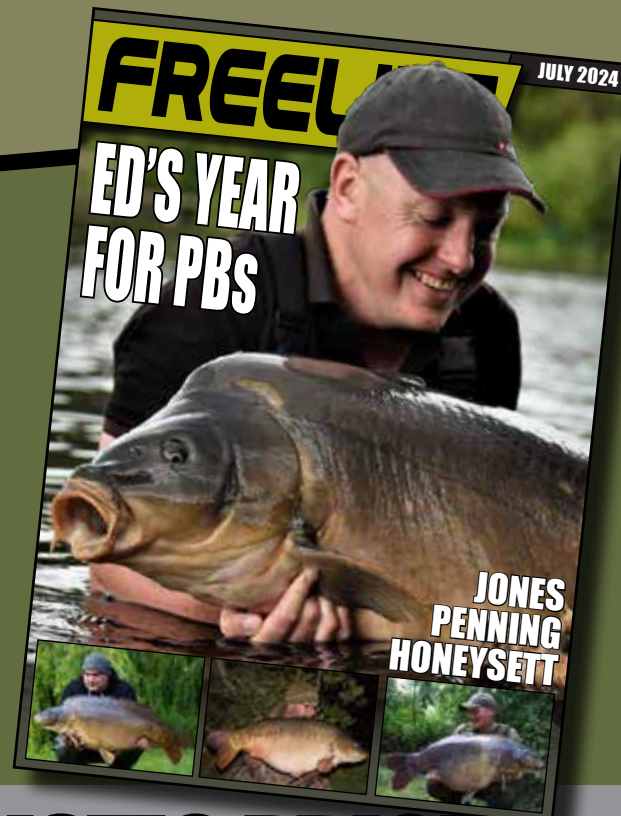
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Dean Bray - In search of a Sutton 40  
Mark Quinn - The Heart Tail Common  
John Claridge - Catching a Croc on a chod  
Paul Heseltine - His second 60  
Timothy Thornton - Durlough reservoir  
Mark Rose - Continues his syndicate exploits  
Barry Oconnor - The final matches  
Dean Walsh - Mental health and carp fishing

Ed Betteridge - A year for pbs  
Jake Anderson - Fishing in the Stour Valley  
Craig Runham - The Parrot  
Keith Tucker - Small Tail  
Derek Ritchie - More from Monks Pit  
Daz Jones - Quest for an ending  
Adam Honeysett - More crackers for Adam  
Adam Penning - Tackling Fryerning



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# BIG CARP

## Top Tens!

### Top 10 Day Ticket Carp Fisheries

|    |                   |
|----|-------------------|
| 1  | COTTINGTON        |
| 2  | LINEAR            |
| 3  | CHRISTCHUCH       |
| 4  | OAK LAKES FISHERY |
| 5  | BLUEBELL LAKES    |
| 6  | ELPHICKS          |
| 7  | SANDHURST         |
| 8  | FRYERNING         |
| 9  | FARLOWS LAKE      |
| 10 | COOLE ACRES       |

### Top 10 French Holiday Destinations

|    |               |
|----|---------------|
| 1  | IKTUS         |
| 2  | LAKE BOSSARD  |
| 3  | LAKE HERITAGE |
| 4  | RIBIERE       |
| 5  | ABBAY         |
| 6  | LAC ROSE      |
| 7  | BERNIERE      |
| 8  | DREAM LAKES   |
| 9  | LES QUIS      |
| 10 | JONCHERY      |

### Top 10 Bait Companies

|    |             |
|----|-------------|
| 1  | DYNAMITE    |
| 2  | STICKY      |
| 3  | NUTRABAITS  |
| 4  | MAINLINE    |
| 6  | TARGET      |
| 5  | CC MOORE    |
| 7  | NASH        |
| 8  | URBAN       |
| 9  | DAVE MALLIN |
| 10 | OUTLAW      |

### Top 10 Carp Tackle Companies (Terminal)

|    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 1  | ESP              |
| 2  | KORDA            |
| 3  | SOLAR            |
| 4  | JAG              |
| 5  | FOX              |
| 6  | THINKING ANGLERS |
| 7  | GARDNER          |
| 8  | NASH             |
| 9  | AVID             |
| 10 | CARP ONLINE      |

### Top 10 Carp Tackle Companies

|    |                      |
|----|----------------------|
| 1  | DIAWA SPORTS         |
| 2  | SHIMANO              |
| 3  | REUBEN HEATON        |
| 4  | FREE SPIRIT          |
| 5  | FOX                  |
| 6  | TRAKKER              |
| 7  | AQUA PRODUCTS        |
| 8  | KUDOS                |
| 9  | CENTURY              |
| 10 | CHILTERN CUSTOM RODS |

### Top 10 Carp Shops

|    |                           |
|----|---------------------------|
| 1  | JOHNSON ROSS              |
| 2  | THE TACKLE BOX            |
| 3  | YATELEY ANGLING CENTRE    |
| 4  | ANGLING DIRECT NORWICH    |
| 5  | POINDESTRES               |
| 6  | KESWALLS                  |
| 7  | ANGLING DIRECT BIRMINGHAM |
| 8  | ANGLING DIRECT SIMPSONS   |
| 9  | TACKLE UP                 |
| 10 | ANGLING DIRECT CHELMSFORD |

### Top 10 Iconic Carp Waters

|    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 1  | YATELEY          |
| 2  | SAVAY            |
| 3  | REDMIRE          |
| 4  | WRAYSBURY        |
| 5  | FOX POOL         |
| 6  | HORTON           |
| 7  | CASSIEN          |
| 8  | LINCH HILL       |
| 9  | ROACH PIT        |
| 10 | JOHNSONS RAILWAY |



As voted by Big Carp readers!

**OVER  
130 PAGES**

# **BCG**

**BIG CARP: 336 JULY 2024**

## **HUNTING SUTTON GIANTS**

**ROSE  
QUINN  
OCONNOR  
THORNTON**

**OVER 30 PAGES OF UK CATCH REPORTS**



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Editor/Publisher  
Rob Maylin  
Bountyhunter  
Publications  
44 Herbs End  
Cove, Hampshire  
GU14 9YD

07768 731425  
bigcarpstudio@hotmail.  
co.uk

Design & Production  
James Harrison

Advertising Sales  
Bountyhunter  
Publications  
mobile 07768 731425

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Publications 2024



Front Cover:  
Dean Walsh with a 56lb  
UK common.



Welcome to Issue 336 of Big Carp after almost 40 years of BC we thought it was time for a change. Our new designer, James, is no stranger to carp magazine design as he used to be the editor of Advanced Carp and he's freelanced for Total Carp, Crafty Carper and Carpworld. James has totally revamped both Big Carp and Free Line. So we have new cover designs, new layouts, new features all based around making our magazines easier to read on phones and tablets. This will be an ongoing process. I would love to hear your views? Message me on Face Book or email [info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk](mailto:info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk). BC is also BIGGER! Almost 40% bigger, and still absolutely FREE!!

We have over 42,250 suscribers at present and I'm sure that will climb over the next few weeks. to be added send an email to [info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk](mailto:info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk) the title FREE SUBBY - it's that easy

So, this issue, where do I start? The cover story from Dean Walsh, looks at carp fishing and mental health, massively important and the first of several articles on this subject over the coming months. Our all new catch report section is almost 40 pages!! Regulars Barry Oconnor, Mark and Emma Rose and Mark Quinn are all back with the next exciting episodes of their angling, some gorgeous fish from this trio too. Dean Bray has been hunting Sutton forties whilst Tim Thornton has been smashing it up on Durleigh Reservoir. Some great short stories from Paul Hesseltine, John Claridge, Les Bowers, Steve Haylett and more make this an ALL NEW BIG CARP to remember.

Now I need your help! Filling 2 magazines each month means I need twice as many articles, If you have had a successful session or campaign, we would love to hear your tale. There are no picture or word limits. Simply email your article to [info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk](mailto:info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk). It's a great way to help to get yourself sponsored. Brands love seeing articles about carp caught on their products

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

Cheers

Rob

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News from around the fishing industry. Keep in touch with what the Angling Trust are doing to protect your fishing

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Having previously passed on the ticket, it's now a place he calls paradise and it just gave up something special.

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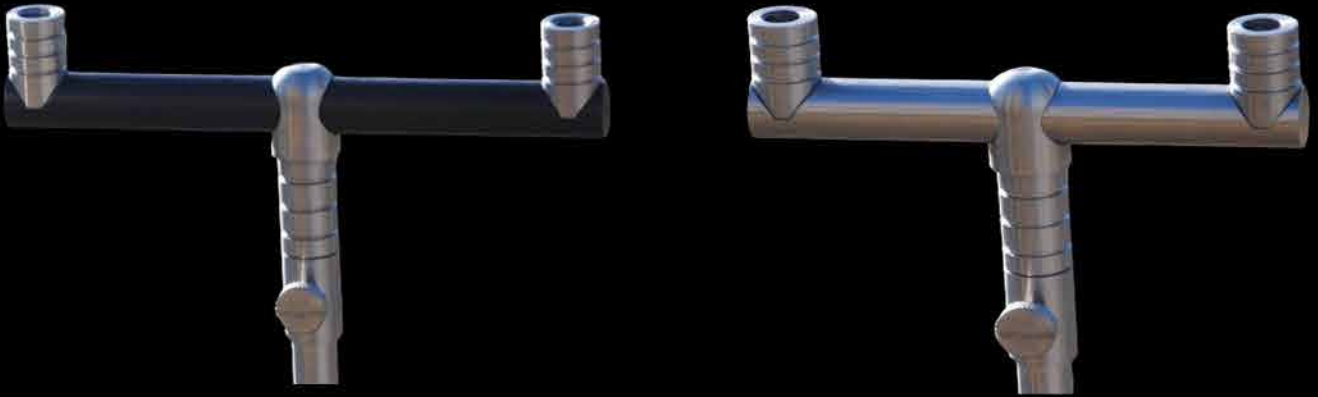
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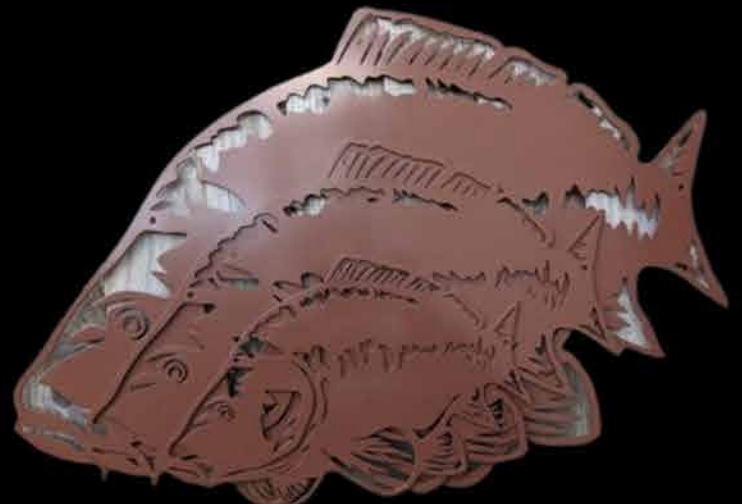
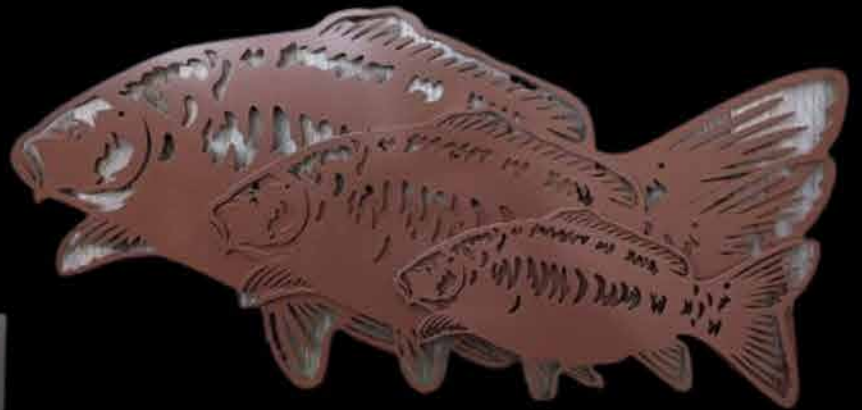
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# SHOCKLEADER



Paul Whitehouse is an Angling Trust Ambassador because he believes in our work to protect fish and our fishing environment, grow our sport and with Fish Legal, make polluters pay.

Paul Whitehouse, star of mortimer & whitehouse gone fishing, "The Angling Trust deserves the support of all anglers."

Chris Yates, passion for



angling and former carp record holder, "I'm a life member, if you love rivers and lakes and the fish we catch, you should be a member too"

Support us too by joining today and receive fantastic member benefits including discounts on day tickets, tackle, bait and more!

Membership starts from

just £31 a year (£27 for seniors)

We all remember how we started our fishing journey- and we all know how much pleasure our hobby gives us and how beneficial it is to both our mental and physical health and wellbeing.

We want to ensure that fishing is available to every one but we need your help - please join us and support our work today.

By joining you will:

- Help us fight pollution through our Anglers Against Pollution campaign and the work of Fish Legal
- Support our work to lobby Government on environmental issues





- Fight angling bans
- Introduce more people to our wonderful sport
- Promote the mental health and wellbeing benefits of angling
- Support grass roots angling clubs

1. Improve fishing access for all  
Your Membership will give you:

- Exclusive discounts on a wide range of fishing tackle, bait and much more
- Public liability insurance while you are fishing
- 10% discount at fisheries around the country
- Access to fishing matches run by the Angling Trust
- Quality annual magazine
- Regular newsletters and updates

Adult membership just £31\* for a whole year, senior citizen membership £27\*

Want more info about the angling trust? Go to: [www.anglingtrust.net](http://www.anglingtrust.net) ■

With pollution in our rivers continuing to cause concern, the Angling Trust has issued new advice for freshwater anglers to help ensure safe fishing.

Our "Health & Safety Guidance for Freshwater Anglers" outlines six simple steps every angler can follow:

- Never put wet lines in your mouth or any other items of tackle that have been in the water.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use a sanitiser before eating and after fishing.
- Cover any cuts and grazes with waterproof plasters before fishing.
- Clean any wounds as soon as possible and wear protective clothing.
- If you do fall in, keep your mouth closed and avoid drinking water.
- Shower as soon as possible if you've been in potentially infected water.

Fishing is about the joy and benefits of being in beautiful places, if anglers follow our guide they can do this safely

and continue to enjoy our wonderful sport.

"Illnesses caused by contact with sewage pollution in rivers are increasingly common and of great concern," said Kris Kent, who runs the Water Quality Monitoring Network initiative which now tests samples from more than 200 rivers and forms a key part of the Angling Trust's Anglers Against Pollution campaign.

"Anglers should not expect to become ill when they go fishing but water testing by clubs has revealed worryingly high levels of harmful bacteria and viruses which can present a significant risk to human health. Excessive nutrient levels also contribute to algal blooms which can be highly toxic. We need to end the discharge of untreated sewage into our rivers and seas and adhere to the Farming Rules for Water to stop the inappropriate spreading of slurry, both of which put anglers' health at risk."

You can access the online guide via the Angling Trust website: [www.anglingtrust.net](http://www.anglingtrust.net)

# PAUL AND BOB BACK FOR A NEW SERIES



Great news! Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing is set to return for its eighth series, which is especially wonderful given Bob Mortimer's recent health issues. The beloved show will revisit the riverbanks that shaped the formative years of Paul Whitehouse and Bob Mortimer.

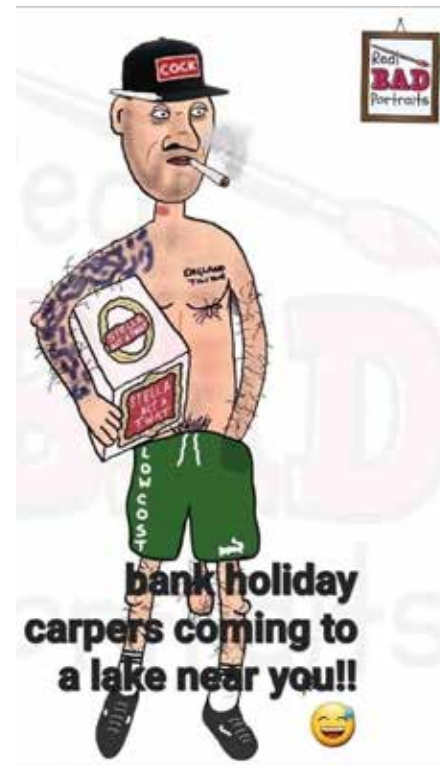
Filming will begin later this year for six new episodes, taking the pair to Whitehouse's birthplace of Wales and revisiting Mortimer's early years in the north-west of England, along with their trusty dog, Ted.

Bob Mortimer shared his excitement: "I'm looking forward to visiting old haunts from my younger years as Paul and I travel back in time for this series, fishing in places that shaped our lives."

Fans can also look forward to the seventh series airing later this year, featuring episodes filmed in Bedfordshire, North Norfolk, and Northern Ireland.

**WORK HAS CAUSED YOU TO BE LATE 3 TIMES THIS WEEK. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?"**

**ME: IT'S WEDNESDAY???**



# AWARDS DAY AT PARTRIDGE LAKES FOR OUR LITTER HEROES



The Angling Trust and Shimano hosted an awards day at Partridge Lakes Fishery in Cheshire to honour some truly deserving winners for their outstanding voluntary work in protecting our water environments.

Our Volunteers Week event was a huge success, bringing together Anglers Against Litter volunteers from across the country to celebrate their contributions.

The winners enjoyed an all-expenses-paid day of fishing on this exclusive water with Shimano ambassadors Nick Speed and Shaun Cameron, who provided tuition and the chance to try out some Shimano gear.

Congratulations to the award winners: David Brunet, Ron Wood, Steve Lile, Michael Rhodes, and the team of Little Britain Anglers, who received a club award. The winners received a whole load of goodies for the day

including plenty of free bait to keep the catches coming, Angling Trust and Shimano branded clothing, a Shimano Tribal dry bag, a 'Chilly's' insulated bottle and a framed certificate recognising their community contributions.

A huge thanks to all the Shimano team & Partridge Lakes for their support, and for hosting the day and making it thoroughly enjoyable.

Highlights of the Year from Anglers Against Litter:

**Community Clean-Up Drives:** We have now funded 150 angling clubs with litter picking kit – sponsored by Shimano. Each club commits to at least 2 litter picks a year – but most do many more. Since Shimano came onboard there have been over 450 litter picks engaging more than 1,370 volunteers. Thanks to these efforts the angling clubs and volunteers involved have significantly

improved the health of our waterways – for anglers, and everybody else!

**Keep Britain Tidy Award:** We are proud to announce that Anglers Against Litter won the prestigious Keep Britain Tidy Best Business Partnership Award. This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved in our campaign and especially all the volunteer litter pickers.

**National Line Recycling Scheme:** The Angling Trust continues to support the Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme, with many anglers and fisheries/clubs across the country sending their old line and spools to be recycled rather than going to landfill.

**Join the Cause:** We invite everyone to continue supporting our mission to keep Britain's waterways litter free. Participation is crucial. Get your club to sign up. There has never been a better time to make your contribution as we are currently running our national litter survey. Download the Snapshot Litter Survey Guide & Sheet, fill it out and submit it to help us track litter hotspots and trends.

Together, anglers make a significant difference in keeping our waterways clean and healthy. Thank you for your ongoing support, and let's make the next year even more impactful for Anglers Against Litter.

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A very clean 32lb common was one of 11 fish caught on one rod today by team member Grant Walters, using his own Infusion bait on our Size 6 Scorpion Curved hook and other end tackle items. Well done Grant.



Lovely old Chard reservoir carp of 24lb for team member Tim Thornton. Taken at 112 yards on our Size 4 Scorpion Crank hook tied in his usual IQ2 D rig. Check out Tim's article in the lates



Team member Lee Oxley is certainly on a roll recently with yet another wide gape victim. Size 4 Scorpion Wide gape hook tied on blow back rig using PTO pro hook link, shrink tube, putty and anti tangle sleeve. This fish is called gills. Still fighting fit going just over 30 at 30lb 5oz. Lee Oxley is on a roll and has managed to bag these beauties! All caught using our Scorpion Wide Gape hooks, Tungsten Rig Putty, Anti Tangle Sleeves & Shrink Tube. Going 27lb, 29lb, and topped off with 30lb 8oz leather! Well done Lee, great angling



Congratulations to team member Chevy Reid for joining the 30's club with this big framed 33lb 5oz mirror. Our size 4 Scorpion Wide Gape hooks and a variety of other end tackle got in the net safely.



Congratulations to team member James Johnson on the new PB common at 36lb 4oz! Backed up with a couple more fish, including this 20lb mirror. James used a size 6 Scorpion Crank hook tied in a ronnie rig to nail his PB. Well done James.



A nice mid double for Paul Gill. He used our size 4 Curved hook tied blowback style.



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Choddy Crank Hook



Aligner



Tungsten Putty



Shrink Tube



Hair Stops

**COMING SOON!!**

The NEW Longcrank has the same offset point as our most popular hook, the Crank, but has the added advantage of having a longer shank. Our competition team has been using these to devastating effect.

**WATCH THIS SPACE**



TAC-TIE

HOOKLINK  
TO BREAK  
PBS -  
NOT THE  
BANK



## AQUASKIN

Carp Punk took over a year of testing to get its coated braid range right. "The team loved it. The coating strips easily but doesn't crack when you knot it. It's extremely reliable," says Carp Punk itself.

The Aquaskin comes in 3 varieties. The Matt Brown and Geen Flek versions are slightly more supple than the Matt Green covering all your rig mechanic needs. All variants are 25lb breakings strain

PRICE: £4.50 for 10m



## AQUASILK

The ultimate PVA bag hook link. Super supple and highly abrasion resistant. "We've sold bucket loads of this material. Anglers just love it," says Carp Punk. We can see why. Both the green and brown versions have a flecked appearance very similar to Kryston Merlin. Available in 25lb breaking strain

PRICE: £4.50 for 20m

## RIG-ID

This is a lovely stiff material to work with. It straightens very easily with a straight pull or just run your fingers up and down to heat it a little. Perfect for chods and rigs requiring a stiff boom. Available in clear and translucent green. It comes on 10m spool in 25lb breaking strain.

PRICE: £3.25 for 10m



Carp Punk is run by respected carp angler, James Harrison. "I got fed up walking out a tackle shop with a few packets of bits having spent £30 or £40. I'm sure I can't be the only one," he says. His goal is to bring end tackle that rivals the larger brands in quality for a much lower price. Carp Punk has everything you need end tackle wise and from what we've seen so far Carp Punk is on the right track. Check out the rest of the range at [www.carpjunk.co.uk](http://www.carpjunk.co.uk)

# THEY'RE UNBELIEVABLY GOOD GEOFF!!



The legendary Geoff Anderson ZipZone pants are now available in a new and even lighterweight version - perfect for summer carp fishing adventures.

The ZipZone Light is the lightest pants Geoff Anderson have ever produced to date. Not only are they super-light, they are also extremely quick-drying, stretchy and take up zero space. Coupled to these essential properties, they are surprisingly strong and even water-resistant. They also feature YKK zips for reliability. They are available in a wide range of sizes from XS (30in) to XXXL (44in) in Sand and XXXXL (46in) in light black

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 of its products, special consideration is made to the environment. All products are free of toxins. Durability and water proofness have always been key in the production of its clothing.

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

Check out the full range of Geoff Anderson out door clothing at:  
[www.geoffanderson.com](http://www.geoffanderson.com)





TAC-TEC

# DONT BE A MUG - STAY COOL OR HOT WITH CAMELBACK



CamelBak refreshes its outdoor drinkware line with new reusable, sustainable and leakproof Thrive range.

CamelBak®, the global leader in personal hydration products for outdoor enthusiasts and athletes for over 30 years, has launched the Thrive collection, a new line of reusable and sustainable drinkware.

The Thrive range features insulated tumblers and mugs, designed for the rigours of extended use during outdoor activities, at camp, and on the road. Ranging in capacity from 500ml to 1L, the Thrive products will keep drinks hot or cold for many hours and are loaded with practical features.

The collection includes three unique product designs, with four different sizes of tumblers and mugs.

Each CamelBak Thrive item is made out of vacuum insulated 18/8 steel, is BPA, BPS and BPF-free, and features safer chemicals, designed to preserve resources and diminish the impact of manufacture on the planet. The tumblers and mugs are easy to clean by hand and are also dishwasher safe. A strong and durable full powder coat finish ensures that drinks taste great, while eliminating condensation and keeping the drinkware sweat-free.

The new line includes CamelBak's Thrive Tumbler Lids, which are 100% leak-proof, so that everyone can use them with confidence while on the move, while in a vehicle, around the campsite, or during a wide range of outdoor

activities.

Each new tumbler and mug also features a non-slip silicone pad integrated on the base of the vessel which prevents dents and ensures a stable, secure and quiet grip on nearly any surface when putting the drinkware down.

**Thrive Mugs:** Available in 1L and 0.5L, the new CamelBak Thrive Mugs feature soft handles, which are comfortable to hold. The unique dual-thread construction on the mugs allows them to easily be used both right and left-handed.

The Thrive Mug 1L is compatible with vehicle drinks holders and keeps liquids cold for up to 21 hours and hot for up to 10 hours. It retails at £40.

The 0.5L version keeps drinks cold for up to 10 hours and hot for up to five hours, and retails at £35.

**Thrive Tumblers:** Available in 0.9L and 0.6L, the new CamelBak Thrive Tumblers are durable and ready for extended use outdoors. Their tapered design allows for a comfortable grip and a perfect fit in most cup holders.

The CamelBak Thrive Tumbler 0.9L keeps drinks cold for up to 19 hours and hot for up to eight hours, and retails at £40, while the 0.6L version keeps drinks cold for up to 14 hours and hot for up to seven hours, and retails at £35.

All of the CamelBak Thrive products are built to the brand's high quality specifications, and they all come with the Got Your Bak™ Lifetime Guarantee. They are available now from [www.camelbak.co.uk](http://www.camelbak.co.uk) and selected specialist retailers.

For more information about CamelBak, please visit:

[www.camelbak.co.uk](http://www.camelbak.co.uk).





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# CARP PUNK

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# NAOMI NAILS UK'S BIGGEST CARP



I recently had a trip to Holme Fenn, in search of the biggest carp in the UK. After a tricky start to the trip, I moved to deeper water and on my last night approach to nick a bite!

The rods had only been out a couple hours, when the left hand rod signalled a slow take. As soon as I connected, the fish had other ideas and found itself lodged firmly into a large weedbed. With slow and steady pressure and bit of patience, I was soon

back into direct contact and it was evident the fish was plodding around in the deep water, using its weight to its full advantage.

Having finally managed to get it in the net a moment of euphoria and utter excitement erupted as I realised what was finally in my landing net - my target, the lake's current largest known resident "Pashley" and a new UK PB at 72lb 12oz! After a few tears of joy,

multiple moments of elation and disbelief, I eventually came to terms that this is potentially the largest carp in the country and the largest carp caught by a female angler in the UK too, a session I certainly won't forget in a hurry"

I used a Spinner Rig with a 25lb boom and a size 4 Kamakura Wide Gape X Hooks presented on a small hump surrounded by weed and with minimal bait around it



### WESTMOOR WACKER NUDGES CLOSER TO 50

New lake record mirror at Westmoor Carp Fishery. The beast itself "The Big Scaley"

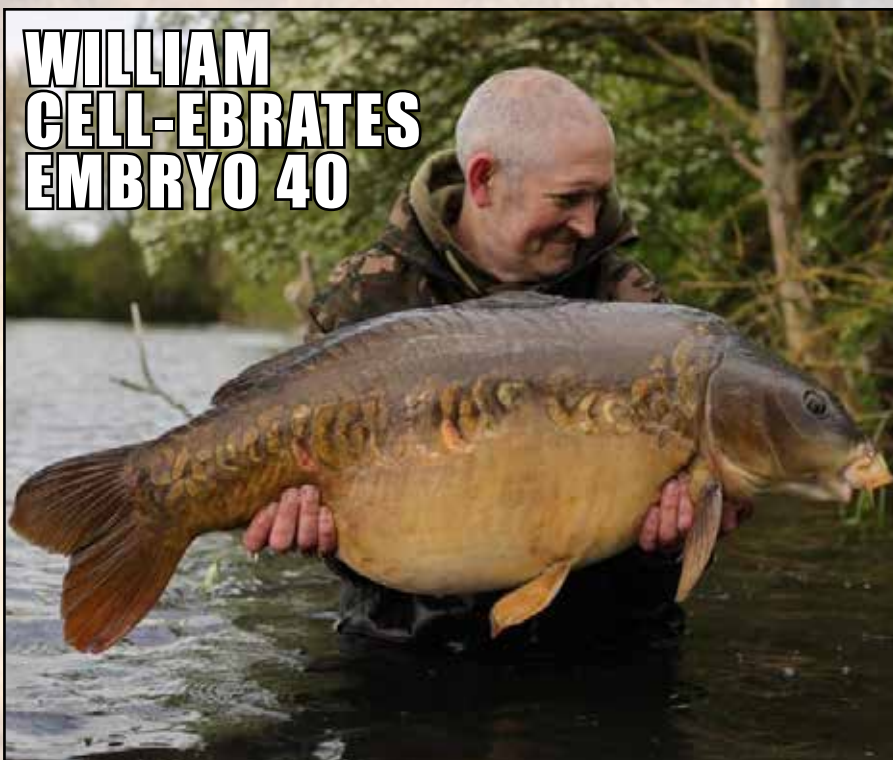
A new lake record, a PB for the angler and now the biggest fish on the complex at a whopping 49lb 4oz of English banger. For a fish that was introduced into the Specimen Lake in February 2017 at 15lb to make 49lb now 7 years later is mind blowing!

Brian Warrick's run over on the reknowned Wellington Country Park continues with another big hit banking 11 carp in 3 nights including this 49lb 4oz mirror. His run now extends to 51 carp in 50 nights with all of them falling to the Cell and Hybrid boilies soaked in Smart Liquid. Awesome angling, Brian.



### WARRICK'S WELLY WONDER

### WILLIAM CELL-EBRATES EMBRYO 40



Checkout this 44lb 8oz mirror caught by William Randall fishing Embryo Angling Stanton Harcourt Lake - a simple spread of Cell boilies dispatched to a gravel bar doing the trick!

### WHARF POOL WHACKER FOR MICHAEL



Michael said: "I arrived at the lake just before first light and two fish showed within five minutes of me being in the swim, so I knew that was my starting point. I baited the area, set the traps and went on to bag three fish, two twenties and an absolute unit of 56lb 4oz, giving me a new personal best."

Last week's trip to Kingsmead 1 I fished four different swims in my attempt to stay on fish.. Casting pva bags to showing fish made using the new Amino Smoke liquid from DNA Baits mixed with the Mega Crayfish Mini mix and insect meal, 7 fish caught most low to mid 20s with the biggest being this very long one at 43lb 2oz..

### BACON BANKS A BEAUTY



### STU'S HALO OF SUCCESS



Last session over the big pit resulted in this one weighing 45lb 5oz. Caught over 15kg of BMX and GLX in 12's & 15's, doused in both liquids. Using my favourite in the range, Pineapple N-Butyric 15mm pop ups from Halobaits, Advanced Wide Gapes from JPrecision hooks as always and MP leadshed 4oz, Long distance, Hex Leads.






**MAT'T**  
**MILITARY**  
**GREEN**



**CUSTOM**  
**PAINT WORK**

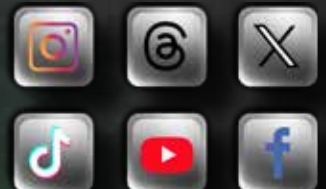
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## CATCH REPORTS



### FLOPPY GOES FORTY

Stephen Nathan Stimson with a new forty for Roach Pit, the Floppy Tail Simmo at 41lb 10oz, the last capture we can find of this fish is from 2021 at 32lb. Another of the Simmo Scallys that's going places. "Two more to come out yet that I expect to be new forties too," said Stephen.

With the sunny high - pressure weather most of the fish were sitting on top out in the middle of the lake. So Mark Stubbles changed to the zigs and soon got the indicators moving with Paw Print at 44lb 8oz and a 21lb. Black foam sprayed with Essential Baits thaumatin gold on adjustable zigs fished four feet under the surface doing the business



### STUBBLES DOUBLES ON ZIGS

### GOCHER'S GOTCHA



Mark Gocher banked a new PB common known as Stalker at 47lb 4oz and backed it up with a nice 30 too. Both fell to the mighty ASM soaked in hemp oil and stim, fished over matching pellet and crumb.

# EMMA MANAGES MASSIVE MIRROR



Emma Rimmer said, "I started off with 3 spombs over each spot. I baited up with CC Moore Prostim Liver 15mm boilies that I'd glugged in prostim liquid, heat treated them, before mixing in ultra mix pellet, micro pellet and sweetcorn. The first day proved very quiet. Before I settled for the following night, after recasting my rods on the same spots - a clear area with weed surrounding at 15 half wraps - I decided to add more bait. I spread 15 spombs in total over the 3 rods.

It was 9 the following morning when I finally had a few beeps on my alarm and the bobbin held at the top then dropped right to the ground. I knew I had something on. The carp didn't put up much of a fight until I got it closer in then it stripped my braid and took me into a weed bed, I kept pressure on and walked back easing the carp out of the weed. I managed to get her out she put bit more of a fight close in I could see she had a nice dark wide back but she slipped over

the net cord easily. I looked at my prize and just guessed she was definitely over 30 but didn't not guess what was to come until I lifted the net up and she went on her side and I saw the size of the belly. When I saw her and felt the weight, I really began to shake carrying her over I knew she was going to be a pb but never guessed the weight she was - 41lb 12oz!! I was so over the moon with everything after what's been going on with my health - this has really made my year."

# BLACKTHORN BANGER

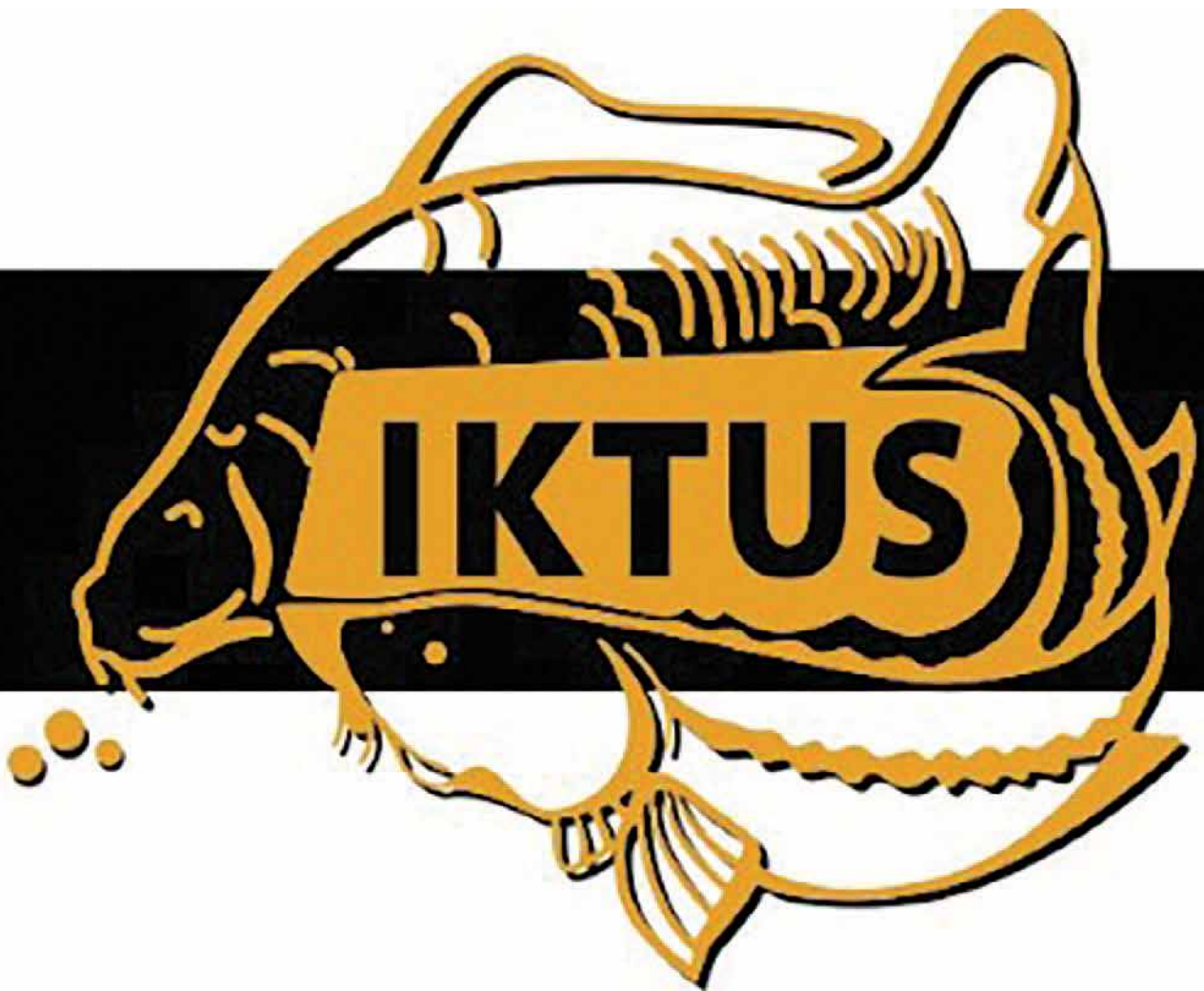


On a recent trip to Blackthorn Fishery, Lewis had been baiting an area with fishery pellet for a few days, but not fishing it. Just topping the area up daily. When he finally decided to drop a rod on the area it took 24 hours before it ripped off! The take resulted in a new lake record and PB for Lewis at 48lb 12oz. A Pineapple wafter on the business end proving irresistible.

Jack Cuthbertson with Christchurch's biggest Mirror, Scar at 48.02, caught using a test pop up over the MC Nut bait

# JACK GETS SCARRED FOR LIFE





# FISHING RESORT



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6 OF THE  
BEST FOR  
LIAM



L i a m  
Fall fished  
Kiny for 96 hours  
and ended up with 6 fish  
The biggest a mirror of  
47lb 2oz followed by two  
commons of 34lb 8 oz and  
28lb 14oz

# HOLY SMOKE: IT'S A FORTY



Andy Gowan might have lost a fiver to his son but he couldn't really complain, after bagging himself a 40-pounder!! Andy fell out of pocket when his son correctly predicted which rod would do their first bite on a father-and-son trip to Linear's Gaunts Lake syndicate, a bite that would yield one of the largest fish in the lake at 40lb 3oz!

Andy said: "I will have to try to convince him to join me on more trips, as the rods had only been out for two hours when the rod pulled up tight!!

"Despite this fish being somewhat of a stalker, it was at its biggest weight when compared to my previous captures, coming in at 40lb 3oz. By far and away it was the biggest fish my lad had seen in the flesh and he couldn't quite believe what was

sulking in the net (he wanted to be involved, so was on netting duties and did a great job). His smile says it all; a magical moment and memories that will live forever!

"We did back it up with a 26lb scaly, which was an amazing-looking creature and made packing down two bivvies and far more stuff than we needed for

a 24 hour session – not to mention two barrow loads half way round a boggy Gaunts – far easier."

Andy was fishing with solid bags of Crayfish Mini Mix pellets pumped with Bug Amino Smoke, with Bug Corker wafers as hookbaits. He presented his smoky solids over a bed of whole and chopped Bug boilies.



### CAPITAL CARP FOR DEMPSEY



This chunky common came from a large extremely low stock trout reservoir in London. After seeing 2 fish feeding over a bed of Red spicy pellet a rod length from the bank, Terry Dempsey lowered a hook bait amongst them and bingo!

### JOHN CASHES IN FOR LINEAR SUCCESS



What a fitting way to sign off what has been a consistent spring for John Finbar Cash over on Black Swan One of its rarer zips.

### COTSWOLD GOLD FALLS TO ZIG



Rig Lockers Jason Smith with 43lb 10oz of absolute Cotswold gold. Fresh off the back of his Katran TV debut with a simply incredible carp! He's actually had a few since then but this one definitely deserves the glory shot

This stunning mirror was landed using Wild Carp Camo in 20.5lb and 16lb Zig Rig. We've said it before but we'll say it again, if you're looking for a zig line that won't let you down then "Zig Rig" is well worth a look



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We've got some 2024 gaps in July and August and first week September, plus booking now for October 2024 and 2025.

School holidays, Dads and Lads deal usually  
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**Quote BIG CARP MAGAZINE when booking**



Great week on Willow 1, B3 last week for Mark Anderson and Leigh Horwood who was celebrating his 70th birthday. Leigh couldn't have had a better celebration of his 70th with more fish than years in La Belle France with Mark Anderson. Thanks for showing him how to winkle more than just the garlicky snails from their shells. Happy birthday Leigh.

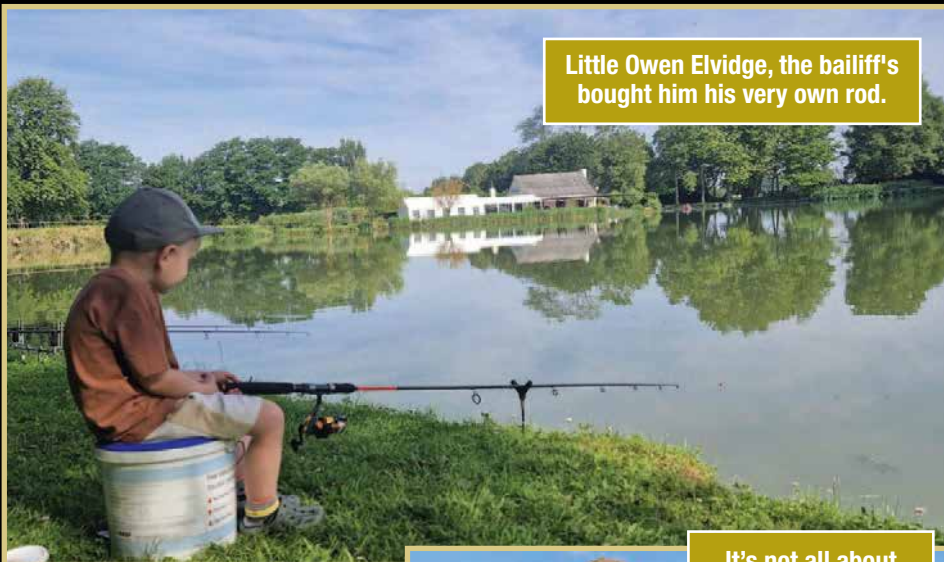




Did somebody say Social Night? Champions league night at Bounty. It's not ALL about fishing eh!?



Oliver with some chunks last week on barn bank post 2 b1. With a new 50lb common for b1 a 44lb and 46lb common. As well as the big mirror at 51lb 5oz. And lots of others, good angling.



Little Owen Elvidge, the bailiff's bought him his very own rod.



New website coming soon



It's not all about monsters, 24lbs of stunning mirror for Stuart Cox.



Jordan Daniel and Steven had a great week on b2 posts 5, 6, 7 resulting in some big carp at the top spawn weight. 2 x 49lb commons 1 x 47lb mirror, plus lots of others and a big cat at 130s. Well done gents!

### HELLO AGAIN!!



What a morning, I was only at the lake three hours when I had a bite, it turned out to be a fish that I caught last month weighing 51lb 3oz. And if that wasn't enough, one of my other rods rattled off just as we had returned her, crazy!!!

### MICHAEL'S MARGIN MONSTER



"I'm sure that's the quickest margin bite I've ever had and also a new margin PB at 42lb+" said Michael Bromfield.

### SPOTTY SPOTS A NEW FORTY



Long serving fishery staff member "Spotty" with this 40lb 8oz mirror!!! Huge well done.

# NICE ONE ON TYSON



This is the smile that says it all . Well done Ross with the mighty Grendon's Tyson at 58lb 4oz!!

# WHEN TWO HALVES MAKE A WHOLE



I had a feeling that this could be the last fish I caught from Frimley, and with the lake now being closed for spawning, it probably is. Not a bad one to do it with though. One the rarer visitors to the bank, a fish I'd heard about but not seen a photo of. Aply called a fish of 'Two Half's' at 43lb. This was the only bite I had over the weekend. But, as I was the 15th angler to set up, on a lake with 20 swims, I was happy to get a bite.



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# CATCH REPORTS



**WELL,  
WELL,  
WELLS**

Under Armour on Kingfisher weighing at 42lb this morning. Smashed my pb of 27lb big time. Absolutely buzzing still what a session



**MIKE BANKS  
MOULSHAM  
MONSTER**

Mike Bumstead with a new lake record, Two-Tone at 44lb (RIGHT) the AV Scaley at 28lb 5oz (BELOW) from Little Moulsham







### A KINGFISHER CHUNK FOR JAMES

James Powell had this chunk out of Kingfisher weighing in at 41lb 10oz.

Mike Jarvis managed 4 carp during a weekend session with this 42lb 4oz bruiser topping it off just nicely. Mike added, "Even better to share the capture with my best friend, very enjoyable times indeed".



### MIKE'S MASSIVE MIRROR

## RETURN OF THE RICK



Rick Willeatts reports, "Gotta be happy with that... First session in 9 years, back on an old stomping ground and she was kind enough to give up one of her jewels... A stunning half Lin, looking immaculate and ready to burst at 40 and ounces... Had to get the trusty weigh crook out to be sure!! Thank you Swan valley... Looking good still!"

## JOSH BOSHES PB



"Great session last week topped by my new pb at over 48lb" reports Josh Hammersley

## PUGH'S PLAN COMES TOGETHER



Ryan Pugh caught one of the A Team from Coole Acres Fishery on a recent session at the Cheshire venue. He banked the mirror known as Mr T at 34lb 8oz using their house pellet! Awesome angling Ryan!



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# BILLY BANKS A PB



Billy Newsom landed this 42lb 10oz common. This is a new PB for Billy and also a new complex record - well done!!

Steve Miller smashed his PB with this common going 40lb. Another fish to break the 40lb barrier, Incredible for Farlow's. That's now 17 different 40lbbers in lake one.



# FARLOW'S 17TH FORTY

### SO CLOSE CALLUM



Callum Pawsey reports, "Just shy of 50lb, of big brown floppy tailed mirror"

### MOVE PAYS OFF



David Smedley had a couple of nights over his lake recently. He had nothing the first night so moved. It paid off with a 10 fish haul with the best this 42lb 3oz common caught on Essential Cell wafers over a mix of Mainline Fibre and 10mm Essential Cell !!!

### MURPHY'S LAW IT'S JUST SHY OF 60



Sam Murphy is only the sixth man to put this incredible carp on the bank. He's got off the ground running this year, taking three of the five bites that the lake has given up to its trying syndicate.

At 59lb 8oz, it represents both a new personal best and lake record too! Caught on a choccy malt hookbait, fished over a light scattering of a new ABS test bait coming out later this year.

Well done Sam, epic, epic result mate!!

## SON OF TRIPLE ROW



Sometimes dreams really do come true! Simply the most amazing carp I've ever caught and I never thought my time would come, so honoured to finally catch the magnificent Son of Triple Row!

Massive thanks to Daniel and the awesome Joe for his work behind the lens, I was one lucky boy having him on the pond

## THE TRAVELLER TRIPS UP



Mitch Raynor reports in that there's a new lake record over at The Mill syndicate - The Traveller at 45lb 12oz

## THUNDER STORM FORTY



Nice 40lb 8oz straight after the thunderstorm up the Mainline!!

# Welcome to **CREEDENCE FISHERY** your exclusive premium carp lake

Located in Essex, Creedence Fishery hosts one of the finest fishing lakes in the area. Created in 1922 and opened in 2020, the fishery boasts a stunning two acre carp lake, stocked with fish up to 44lb, with at least 30 x 30lb carp up to 39lb and at least six different 40s, backed up with another 30 x upper 20s. A handful of other 30lb fish and some fast growers to back them up. We are proud to offer you an excellent fishing environment and with accommodating facilities to help you get that new personal best!

## THE FACILITIES



Four purpose built cabins adorn this beautiful hidden carp lake in Essex. Bookings available via the website. (Four Swims) Whole lake bookings available.

Creedence Fishery: A Year of Remarkable Growth In the few years since its inception, Creedence Fishery, located in picturesque Essex surroundings, has quickly distinguished itself as a premier destination for carp angling enthusiasts. This two-acre modern carp fishery has seen a flurry of activity and development over the last 12 months, significantly enhancing the angling experience and bolstering its presence within the community. At the heart of Creedence Fishery are its unique offerings that cater to the comfort and convenience of anglers. Each of the four meticulously designed swims (one of which one is a double) houses a wooden cabin equipped with modern amenities including heating, a fridge, TV, power, and Wi-Fi.

This innovative approach ensures that anglers can focus on their passion without the hassle of setting up bivvies, regardless of the weather conditions. In order to prevent unsightly angling tackle hanging from the trees along its margins, and to protect the cabins and wildlife, Creedence Fishery is a bait-boat only venue which adds to the excitement and challenge of catching big carp from its waters. Furthermore, the inclusion of essential carp care equipment, along with toilets, shower and vending machine, underscores the fishery's commitment to both angler satisfaction and fish welfare.

A pivotal development this year has been the introduction of a communal BBQ and social area, fostering a sense of community among visitors. The integration of the 'swimbooker' app for easy online booking has also streamlined the booking process, reflecting the fishery's embrace of technology to enhance user experience. The stocking program represents another significant milestone, with the addition of over 15x 30lb carp and

3x 40lb carp to the lake. This initiative not only promises thrilling challenges for anglers aiming to catch these magnificent specimens, but with the recent nettings removing huge numbers of smaller fish, allows for the backup stock to grow through too.

The impact of these developments is evident in the surge of anglers flocking to Creedence Fishery, drawn by the allure of its massive specimen carp and the enhanced fishing experience. The attention from mainstream angling media further validates the fishery's growing reputation as a premier destination. Looking ahead, Creedence Fishery plans to continue its trajectory of growth with a focus on nurturing huge specimen carp.

A scheduled netting at the year's end aims to curate the lake's population, ensuring that only carp above 25lb remain, alongside the introduction of even more 40lb carp. A testament to the fishery's appeal is a special feature by 'AJ Spooner' of swimbooker, whose YouTube session capturing multiple 30lb catches in a single winter outing has captivated the angling community.

This event, emblematic of the fishery's potential, can be easily accessed through the QR code link, as we invite you to witness the thrill of angling at Creedence Fishery. As Creedence Fishery continues to evolve, its blend of comfort, community, and carp sets it apart, promising memorable experiences for all who visit. With bookings already matching last year's total by February 2024, the fishery's future looks as bright as the reflective scales of its prized carp. Every new booking also includes 3KG of free feed pellet for every angler! Check the live availability of Creedence Fishery via the swimbooker app, and, if you're looking for a comfortable place to target huge carp in Essex, get it booked!



swimbooker

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See us on Facebook (Creedence Fishery) and Instagram (@CreedenceFishery)



We look forward to welcoming you to Creedence Fishery!

## CATCH REPORTS

### BLUE MOON MAKES RARE APPEARANCE



James Pails cradling Dinton White Swan royalty. An incredible looking linear known as Blue Moon. Getting his net under this rarely banked 46lb8oz mirror, certainly put a big smile on James's face.

### TOP WEIGHT FOR EMMET



Emmet at an all time high of 46lb on the dot.

### TOP WEEKEND FOR GAZ



It was a top weekend for Gaz Knowles. United lifted the FA Cup...and he got to lift... "Heartscale" at a 46lb 10oz...Lake record.



Adam Francis with Beadle at 42lb+ from Carthegena. "Pure relief & elation viewing the huge frame in net the following morning, after invaluable help from the boat by Jerry, as Beadle had made a bee-line for the final close in marginal snag."

**WATCH OUT:  
BEADLE'S  
COME  
OUT**

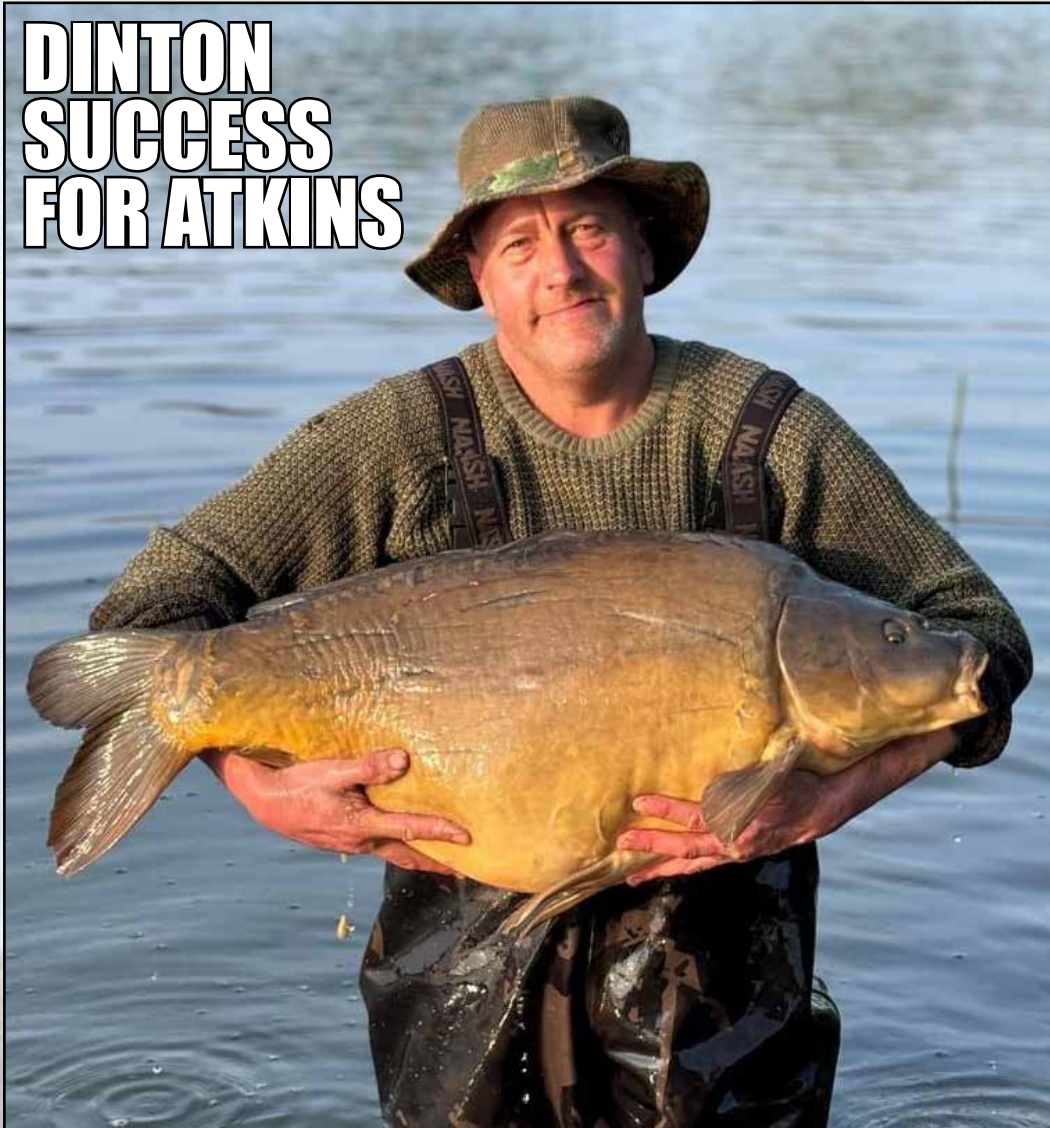


**IVAN'S FISH  
OF A  
LIFETIME**

Fish of a life time for me last week. 53lb 8ozs from St Ives fishery. To say I am still buzzing is an understatement. Thanks to Tony Moulder and Andy Saul for your help and pictures.



## DINTON SUCCESS FOR ATKINS



46lb of Dinton unit for Garry Atkin. With his eyes glued to the water Gary was just waiting for something to act on, a moment that a carp quickly obliged, with a huge set of shoulders crashing out in the distance.

No time to waste Gary didn't faff about finding a spot, opting to simply chuck a single white Monster Shrimp Pop-Up at it.

Rod set and it wasn't long before the bobbin smashed against the blank... a long slow battle proceeded before a huge pair of shoulders plodded into the back of the net.

## PARADISE PB FOR CRAIG

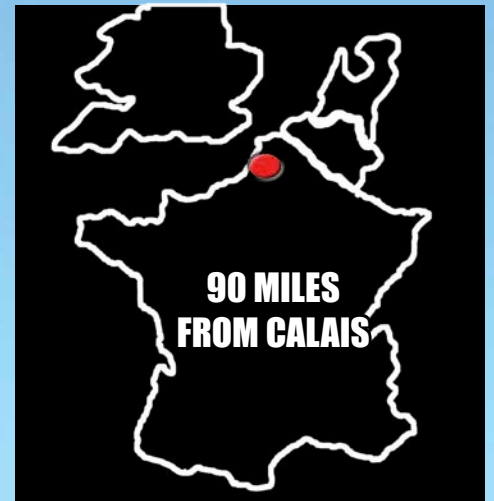


The hardest Lake on the Anglers Paradise complex and Craig Russell has literally smashed it!

With just a couple of hours left of his session, the alarm screams off and before he knew it, he was netting a new personal best 40lb 9oz Common!!!!

Fantastic angling!!! Massive congratulations Craig, we are over the moon for you!!!

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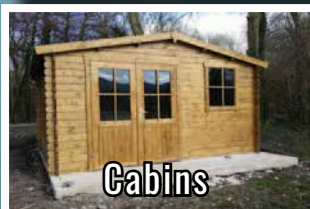
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# HIBBERTS BANKS BRACE OF CHESHIRE 40S



Cheshire forties are a very rare breed, but how about two of them in the same session!

James Hibberts had a dream session on a Cheshire syndicate, landing two 40lb-plus commons as part of a seven-fish catch and setting a new personal best along the way.

The new PB came from a fish known as Scar, which tipped the scales at 43lb 8oz, and was backed up by Barbecue at 42lb 6oz, a fish that had not been caught in 18 months and was making its first bank-side appearance as a forty.

All James' fish were caught over mixed-sized Bug boilies and particles, which he covered in Bug Hydro Spod Syrup.



Nick Dodds has been at it again over on the Bayswater syndicate banking this brute of a mirror at 42lb 12oz using the Zee Bug boilie range!

**ZEE BUG  
BANKS  
BAYESWATER  
BEAUTY**



A recent capture that simply blew me away. A fish called the "Big Stockie" at 52lb 8oz and my new PB mirror. It's also my first 50lber caught on Halo baits.

A yellow Skunkz pop up fished over BMX boilies & chillie hemp. Size 4 Ronnie rigs with small pva mesh bags were used. Big shout out to the boys especially Jake for everything.

**GEEZER  
GETS A  
NIFTY**



## CATCH REPORTS

Dean Knight reported in saying, "Last week I landed a new lake record & smashed my p.b by 21lb finally landing 1 of the big girls from the monster 300-acre pit. This is only my 2nd fish in 5 seasons. With this being my 6th season. There's only about 40 carp present, so this place really does separate the men from the boys. 1 of the biggest fish in the country at 62lb 4oz. A proper fish from a proper pit. What a buzz!

# 300 ACRE 60 FOR KNIGHT



## BLUEBELL BEAUTY



Richard Hall with the "Si Harris" what a clonking 47lb 8oz Bluebell fish caught on the ever faithful ASM.



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## NEW HORCOTT LAKES 40



This 40lb fully scaled mirror was banked by Paul Allen on his recent session at Horcott Lakes & yet another new 40 for the complex.

Paul fished a combination of CC Moore & Co Ltd Prostim Liver & Odyssey XXX boilies, corn & a few pellets. Paul used a PSL pink wafter cast over the top of his mix to tempt this absolute awesome carp.

Fortis' Darran Goulder was over the moon to land a new PB in the shape of this glorious 57lb 12oz common!

Fishing like a coiled spring for a week is not everyone's cup of tea but it's a truly amazing lake to pit your wits against and due to the terrain put some future products to test too

Huge custom boilies from Poacher Baits being the order of the day.

## GOULDER GETS A GIANT COMMON



## STILL BUZZING MY BITS OFF!!



Dean Mackay reported that, "I remember my first 20 like it was yesterday. I remember my first 30, like it was yesterday. I remember my first 40, like it was yesterday. And I remember my first UK 50, like it was...hold on...it was yesterday.."





### IT'S SILVER FOR TONY

Tony Higgins has recently returned from a red-letter session on Elsons lake Stanwick Fishery, landing this epic commonly known as the Silver Common and at 44lb 2oz, it's a new lake record!

A 12mm yellow Nutcracker pop up presented amongst a scattering of matching free offerings was enough to tempt this incredible carp.



### AJ BANKS PB

Friend of Bank Tackle Adam Jones has beat his PB with this 43lb 8oz beauty. Rig bits included the new BT Specialist Wide Gapes in size 6 and our Semi Stiff Coated Braid. Well done Adam, congratulations on your new PB That's another PB to the Specialist range.



### LAMEY LANDS ZIG LUMP

After smashing my UK PB last year a few people asked me what are my target fish or targets?

With the time I do now days I never have target fish I just want bites although I have plenty I want to catch.

The only target I had was to catch a 40 on zig or off the surface! The first decent session for a long time with the right conditions I landed this 41lb 3oz mirror! So, target achieved

## CATCH REPORTS

The UK's most distinguished and largest fully scaled carp has graced the banks of Manor Carp Fishery once again, succumbing to a bait it clearly has a taste for – The Bug!!

Its Captor was Neil Smith, who landed the 60lb 12oz giant at approximately 6 o'clock on a beautiful Sunday morning from a spot he had laced with Bug goodness.

**PRAISE  
THE  
LORD!!**



Jordan Pashley said, "I was completely lost for words when one of the lads read out the weight!" A near 60lb mirror of monstrous proportions - massive well-done mate!

The big girls like his mix of Krill Active, mixed sizes of Bloodworm pellet, corn and a good helping of Calanus liquid.

**MONKS  
MONSTER  
NEARS  
60**



# Storm Free Fishery

**A great challenge, stealth required!**



I am proud to announce the opening of a new and exciting venue called Storm Free Fishery! The lake is located near Limoges, France and It is steeped in history, dating back to the Napoleonic period. It is approximately three acres in size, set in a beautiful and remote wooded valley full of beech, ash and oak trees. Please feel free to contact me with your enquiries. Kind regards,

**Mark Gibson**



- Exclusive lake booking for up to four anglers (price TBC).
- Previously held a good number of 30s, 40s and some 50s but the stock is unknown.
- New facilities will include summer house, kitchen, shower, toilet and newly refurbished swims.
- Lake record (from over 15 years ago) 56lbs.
- Restaurants, shops and supermarkets within 15 minutes.
- Large fully stocked tackle shop within 15 minutes.
- Quiet valley with no light pollution.

- Stock size: approximately 80-100 carp.
- Un-fished for over 15 years!
- 40 mins drive from Limoges.
- Three acres in size.
- 300 years old.
- Catfish over 100lb.

**NEW  
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OPEN**

[www.stormfreefishery.com](http://www.stormfreefishery.com)

**Storm Free Fishery**

Contact: Mark Gibson on 07599 547978  
[stormfreefishery@gmail.com](mailto:stormfreefishery@gmail.com)

See us on Facebook  and Instagram 



# THAT'S NO 'TINPOT' 50



Daren 'Tinpot' Norman got his spring off the mark at Burghfield in emphatic style a few weeks back. Well done Tinny! 'I learnt long ago that when times are tough you've gotta just keep on pushing and finally on my 20th night of the year I got it right and nicked a couple of fish on my 3rd move of a 4 day session. It was worth the wait, being my 4th U.K. 50, a fish known as the half lin at 50lb 2oz. A couple of hours later I followed it up with a 38 to make the long drive home a happy one this time. Both fish weeded me up for some time but the size 4 Claw Hammers held firm, these were fished slipped on tungsten loaded links. Happy days!



### UNKNOWN 40 FOR PARKER



Dan Parker has been at it yet again, catching the kind of carp many of us could only dream about catching.

This incredible forty plus has probably not seen a hook in years, maybe never, who knows. The one thing we do know is that she now sits firmly in Danks album along with many other special ones he has had in recent times.

### THE SMALL SCALE FULLY PLAYS BALL



Alex Ball with the Small Scale Fully at 42lb from Roach Pit.

### LEWIS COMPLETS THE SET



English 50lb mirrors are rare especially ones which look like this beauty named Kev's Lin from the famous Stoneacres. Urban baits Lewis Holland landed the stunning mirror last week using a combination of Nutcracker and Red spicy fish! He has now completed the set of big fish from the low stock pit, top angling Lewis once again!

## CATCH REPORTS

### WHITE TIPS TRIPS UP



Surely one of the best commons in the country has crossed the cord to GT angler Daniel F o a k e s mighty White Tips at 51lb 8oz.

### NOT SO 'ARD FOR THE EVERARDS



Jamie Everard had a great trip up to Cotswolds with his old Man. They landed 19 fish landed between them. Hi-lights being a big old mirror of 45lb, a fully scaled of 33lb 8oz, another mirror of 34lb and a 33lb+ for Jamie's dad.

Having the majority of my bites from the edge watching them get nailed made for some pretty exciting fishing.





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### **Standlake, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 7RZ**

3 Carp Fishery Lakes for sale with associated surrounding land. The lakes, known as Oxlease, Hunts Corner and Hunts Corner Pond are let out and operated together with other lakes as part of a wider day ticket fishery. The Lease has break provisions (subject to notice) so the lakes could be of interest as an investment or to lake operators. Currently 40 swims on the largest lake and 10 on the secondary lake. In all about 65.83 acres (26.63 hectares)

For Further Details contact Charlotte Bailey or Kevin Prince  
Charlotte.bailey@adkin.co.uk or kevin.prince@adkin.co.uk

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## THE BOX TICKED OFF



A penultimate moment on Sam Jones campaign saw him land 'The Box' at over 50lb. A sure sign that things are really starting to kick into gear!

Well it's finally happened for Chris Butler. "I've finally put a fish on the bank this year after countless nights and lost fish. Well worth the wait though at 40lb 15oz. I'm a very happy bunny

## BUTLER BANKS THIS BEAUTY AFTER 20 NIGHT BLANK





it must be coming up to 20 years since I first set foot on Linear but I was finally rewarded with one I dearly wanted, the "big original" as I have called it. A fish that was around when I very first started fishing the complex all them years ago.....for the record the fish weighed 40lbs 10oz and what made the capture even more special was that I got to share it with my amazing girlfriend!

### MAKER'S MADE UP WITH THIS MIRROR



James Cox decided to head over to Christchurch to try and get amongst a few of the ones he had 'left behind' A three-night trip resulted in an eight-fish hit, with the top prize being 'Litchys' at an awe-inspiring 42lb

### LAKE SWAP PAYS OFF



## SECOND 60 FOR DAN



Dan Taylor recently landed the lakes biggest resident at 61lb his second UK 60. Dan said: "I caught the big common on my 13th night at the venue fishing a swim that had done me well on a previous trip."

Well done to Chris Belcher who's had a brilliant spring on the Wharf pool. He told us: "With spawning on the horizon and the weather spot on for the time of year I had to get out. I arrived at the lake at 4pm rods out by 4:15pm and this stunner weighing 56lb 12oz was in the net by 5pm, rods were packed up straight after and it was the perfect end to a super spring campaign."

## 15 MINUTES FOR A 50



## ELLA'VA COMMON THAT SPUG



Mike Spug Redfern has just landed his 6th Norfolk 40 in the shape of "Ella" at a new PB common of 46lbs 2oz from Robles Lake at Layfields Lakes. He caught on an Essential IB Waffer fished over Cell and Essential Cell freebies.

### MARVELLOUS MIRROR MARLES



Mervyn William Marles successfully banked this stunning 40lb 12oz scaly mirror using the soon to be released ISO Fish with matching hookbait and Smart Liquid. Well angled, Mervyn.

### NO BUTTS IT'S A BEAUTY



Congratulations to Ryan Butt on his capture of this Linch Hill mirror known as Single Scale weighing 47lb 6oz.

### A FROSTY FORTY



It was a cold, wet and frosty one for Rob Saunders down on The Carp Society's Farriers Lake. "A few better fish had been showing in one area of the lake so that's where I started. The night passed without a sign but by lunch time the fish were showing around the spots. Shortly after the left rod was away with a 38lb common then an hour later the right rod was away producing a perfect 47+ common. Then it all went quiet but I wasn't complaining"

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## *fine arts*

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# Oak Lakes Fisheries



[www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk](http://www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk)

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



The smile says it all. A nice 15lb common

Another PB smashed with this 30lb 5oz common



Gary Linear banked 2 nice carp recently including this 21lb common and a 19lb 9oz mirror.

The mirror known as Two Face made an appearance at 30lb 6oz

Tony Shinton banked this 30lb carp. He wanted to name it Sophie's Common after his daughter.



Greg and Frank Chappell banked 4 carp between them - nice one lads

The Long Common graced bank at an impressive 33lb 4oz.



Another nice 20 from the day ticket lake



**THE  
BEST  
MEDICINE**

**DEAN WALSH**

I'm not one to normally talk about personal things but I feel like it's the best way to let everybody know the truth of how I've been able to get my head so deep into my angling the last five years, especially the last two. Also to help people understand some of my choices and decisions I've made in this time.

All of my twenty's and even my later teens I've struggled with mental health, to the point sometimes I couldn't bare to be around people even my closest friends and family keeping everything bottled up and away.

Trying to forget about it all by partying all the time, gambling and all the other things that comes along with this and having an addictive personality I knew I needed to change these negative habits to positive ones which is where my fishing came into place massively.

Feeling as though it's not the normal and it's "unmanly" to speak about it is probably the most common factor of why men don't speak about it but the truth is it takes a set of balls

and a big heart to air it out there and be honest and open about it. Some of the strongest people I know mentally and physically have been through a lot of similar experience, mental health can affect anybody.

As many have said in the past and I would definitely agree, it is the worst thing you can do. But as a young bloke it feels easier to keep it all inside rather than face the music and deal with it.

I've not put this out there for people to feel sorry or for sympathy etc if I'm gona be honest this is one of the main reasons I've never put it out there or spoke about it as I struggle to deal with stuff like that but after losing a few of my closest due to mental health and knowing a lot of people around me are dealing with it I've finally come to this decision. Anybody out there struggling that feels like they've got nobody to speak to and needs a chat my

inboxes are always open or my phones always on for a chat!

Any narrow-minded or judgemental people that are of the mindset of "mental health isn't real" please do me a favour and remove yourself from my social media. Your negative energy isn't wanted round here!

Big love to family and friends on and off the bank! I know most of you wouldn't have had a clue about any of this you'd be lucky if 1% of people I know had half an idea about it. Nothing personal anybody that knows me properly me knows I'm a stubborn b\*\*\*\*\*d that's always faced my problems alone and probly always will.

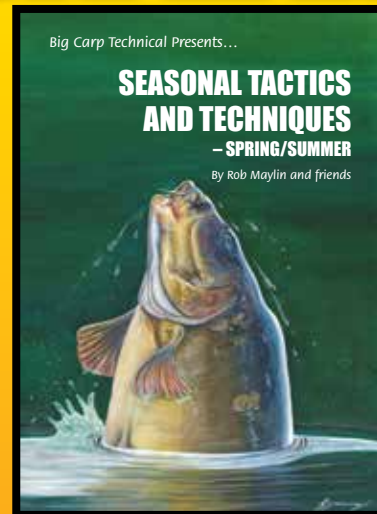
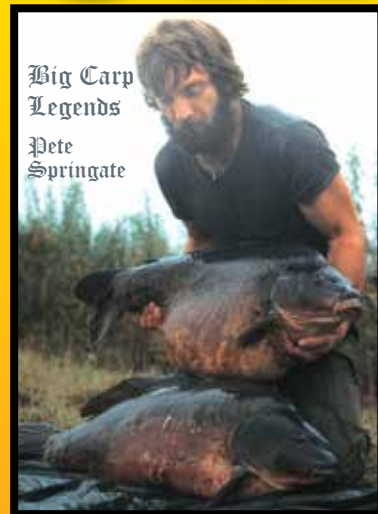
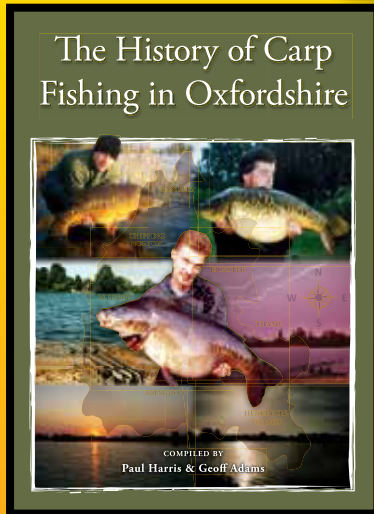
Anyways that's enough of the serious talk for now, here's a photo of Tilly, my 4th target in 40 nights and my first UK 50 weighing 56lb!!

After 29 nights of solid angling accross 4 different lakes over 350 miles apart clocking over 3000 miles amongst it all bouncing county to county doing over 450 miles in one day looking at 3 diffo lakes before I decided on one to fish.

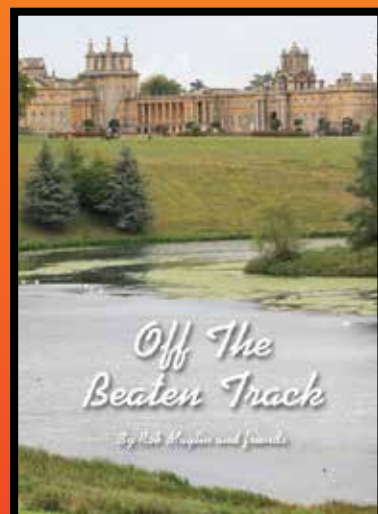
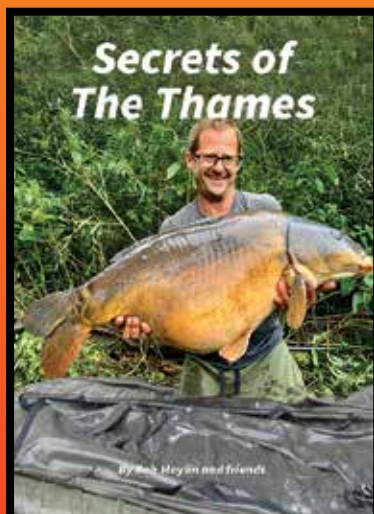
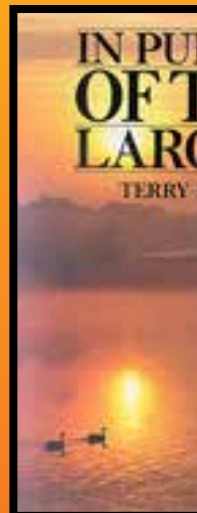
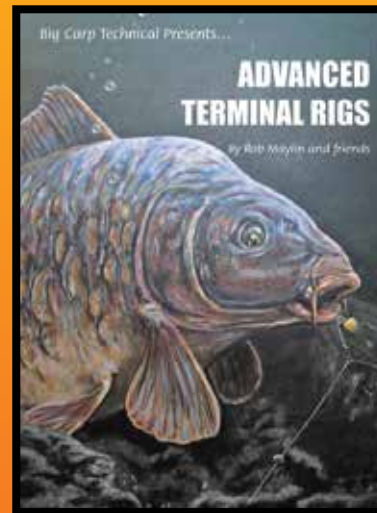
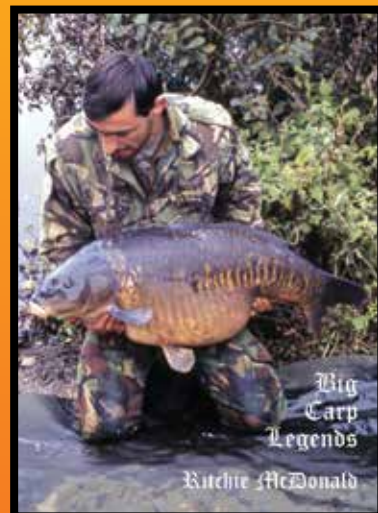
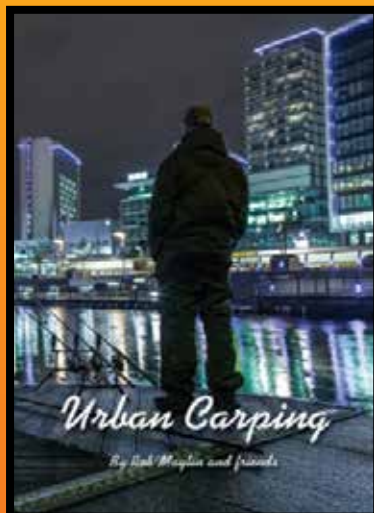
Effort = Reward and with a bit luck along the way anything is possible!!



# SUMMER S



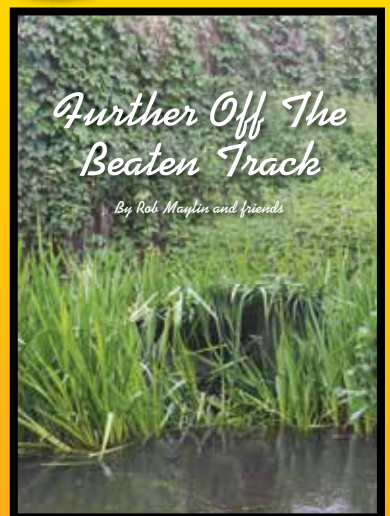
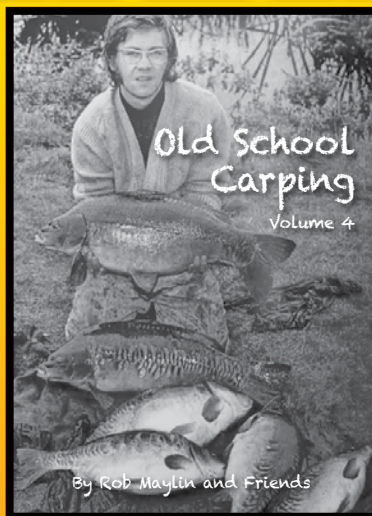
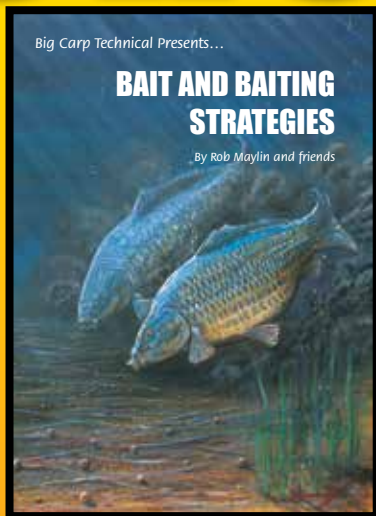
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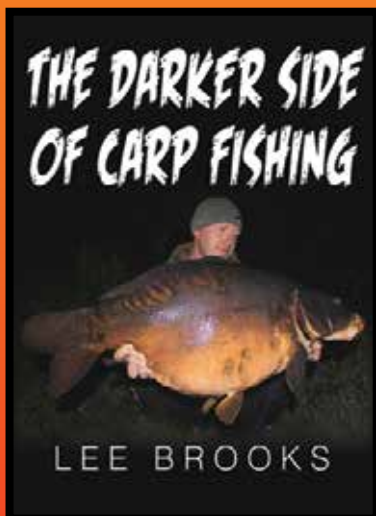
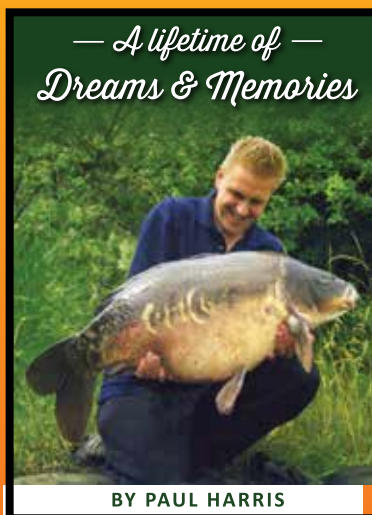
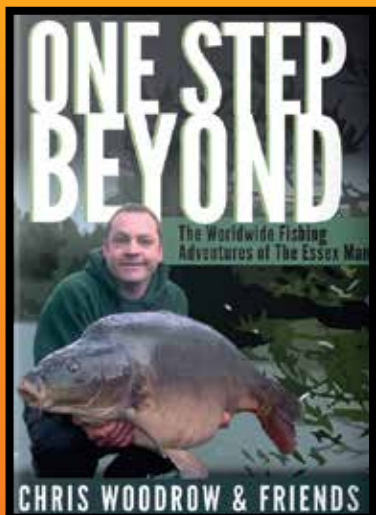
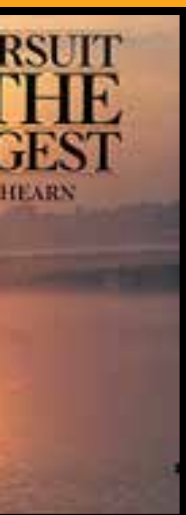
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# **DOWN IN DEEPEST DEVON**

**TIMOTHY THORNTON**

I'd ventured up the M5 from my home in South East st Devon a couple of times in the winter of 2024 for a few short day sessions on Durleigh reservoir in Somerset. This is a pre swim booking days only venue which presents challenges in terms travel, time, location and weather conditions.

I was hoping to repeat the success of the previous winter, but this year for me it just didn't happen. I'd blanked on each occasion. This might sound an unusual start to a success story, but this is how it was.

The good thing about failure means it causes you to look at why you failed. I assessed the last few trips and one thing I had noticed was that any carp I did see were way out of range for normal long range casting. Bait

boats were allowed on the venue in winter and early spring but being a bit of a traditional angler I'd shyed away from using one.

However, I'd figured that the only way I was going to get to the vast majority of the carp in the lake was to invest in a boat which I did.

There was also another big reason I wanted to use a boat and that was I wanted to selectively target the larger carp in the reservoir. This was often difficult to do as all too often when the main shoal fish came upon a big bed of bait the odds of a biggie picking up your hookbait first were greatly reduced.

So, my approach was to drop off a decent amount of bait in the boat to create an attractive spot, but not so great that it attracted the shoal. That



They certainly liked the bait mix I gave them

was the theory anyway. This would mean any bigger carp feeding away from the shoal as I believe they often do would be more likely to feed on the spot solely and increase my chances of bigger carp. In other words, being more selective.

Now Durleigh operates a booking system and you have to book your swim a couple of weeks before you fish, and we all know a lot can change in 2 weeks. Right? So it can be a bit of a lottery I.e. 1. weather conditions. 2. Are the carp up for a feed? 3. Where are the carp? 4. You are limited to a day session with a fixed pre booked swim. Etc. Etc. You get the picture !!.

So, I'd got the location pretty much spot on as the carp were held up mainly some 170+ yards out towards the central area

of the dam end in an area surrounded by buoys near the valve tower. So I made sure I'd got myself booked in the best possible swim near to this location.

I'd also noticed they favoured a certain spot at range so I concentrated on this and fed it a couple of times a week over a 3 week period by pre booking my swim.

So the rest was down to the weather conditions and if the carp wanted a feed. In other words I'd put myself in the best position to increase the odds of getting big fish bites. I had to accept, if they weren't having it on the particular day I went I couldn't change that. That's fishing !!.

So from the end of March to the start of April I had a few sessions. I'd also timed the sessions so that it was at a critical



There was a fine line between too much and just enough bait

time when the carp were becoming more active into spring.

My first couple of sessions saw me have quite few bites resulting of some decent carp, but



The baiting kicked in after 3 weeks, starting off with this 29lb 8oz mirror

The first of a string of 30s going 31lb 2oz



nothing massive. Things changed after the bait had been going in a couple of weeks. I was on DNA baits Bug/SLK/S7 boilies with their Crayfish maxi mix pellets and a few tigers and corn. A high attract mix with added liquids which are also in the DNA range.

Things changed in the form of a lovely long old Durleigh mirror of 29lb 8oz which slipped up to my Bug 18mm hard hooker and 15mm Bug pop up snowman hookbait attached to a pva bag of Crayfish maxi mix pellets injected with Crayfish spod syrup.

This fish had previously done 33lb and was the calibre of fish I was after using this selective baiting approach.

My next day sessions saw a couple early bites in the morning again and

A simple Snowman presentation on a D-Rig proved itself over and over.



The best of my spring campaign at 37lb 6oz



it became clear feeding pattern was developing. A spell in the morning and another late afternoon if they were 'on it'. I had a low twenty then it went quiet. The next bite was a one toner at range. I hit into it and it immediately took line at 170+ yards. It surfaced in 20+ feet of water and there was a massive bow wave. This was no double !!. I took line and began a very slow deep battle nearly all the way to the bank. Then disaster struck. It snagged me on something. I kept the pressure on and eased it out. Great, I thought, then the hook pulled. Guttred!!! I remained mentally strong and put this big loss behind me. It was certainly a very big carp.

The next bite was a slow heavy fish which after

a decent scrap went 31.02. Typically bigger after a quiet spell shoal free. I was elated. My first 30 of the spring campaign and my 4th 30 off the water. It made up for the loss earlier.

My next session was a quite a slow one. Not much doing which I didn't mind. As I've previously mentioned, the bigger carp tend to come out the blue when the main shoal aren't feeding. I'd two traps set in the zone and another set near to where I'd seen a couple of shows. I'd two in the zone, I was fishing, so didn't mind sacrificing a third rod for a bit of exploratory work.

About mid morning I had a sow take on one of the distance rods on the spot. A typical heavy battle again ensued. These carp

test every component of your tackle so you have to check and double check rigs, hooks etc every time. I use Carptackleonline size 4 Scorpion Crank hooks for most of my long range carp fishing. They are super strong and reliable.

As I got the carp under the rod tip it started playing up a bit probably giving a last ditch attempt for freedom. I could see it was big. As I pulled it over the net cord there was a sigh of relief. Only when I went to lift this carp after dismantling the net did I realise how big. Clearly an upper 30.

I zeroed the Reuben Heaton scales with my light weigh sling and she went 37lb 08oz. After re checking the weight of the sling I subtracted a

After achieving my targets, I shared the spot with some close friends



achieved my spring target from the water so pressure was off if you like. These resulted in a fair few carp and a number of 20s. Indeed it was great to share the spot with a few mates and my mate John's son Leo ( aka Shrimpton).

After the socials I re focused and set out on another sole session. The bait had been going in a couple of weeks now in decent quantities. I was quite satisfied not many other anglers were accurately fishing my spot, and if they were all the better. More bait going in.

The next session saw me focus on two spots. The original long range spot and the spot I'd seen fish show before from where I'd had the 21+ scaley from. There appeared to be two areas now they were favouring. The session started with steady bites

further 2oz making her 37lb 6oz. A new PB for me.

My mate James Floyd was on the other side of the reservoir and his mate kindly took some pictures. She was then safely returned.

A couple of hours late

the third rod I'd set near the showing carp I'd seen earlier was away and after a decent battle a lovely 21+ scaley mirror was in the net.

I had a couple of social sessions with mates after this as I'd more than

They were a long way out, in an area surrounded by bouys, making it an added challenge



This fine 31lb 8oz Durlough common marked the end of my Spring campaign



and fish to 20+. I then hooked a decent fish on the distance spot which I got right into the side but calamity struck and it managed to get wrapped around my 2nd and 3rd lines slipping the hook. This was a large common. Gutted again!! Baits back out and I was soon playing another which turned out to be 30lb 8oz. My disappointment was now overcome!!

As the day went on they really got on the bait on the distance spot resulting in me only fishing with one rod at one stage. To cut a long story short I had 10 bites that day, the other notable ones going 27lb 8oz, 26lb 2oz, 24lb 4oz and 20lb 2oz.

The fishing had been pretty intense over the

three weeks of my little campaign so I decided I was going to do one last session before winding things down. I'd done well, so wanted to end on a high.

My last session was a pretty cold affair with not much showing or bites. I did see the odd carp show but no pick ups. It was getting late in the afternoon and I'd noticed a couple of decent carp show a couple of times short. When I say short I mean 60 yards ish. So I dropped a rod on that spot and left it alone for an hour or so. In the meantime the distance spot produced a character common about 18lb. I then had a really slow drop back on the short rod. Typical bream I thought. But this was

no bream. I met solid resistance and a slow deep fight began with the wind whistling past my ears and through my line. Thankfully, she was soon in the net. A lovely, long, pristine, big-reservoir common. She went 31lb 8oz and what a looker!! After a couple of self takes she was returned.

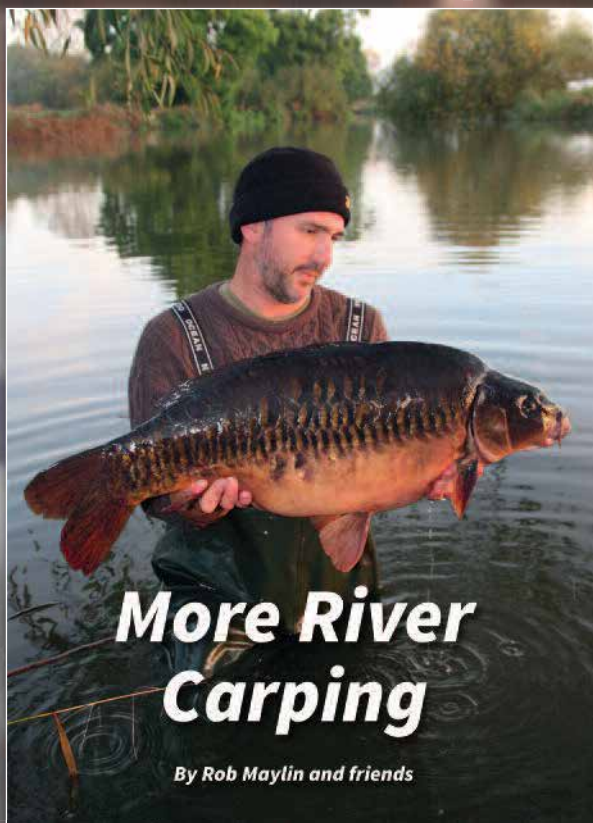
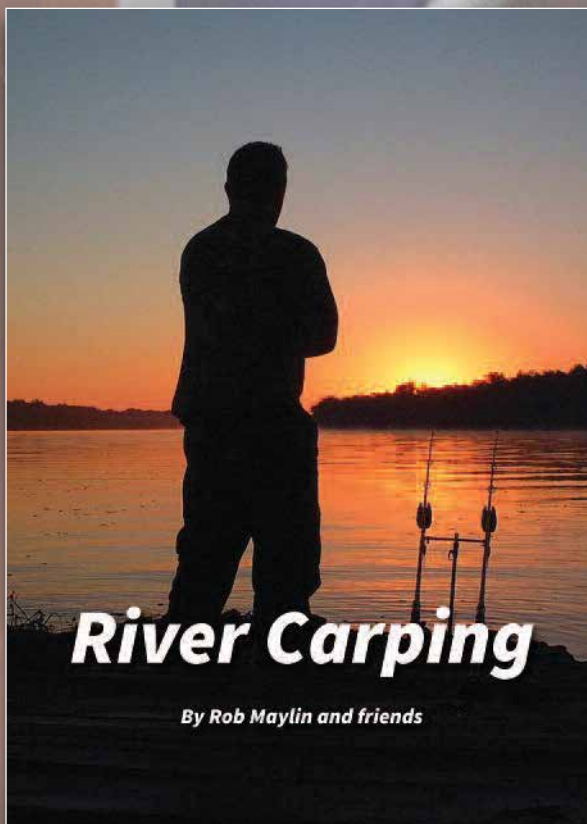
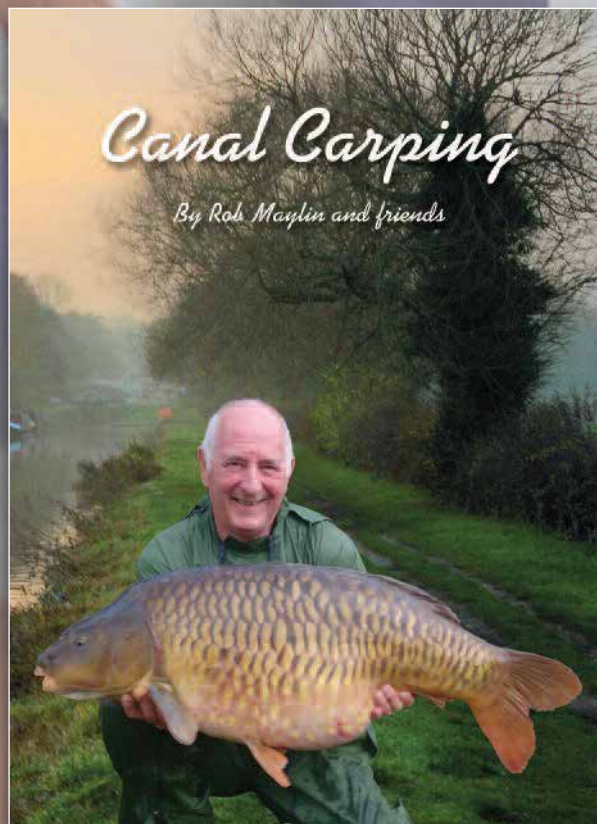
This ended my mini Spring campaign on Durlough reservoir in style. There was a lot of thought, planning and effort that went into the captures, which aren't often shown in social media. It also proves you can be selective for larger carp. You just have to use thought, perseverance and keep on going !!

Timing is everything. ■



# THE RIVER AND CANAL SERIES

*Tales and Technical, a must read series for the river and canal angler*



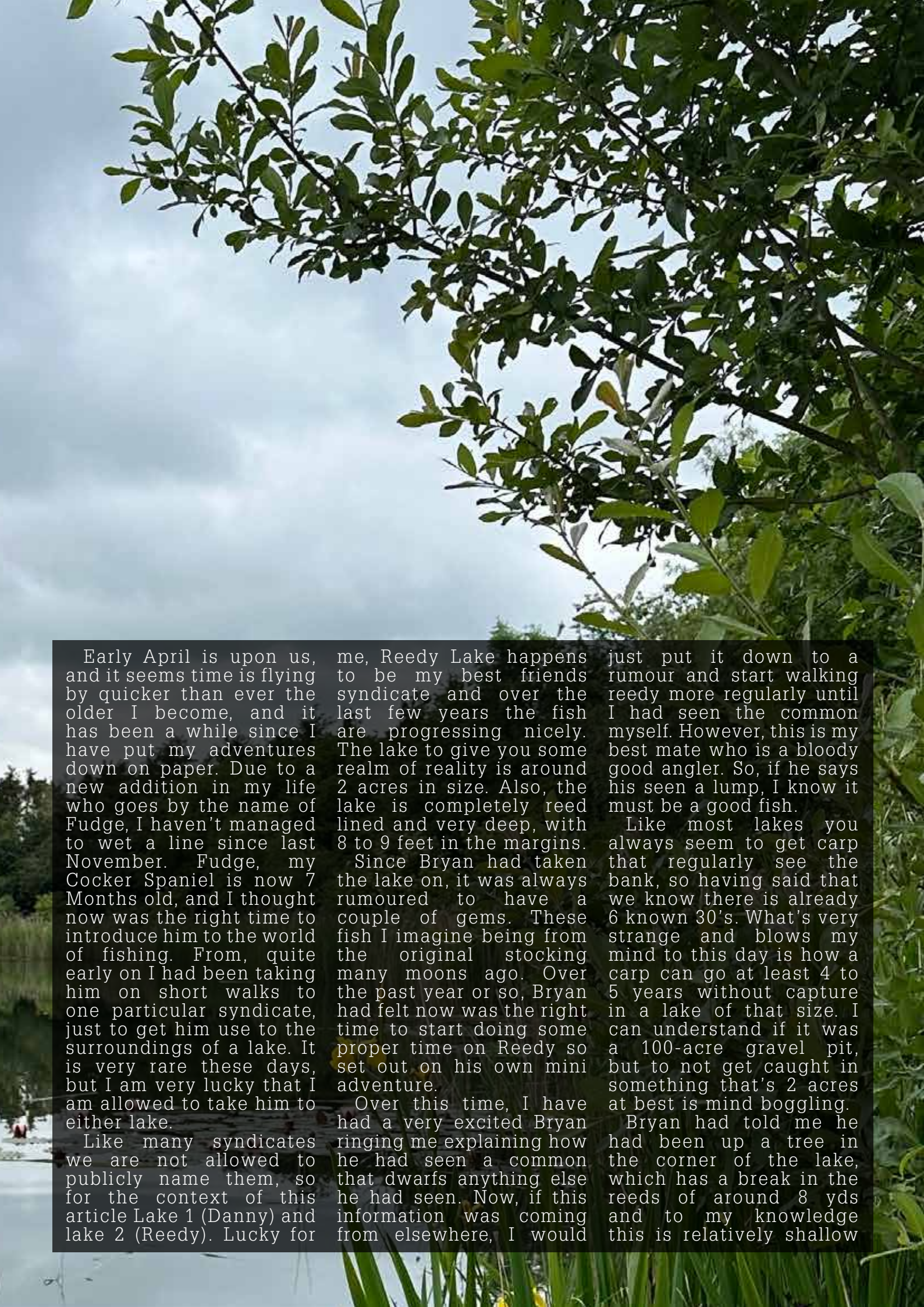
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# QUEEN OF HEARTS

MARK QUINN



Early April is upon us, and it seems time is flying by quicker than ever the older I become, and it has been a while since I have put my adventures down on paper. Due to a new addition in my life who goes by the name of Fudge, I haven't managed to wet a line since last November. Fudge, my Cocker Spaniel is now 7 Months old, and I thought now was the right time to introduce him to the world of fishing. From, quite early on I had been taking him on short walks to one particular syndicate, just to get him use to the surroundings of a lake. It is very rare these days, but I am very lucky that I am allowed to take him to either lake.

Like many syndicates we are not allowed to publicly name them, so for the context of this article Lake 1 (Danny) and lake 2 (Reedy). Lucky for

me, Reedy Lake happens to be my best friends syndicate and over the last few years the fish are progressing nicely. The lake to give you some realm of reality is around 2 acres in size. Also, the lake is completely reed lined and very deep, with 8 to 9 feet in the margins.

Since Bryan had taken the lake on, it was always rumoured to have a couple of gems. These fish I imagine being from the original stocking many moons ago. Over the past year or so, Bryan had felt now was the right time to start doing some proper time on Reedy so set out on his own mini adventure.

Over this time, I have had a very excited Bryan ringing me explaining how he had seen a common that dwarfs anything else he had seen. Now, if this information was coming from elsewhere, I would

just put it down to a rumour and start walking reedy more regularly until I had seen the common myself. However, this is my best mate who is a bloody good angler. So, if he says his seen a lump, I know it must be a good fish.

Like most lakes you always seem to get carp that regularly see the bank, so having said that we know there is already 6 known 30's. What's very strange and blows my mind to this day is how a carp can go at least 4 to 5 years without capture in a lake of that size. I can understand if it was a 100-acre gravel pit, but to not get caught in something that's 2 acres at best is mind boggling.

Bryan had told me he had been up a tree in the corner of the lake, which has a break in the reeds of around 8 yds and to my knowledge this is relatively shallow

Fudge was almost as excited as I was



use a solid p.v.a bag method. One I had found productive in years past. The idea is to keep things very simple including the rig that consists of:

- Size 6 Curve shank hook.
- 20lb IQ soft material (7 inches).
- Micro hook swivel.
- Hook stopper bead.
- Inline Lead arrangement.
- Wafter hook bait.

Bait wise I use a mixture, for my loose feed I use D.T Baits Cold water green beast including a pellet. However, for my hook baits, I use RCS filthy hooker range from Carp Addiction. Lake Arrival. Fudge and I pulled up to the electric gate and with a zap of the card we were in. At this point, Fudge was sat on my lap as we made our way down the farm track. He seemed as excited as me panting heavily and whimpering out the window, almost as if he knew what was about to take place. We pulled up in the carpark and I let Fudge out the van, he went straight to the otter fence gate wagging his tail with excitement to get in. To my amazement no one was fishing, which was a god send. This meant we could take our time and walk the lake and try to locate a few.

It wasn't long before I saw the first show. A chestnut mirror fully out the water flopping over. I spent some time watching the water in a swim called the Hangover, a swim I've caught from in the past. The fish seemed to be more out in front of the next swim, a swim called Lorrell's. If you were to draw a line down the

compared to the rest of the lake with around 3 to 4 feet in depth. He said fish had been coming in regular to feed on the spot when suddenly, a fish called Single came gliding in to have a little feed. There had been a recent capture of Single, so we know last time out she was around 34lb. Bryan said Single hadn't been feeding long when a huge shape emerged from the depths and with this, he said his jaw dropped and couldn't believe what he was witnessing. The big framed common was directly below him and Bryan said he was frozen to the tree trunk trying to put some kind of weight to the monster. He said he had to keep looking at Single then the common to try and gauge its size and concluded that the common was at least another 1/4 in width

compared to Single and a further 6 to 8 inches in length. Having said this, Bryan put a conservative estimate of 42lb but said it could easily be bigger than that. A nice dilemma. Having taken this information on board, I now had a dilemma of what lake to fish for my first session with Fudge. I decided to start on Danny's. There are a few reasons for this:

1. It's completely fenced in.
2. Fudge has plenty of freedom.
3. Every fish is a hand-picked stunner.
4. All at big weights this time of year.

With that settled, I was buzzing with excitement going through the normal rituals. This turned quickly to approach. Normally, this time of year can always be tricky with the fish not long waking up, so I decided I would



Faith in your bait is paramount for a campaign



Simplicity and reliability are what I look for in a rig



A boilie and pellet approach has always served me well



Small PVA bags give me the perfect presentation

centre of the lake they were on that line.

I didn't rush at this point and decided to sit a little longer in the hangover, a lovely little swim that fishes to the island with a channel leading to the shallow end of the lake. The weather was warm, and the sun was beating down so I knew there may be a point the fish may decide to venture down to the shallows and just as I thought this, I saw some bubbles breaking the surface near a bush on the island. I looked at Fudge and said come on champ lets start in here, and with that we went to get the gear.

After setting up home it was time to get the rods out, as previously stated I had fished this swim in the past and

decided to wrap the rods to my normal spots. To be honest, it's a swim where you could quite easily just fish one rod as fishing 2 can sometimes cut you off. However, I opted to fish 2 and flicked them out on to the spots and slackened off completely. I then grabbed the catapult and put 2 pouchful of boilies over each rod. I sat back on the bed chair with Fudge under 1 arm telling him it looks good. He looked at me as if to say what are you talking about you nutter? Please can I go and chase the birds now? lol.

Take 1: I had been sat there for around an hour just taking it all in, when I thought shit, I haven't had a cuppa. There is nothing more carpy than the kettle on the stove. Us anglers

are a strange breed and its funny how we all have our own superstitions, so with that on went the kettle.

The kettle was just coming to the boil when out of nowhere the bobbin pulled up tight and we were away (You couldn't have planned it better). Fudge bless him, must of wondered what the hell was going on. The Delkim Wobble followed by me chucking my cup while running to the rod. I picked the rod up and instantly realised I was into what felt like a decent fish. What followed was one of the best battles with a carp I have ever had. I was forced to backwind straight away with whatever I was attached to taking 50 yards off me and kiting



First of the year - Trebore at a very pleasing 31lb 12oz

along the far margin. Mr Carp then made its way back across the lake and continued to burrow 20 yards up the margin to my right. By this point I was anxious, as there is a bush that stretches out into the lake to my right. I was on my knees with the tip under the water as low as I could get it. The thing is, in Danny's they are all stunners, and you don't want to lose any of them, and we were at a stalemate for what felt like an eternity. Not only this, but the fish seem to know exactly where to go as it continued to burrow. Eventually the fish started to tire, and the lunges became more controllable, and it wasn't long before I caught my first glimpse of what I was attached too. A common, and it looked

a good fish too. I love watching commons twist and turn in the depths, they have a fleck of white under their scales that sparkle in the clear water. I reached down to my left and slid the net into the water, the common was close to being Fudge's first encounter and I was shaking with excitement. As the tubing broke the surface of the water followed by a huge bar of gold, I slipped the net under her, and she was ours. I lifted the net to take a closer look at our prize, yes, I thought, that's 30 and made sure.

Fudge new this was a good thing and not to be scared if that makes sense. I transferred the fish into the retainer and weighed her, the scales rattled round to 31lb

12oz. What a result, first fish of the year and it's a 30. I literally lowered the fish back down on the matt when Lee one of the bailiffs was behind me. "Oi oi what you got?"

"A lovely common mate, and your just in time to take the pictures" I replied.

I unzipped the retainer and held up what can only be described as stunning. I asked Lee what one it was as I wasn't familiar with the common and he wasn't sure either. Turned out to be a rare one, a fish called Trebore. With help from Lee, we managed to get some filming done and the necessary photos. There seems to be a bit more pressure these days due to our brand Aqua Liliium Clothing. Everything must be logged

My brother Steven got in on the action with this 28lb mirror



and photographed so we have social media content to show case the brand. It wasn't long before it was time to return the bar of gold to her home and with a twist and a flick of her tail she melted away, as if it was just a dream. Lee congratulated me and continued his walk round and once he was out of sight, I had a little dance with Fudge whispering yeessssssss lets go again.

Take 2: I put the rod back out on the spot and re-boiled the kettle for that well earned cuppa. It was lovely sitting there watching Fudge sat at the edge of the swim, trying to work out what was going on with the Geese. They were causing a right old commotion fighting with the swans, I guess for best nesting rights to bring up there young.

Nothing really happened

that evening and as the sun fell and the sky darkened, it was time to settle down and get in my bag. Fudge didn't settle to well due to the bird life, but he is a young dog and I guess this will get better with time.

We managed to fall asleep around midnight I believe, and in my subconsciousness I could hear a bite alarm. I guess I was just out of sink as it took me a second to work out, I was away again. It was only the fact Fudge sat up that I realised it was us. I stumbled down the bank and bent into the take, Fudge started to cry as I didn't have time to take him off his night clip. I told him it was ok and continued to play the fish. The fight was different to the first, with the fish being a bit faster through the water and after a much shorter

battle to the first, the fish was in the net. I turned on my head torch and peered inside, it was a lovely scraper 20 mirror with beautiful scale patterns. I guess a stocky Ben had stocked a year or so ago. Daylight was upon us, so I transferred the fish to the retainer and wasted no time getting the rod back out on the spot. I didn't feel the need to retain the fish and quickly weighed the mirror, so Ben had a record for the logbook, I then took a few snaps on the matt and checked the fish for any minor marks. There was one other person fishing down in the shallows, but it was early, and I didn't really know him, so I made the decision just to slip the fish back.

Take 3: I turned to Fudge and thanked him for being a lucky carp dog, me and my brother are convinced its not skill that puts these fish on the bank, but its simply down to the dogs. By this time Fudge was looking at me as if to say cut the crap and feed me lol, so with that on went the kettle for a cuppa and his bowl was filled with biscuit. I literally had time to take one sip of tea when the bobbin slowly pulled up tight. I have a theory behind this: SLOW TAKE, BIG FISH In my troubled mind, the reason takes are normally slower o bigger fish is the simple fact they must right themselves before taking off, and that slow lift of the bobbin is that happening. Anyway, enough about my imagination, I picked up the same rod that had done the two previous bites and I was right the fish felt heavy as it kited



Carp Addiction RCS hook baits whittled down proved deadly



away to my right. That is the good thing about my Harrisonn Torrix rods, you always know when you're into a good one. Whatever I was attached too slowly continued to my right, again trying to find safety under the bush to my right. I did manage to turn the fish before the bush when the line fell slack. (DISASTER) Absolutely gutted, its never nice when one falls off, however this is a lake where you don't want to lose any of them.

Oh well, I guess you can't win them all and I tried to stay positive thinking about what I had already landed. I did not have time to think to long when my phone started

to ring, it was Steven my brother who also had a ticket for Danny's. He asked how I was getting on and after a brief chat he said he would be over around lunch time. I explained to him a few fish were still showing to the right of me in lorrell's over a spot he had fished in the past, so at least he had something to go on. I could reach the spot from my swim however I chose not to as I did not want to jeopardize the spot I had going and if you remember I explained the swim I was in, is quite tight and you could quite easily only fish one rod.

Take 4: Now, at this point I was starting to wonder if Fudge was lucky or was it

the kettle? I kid you not I pushed the spark button to my Trakker stove and the same rod was away again. A carbon copy of the take before, to the point that the fish kited to the right trying to burrow under the bush. I knew straight away this was another good fish and lucky for me I managed to steer the fish from danger. The fish was heavy and powerful, using its weight to force me into a number of backwind situations and although the fish went on a few runs it was a fight where you felt in control. An eternity had passed (well that is what it felt like) before I got my first glimpse of what I was playing. A mirror, not

Fudge's luck rubbed off on Steven with a 25lb mirror





"Bubbles" tipped the scales at 33lb 8oz - well chuffed



next swim and the wind switched round to a NW. This was to be the last action for me on this trip, however, Steven chucked out to the spot where the fish were showing and had a bite within the hour. Steven held up his prize in the shape of a 25lb mirror and he thanked Fudge for bringing him luck too.

We normally have two carp dogs however, Monty the original carp dog is not very well at the moment and unfortunately can't come with us. Steven managed another two fish that night, strangely enough all around the same weight. To have 7 takes between us and land 6 within 48 hours

was a great session for this lake as its not an easy venue. Morning broke and we packed up early, unfortunately like most we had to go to work, and we shut the gate on what was another great memory made. I've stepped in something. A week had passed before Fudge and me would see ourselves on the bank again, and as usual my best mate Bryan would be on the phone checking in to see how I was. He said, me and Kieran are fishing Reedy's Thursday night do you fancy a social? Work was a bit quiet so I said yes definitely however, I would probably go down a day earlier so I would see

them bankside.

I pulled up Wednesday morning and parked Betty the van. Again, to my delight the lake was void of any anglers which gave me the freedom to walk round although to be honest I already knew where I wanted to be, even if the fish wasn't there. The lake is only small so in my head I had 2 days ahead of me and they would get in there as it's a sun trap in the afternoon. If you remember me saying Bryan told me the common liked a particular corner including Single. Although I wasn't interested in Single as I had already had the pleasure of a cuddle on

more than one occasion. With my mind set, and the barrow loaded, we were off.

On our way round to the swim, I did come across some fish in the far corner and thought that's one spot taken care of, and we carried on to our chosen swim. When you have a whole lake to yourself it's important to grab the opportunity and take the piss (I mean use it to your advantage lol). While Fudge made sure to sniff every bush in the swim, I proceeded to get set up. The sky was black with clouds, so I decided to get the house up first. To be honest, more to keep Fudge dry than anything else. It was a close call; I had just slid the bed chair under the dome when the first drops started hitting the water. The bags were quickly thrown in and we

sat there for 20 minutes watching the water for signs. We didn't have to wait long when the reeds to my left near the shallow corner started to rock. Happy days we now have 2 spots to go at.

The rain stopped and for the first time in a week the sun broke through, Heaven I thought to myself as I looked up. I could have stood there for ages as the sun warmed my face, but I snapped out of a daze and continued to push the two rod sections together. I decided to stick to the same methods as I recently used on Danny's. (If it's not broke don't fix it) So, with that said I tied on fresh rigs and a little bag of goodness ready to be placed on each spot. The first rod to go out was the rod to the far corner so this was placed on the spot with a good handful

of cold-water green beast. It was a nice angle to fish the far corner from as it gives you a direct line, anyway I set the bobbin and tightened up the drag to the old work horse and we had one rod fishing. The 2nd rod was placed 3 yards back from the opening in the corner to my left. There were two reeds that were separate to the main reed bed with a slight gap between them. To me, this looked like a doorway into the reeds where a carp would be using it to get in and out. Again, I added a generous handful of Cold-Water Green Beast but for this area I also scattered a couple of handfuls of sweetcorn. I placed the rod on the buzzer and tightened up, due to where the rig was placed, I knew I needed to be on the rod quick so, with this in mind I fished locked up.

Right then, I said to Fudge time for a cuppa and I grabbed the tea making kit. Now this is no lie, I filled the kettle and placed it on the stove followed by the spark button. The stove ignited and the Delkim for the far rod started singing. Blimey Fudge, were in already champ. I picked the rod up and reeled like mad as the fish was coming towards me and as I caught up with it the line tightened, and we were into one. I knew quite quickly that what I was playing wasn't of any size and within 4/5 minutes the tubing was visible. As I looked through the water column the fish looked like it was glowing, and I realised I was playing one of the ghosties that live in the depths. Before to long

I had to sit on my hands and wait - making a brew seemed a good plan



the common was in the net, lovely I thought, what a good start. I didn't hang about; I unhooked the fish and slipped it back. I didn't bother weighing the common, but I estimate around 12lb.

With a check of the hook point, fresh bait and bag, the rod was put back on the spot. Around 3 hours past before another opportunity burst into life, the same rod was away again. This time, the angry carp was trying to end the fight by trying to take me through the left-hand reed bed but luckily for me, the fish didn't find sanctuary and soon decided to kite across the lake to my right. This did feel a slightly better fish; however, I knew it wasn't a monster and as I sunk the net into the water a beautiful mirror broke the surface. The mirror made one more dash for freedom before it was ready for the net. After gently placing the mirror on the matt, I peeled back the mesh and what laid before me was a pristine mirror carp. The carp still had its curtain and I thought to myself, this fish is brand new and never seen the bank. I weighed the stunner for the records and took a snap of each side before letting her go. I sent the picture to Bryan and told him the carp was 16lb, he replied with, this is a fish that was stocked back in 2018 at a weight of 3lb and confirmed showing the photo of the stocking. Just goes to show that fish can go years without being caught.

Time was getting on for 16:00 and I wasn't sure if anyone else was coming down after work to do

the night, so I made the decision to bring the far rod round to the left more. The corner I had the rod in is a popular swim and I know the swim that fishes that water is normally the first to go. I did however bait the area just in case no one turned up, this would mean I could drop back on the spot tomorrow morning. While I was getting the rod ready for the new area, my lefthand rod was away and I looked up to see an alarming curve in the Torrix. I just made it to the rod as it was starting to leave the seat of the buzzer. (Note to self-use Delkim snag ears) Thank God, the drag on my 5000T was tightened right up as I battled to guide the fish away from the reeds. Guide!! Who am I kidding? It was total carnage and one hell of a scrap all the way to the

net. To my delight I lifted the net out the water and I was quietly confident this would be the first 20 of the session. A right character this one, if I was betting man, I would say one of the originals. The common looked like it could tell me a story or 2 that's for sure. The old warrior tipped the needle over the 20-barrier weighing 22lb 8oz.

To my surprise, the night passed uneventfully for me, and I woke up wondering why it didn't happen? It was cold, so maybe I made a mistake and should have moved the rods into deeper water. Although I hadn't caught, Bryan decided to fish that night and managed a lovely mirror of just over the 20lb barrier. We took some snaps and Bryan went off to work leaving me once more with the whole lake to myself. I

Fudge watched the water as he was on Duck duty



The gap in the reeds proved to be a very productive spot.



looked on my weather app and it was due to be sunny and warm with rain moving in around 17:00 so I decided to stick to my guns and place both rods back on the same spots as the day previously.

3 or 4 hours had passed before I started seeing the first signs of life over my left-hand spot. The reeds started to move, followed by rows of bubbles and I looked at Fudge. Any minute now mate and we are in, but unfortunately two ducks had other ideas and decided to start diving on my baited area and with the bobbin lifting, a startled duck broke the surface. Although frustrating, I skipped the rod in and re-positioned, this time telling Fudge he had to be on duck duty. Meaning every time Donald was about, I would send Fudge round to scare them off which worked a treat, and it wasn't long before signs of fish were back in the swim.

Time was getting on now, and I was left scratching my solar panel (why hasn't it happened)? I couldn't risk going to check the far rod as I couldn't afford to be off my rods, you know what its like, sods law I would get a take just as I get to the spot. So, I said to myself have faith, you know its fishing, so I sat on my hands and decided to put the kettle on.

Around 14:00 I walked down on to the platform and looked over to the spot where my left-hand rod was. O.M.G how have I not had a take? They were definitely feeding, and it looked like they were there in numbers too. I turned and sat with Fudge on a little wooden

bench placed at the back of the platform still confident the left-hand bobbin would crack the bottom of the rod when to my surprise the rod placed in the far corner was away. The bobbin lifted slowly, and I picked up the rod, sometimes you just know when your attached to something special. Whatever was on the end felt heavy, and on a tight line the fish slowly kited right. At this point I had a slight issue, out in the middle of the lake is a white, weighted marker pole and I thought the fish was clear of it on how the line was entering the water. However, I was wrong, I'd misjudged it. Shiiiiiiiiitttttttt. It was time to pray and hope your luck's in, as I watched the pole slowly disappear, I could feel the line rubbing along it as the fish continued to kite right. Please, please don't snag up. Suddenly there was a violent jolt that transferred up the carbon blank and to my relief I could see the marker pole lifting back up out of the water. To my delight, the pole had lent over enough for the line to slide up and over the top meaning I was back in direct contact with the heavy fish. By now, I didn't know if any damage had occurred to the line, so I played the fish as softly as possible, trying to keep the battle out in open water. I started to gain line and it wasn't long before the fish was out in front of me. It stayed deep, really deep, and I was anxious to see what I was playing it had to be at best, one of the A team. Finally, I could see it. Not just a

common - a big common. My legs were shaking, and I was thinking bloody hell what if it is the un-caught monster Bryan had seen. I tried to shake the thought from my head and carried on with the task in hand as she wasn't mine yet. I was in no rush, just telling myself to stay in control and she will come when she's ready. She took a final gulp of air and tipped onto her side as I pulled her slowly over the cord to the net. She was in and let me tell you the adrenaline I felt. The Ready Brek glow was back.

I placed the rod down to my right, by this point I was on my knees trying to bring some kind of composure to the party. Fudge already had his head in the net trying to see what it was, and I decided to put him on his clip just so I could calm down and try and work out what I had accomplished. With a deep breath took I lifted the net and gasped, wow, what a fish as I chuckled to myself. I lowered the fish back down and immediately got on the phone to Bryan. (No answer) So, I phoned the workshop and Dawn answered, Is he there? Yes, but his with a customer. Tell him I've had a big common and to ring me back asap. Ok Mark, I will tell him.

The Common had been resting in the net for around 10 minutes by this point. So, I decided it was time to wet the unhooking mat and transfer the bar of gold to the retainer. I laid on my front and lifted the big framed common towards me still chuckling to myself. It was clear she

was never coming off; the hook hold was plum in the bottom lip. I popped the hook out and placed it to the side before the transfer happened. While looking at Fudge, I said are you ready as I lifted the fish out of the water. I love the sound the water makes as it flows back into the lake. Blimey she's a lump, and as I placed her onto the matt, Bryan was on the phone. "Well, come on then what you got?"

"I don't know mate; all I know is its stunning. I will Facetime you, ok give me a minute I just want to weigh her." I replied.

I had already zeroed the Rueben Heaton's so all what was left to do was to attach the weigh bar and hook

on the two metal hoops of success. I locked my arms and lifted watching the needle rotate, as I focused on its final resting place. 36lb dead, happy days. The common was lowered back down and I once again flooded the retainer with a fresh bucket of water. I face timed Bryan as I un-zipped the retainer to take a closer inspection. Immediately I noticed the size of its tail and as Bryan answered, the phone camera was focused in on it. "That's Heart Tail mate, how big is it?" he asked "36lb dude," I replied.

"Get in mate, that's the biggest she's ever been" exclaimed Bryan. He hung up as he was on his way to come and do the

photos along with some video for Aqua Liliam and Carp Addiction. So, I took a final look and zipped her back up and placed her back in the deep margins.

I sat back on my bed chair, and it started to sink in that I had caught 3 x 30lb's in two weeks. I was so happy and although it wasn't the mythical common, it was still a stunning fish and certainly one for the album. I was sat there when Kieran come walking round, "I hear congratulations is in order?" and passed me a Maccy D's.

"Thank you mate," and I went about telling him the story of the capture. We had just finished when the first drops of

She pulled the Ruebens around to exactly 36lb





rain started hitting the water and it was time to get under cover while we waited for Bryan. It wasn't long when Senna, Bryan's dog come racing into the swim. Senna by name, Senna by nature. "Oi Oi happy days brother, let me get sorted out and we will do the pictures"

It wasn't long before it was time to go and collect my prize from the waters edge and by this time a few of my angling friends had gathered round to share the moment. Unfortunately, it was chucking it down so on went the waterproof jacket and we got on with the task. I wasn't prepared to wait for a break in the weather as I'm not too

keen on retaining fish. I placed her down on the matt and after un-zipping the retainer, went for the lift. She wasn't too happy to begin with and took a minute to settle before she was comfortable. Another bucket of water was poured over her golden scales while I cradled her in my arms. Once everybody was happy, we had the photos we needed it was time to say goodbye. I lowered her back into her home and un-zipped the front of the retainer. I didn't really get time to say goodbye as she saw an opening and melted through the water column. I said thank you for the memory and Bryan helped me up and shook

my hand. We all stood in the rain celebrating with a cold can before everyone started to retreat back to there dry bivvy's with a change of clothes high up on the agenda.

If you're wondering if the left-hand rod ever went, I am delighted to say it did, resulting in a common of around 18lb. The morning came around quickly and for once I woke to bright sunshine which was a result in helping dry out the gear and we packed up ready for home. We got in the van and made our way up the long bumpy track, which I spent mostly daydreaming about this mythical common knowing that I will soon be back again!!

And there she finally was  
- Heart Tail in all her glory






# **THE NEXT CHAPTER**

**PART 2**

**MARK ROSE**



After a very successful start to my maiden 'Baitworks' campaign, I couldn't wait to get back out and go again. This would have to wait a few weeks with Christmas upon us and obviously the normal family things would take precedence. Soon enough though I would find myself back at Festival ready for round two but more importantly my first trip of 2024. A year I hope that promises more than 2023 in terms of bank time and opportunities.

But more importantly, a journey I hope you, the reader, can accompany me on.

Waking up on the day of reckoning, I was surprised to see it dry and not a raindrop in sight (which has definitely been a rare commodity this 'Winter'). I'm not sure about you, but setting up and packing down has certainly been a chore with 'puddles' and 'mud' galore. But all that to one side, to me there is something very special about 'Winter' fishing,

and it's definitely one of my favorite times of year to get the rods out.

Due to another booking on the Peg that I had chosen to fish, I couldn't get on till 4pm, which meant a nice leisurely load up and even a nice bacon butty before the off. I hit the road at around 1.30pm, so I could do my 'bailiff' duties on both the lakes and with the angler in my peg leaving bang on 4pm, it was always going to be "a race against time", before the light dropped

Off the mark with this one



out of the sky. After a full hour or so of setting up and getting my house in order. I soon found myself staring out into the dark abyss, albeit with a nice cold beer in hand and the rods on the spots. It was pleasantly mild for the end of January, and even the slight breeze had a Southerly warmth to it. In fact, I was actually feeling quite confident, as the first two nights of the trip the weather was meant to be staying fairly consistent.

Baiting strategy was to lean more towards the minimal end of the spectrum (as it was only January and the last thing I wanted to do was fill it in). Bait wise, would be a mix of 'Baitworks' 'Monster Red' and 'CreAmino', glugged in their matching Liquids and Oils, along with the 'Festival Fishery House Pellet', glugged in the 'Baitworks' 'Edges'

liquid. The same combo that after my last trip, I know definitely worked. As the 'Baitworks' saying goes "IT-WORKS"! Just before 6pm it was a bit of a "deja-vu" situation as from last time out and with the sound of the 'Delkim' shattering the

night time silence, my middle rod was away. I would like to say the battle was straightforward and went to plan. But this fish had other ideas and ran me ragged, wiping out both my other rods. With numerous attempts to take me into the reeds,



It was a bliding start on the Baitworks Monster Red bait.

this in my mind, went from a 30lb plus Carp to the thinking it was one of the lake's resident Catfish. Soon enough though, both my theories were proved to be way wide of the mark. With a lovely 19lb 12oz Common weighed and returned, I was over the moon to have opened my account on my first night of 2024 after just an hour of fishing. A boosted 'Baitworks' 'Monster Red' Barrel Waffer, proving the downfall yet again. My elation was short lived mind you, when I remembered the carnage that had been left behind. It was worth it though, despite the fact that I had, not 1 but 3 rods to redo.

With one of Aldi's finest sandwiches demolished, I decided to turn in for the

night. I don't tend to sleep much on the bank, but decided to set my alarm just before first light, as a backup.

The night passed by uneventfully and although it was extremely mild for the time of year, around 7 degrees, I only heard one fish crash through the hours of darkness and that unfortunately was down the other end of the lake. With the forecasters actually getting it right and with again none of that horrible cloud pee to be seen, the plan was to keep the rods in situ till just after 1pm and then redo them ready for the night ahead, unless something told me otherwise. However, just before 9am and rudely interrupting my crumpets

with butter banquet, the same rod armed with the same bait, sounded out one beep with the bobbin holding tight. I was up and on the rod in seconds and the battle commenced.

You tend to be able to tell when your attached to something a little bit better, (well apart from yesterday's little encounter) and with this fish slowly plodding back and forth, holding deep, I was ecstatic to finally see a beautiful mirror slide over the cord, with the added bonus of not a single wipe out of any other rod, this time. With the carp unhooked and secured safely in the waters edge, I quickly got everything wetted and zero, as well as some fresh lake water in the bucket, to ensure



And that was the end of the mild weather

to keep the fish hydrated at all times! The needle sailed past the 30 mark and settled on 33lb 10oz. What a start to the year and less than 24 hours in!

With a few proper snaps done and the fish returned, I wasted no time getting a fresh bait and the rod straight back out, so as to maximize my angling time, during this mild weather spell. With that done and the bobbin set, I returned to my now, cold and soggy crumpets. "Yum", not!... But at least I had a big smile on my face. With the temps at a lovely 13 degrees, out of the wind it felt a lot more and it was certainly nice not to have to wade to the brew kit for a change (I swear I was beginning to form webbed feet over the last few months).

Winter returned literally overnight



The needle sailed past 30



Just before midday whilst having my daily tidy up, (Oh the joys of OCD) my middle alarm yet again was in full song and with the fish coming back towards me at a rate of knots, it was soon to be safely in the bottom of the net surely. But nope! With one look at me it was off, and with a second wind in its sails, it really did try everything it could in its powers, to outdo me. Soon enough though, a common of 28lb 12oz was swimming back in the comforts of its watery home, with of course the mandatory pics done for the photo album.

With the rod refreshed and back out, I was sort of in a dream land. 3 fish, in just under 24 hours and on only my 2nd trip using 'Baitworks'! I couldn't

quite believe it, especially after my 1st trip (Part One) was such a success. I do know one thing though: Yes, location and tactics are key, but having a fantastic bait at your disposal certainly helps. And let's face it, we all know that Mr Bryant and his team have more knowledge and expertise than most when it comes to what's good or bad, with no stone left unturned in the strive for perfection. The rest of the day passed by uneventfully, not that I could complain. With darkness set in, however, I was in for a rather different night ahead.

By 1am the winds had picked up, with gusts hitting 40mph plus and biting temps dropping to just above freezing. It was certainly feeling a lot

more seasonal.

Thankfully by first light, the winds had receded a little, but it was still absolutely Baltic and to say I was feeling a little less confident, would have been an understatement. That said you have to try and keep an area of optimism about you, otherwise you're in for a hard slog. I'd like to say the day was eventful, but as expected it was a day of 'Shiver, Coffee, Pee, Repeat...' To be honest, I was quite glad to finally be able to zip up my bag with my hot water bottle by my side (And Yes I'm getting soft in my old age!).

First light brought with it a touch of ground frost and a very dull flat looking lake. A confidence booster it wasn't, but as we know things can change in the slightest of time frames. And similar to the bite on the first morning, just after 9am the same rod was away again gracing my hands with another lovely mirror of 28lb. Another 'Baitworks' 'Monster Red' Barrel doing the business, the only difference this time, due to the temperature drops that I'd gone with a 'Carp Craze' 50mm Mesh Bag of Super Boosted 'Monster Red' Bag and Stick Mix with a couple of crumbed up boilies.

With less than 24 hours to go and the lovely forecasters predicting, Yes! You guessed it, the return of the wet stuff, I decided to get a few bits cleaned up, to take down to the car when I redid the rods, so as to make the pack down in the morning a little easier. Especially with the thought of having

I now had full confidence in the new bait



to get it all back out at home again to do. This is something I think I've spent more time doing than I care to remember these last few months. As one of the Winter regulars said to me, he doesn't think his bivvy has been dry since the beginning of November, lol - Something I think most of us can relate to. Anyway enough of the waffling and back to the session.

The final night was a night of good food, a couple of cold beers and quite frankly not a lot else. Soon enough bits were starting to be loaded back on the barrow. With time ticking away, there was still time for that one

last and final twist and oh yes, you guessed it. Another mirror weighing 28lb 2oz staring back at me. Same rod, same bait! The last couple of hours went by quickly and I have to admit I was looking forward to getting back to Emma and having a bit of normality.

With the final bag loaded and the boot closed down, I looked back at the lake to reflect on my last two trips. Both were for four nights that resulted in a total of 12 fish. 9 being over the 20lb barrier and one topping the scales at just over the 33lb mark. To me it just goes to show that 'Winter' fishing can be very productive,

with just a little thought and making sure your preparation is spot on. To me food and clothing definitely makes a big difference, as if you're cold and hungry your mind will always be halfway home. Yes there's times you question your sanity, but you soon forget those moments when you have that stunning fish (or should I say block of ice), in your hands, decorated in its full winter colours.

As always, like we say at 'Obsession Carp' enjoy your fishing the way you want too and of course, "Believe in your Dreams!" Till next time - thanks for reading and be lucky in your own fishing. ■

A nice 28lb 2oz mirror to finish off with





# 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.

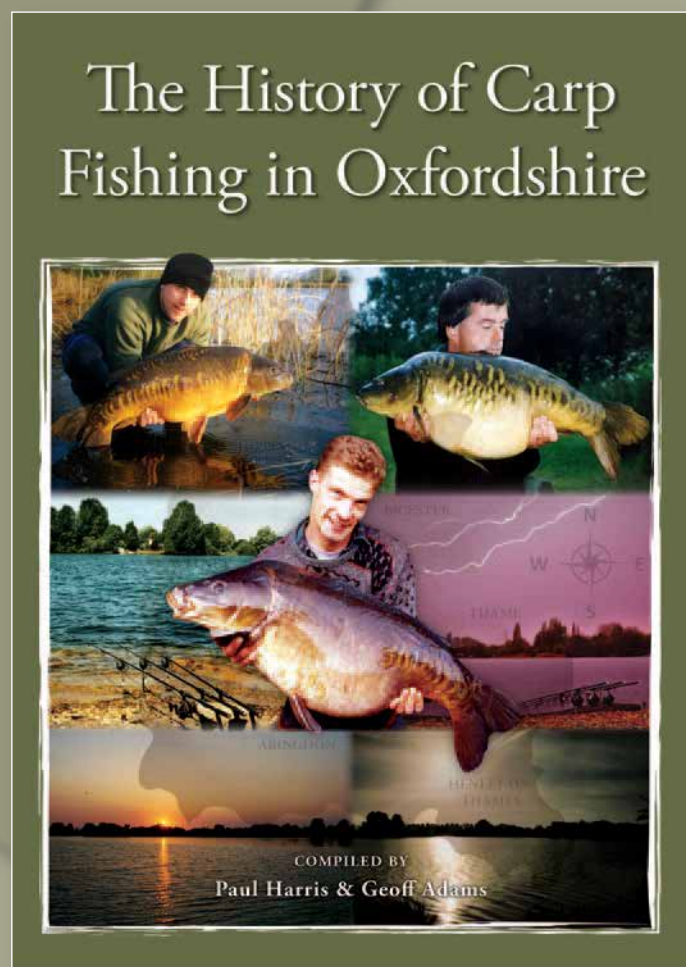
Nick Stansfield is a brilliant young Oxford carper who doesn't shout about his catches. We have two incredible chapters from him from two of the county's most iconic lakes, The Leisure Park and The Big S! Josh Chatfield has written a fantastic chapter which really gives you an insight into how fishing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

A scenic view of a riverbank at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the water. In the foreground, there is a wooden fence and a fishing rod with a reel mounted on a metal plate on the ground. The background shows a calm river reflecting the sky and surrounding trees.

# THE WINTER SERIES OF ELITE CARP MATCHES

**PART 2**

**BARRY OCONNOR**

Welcome to part 2 of the Winter Carp Match Series on Cottingham, Lake Pepper. This follows on from the first three matches that took place in 2023. If you have read part 1 you will know we had some success in a couple of the matches. This is the continuation of that series of winter carp matches.

The new year was upon us and the January 2024 winter match soon came round. Again, the draw wasn't good to us and we came out seventh. When I think of all the draws we've been in over the years our average was always around midway or lower. Yes we did come out first or second on a couple of occasions but that was about it. Twice in carp matches we came out last and went on to win. It has happened a

couple of times in our main Elites too. Anyway, there were only three pegs left so we opted for peg 2 again. Remember we were in peg 2 in the Champions League back in October and we blanked. That didn't matter to us as we knew we would try our best as we do in any carp match. It's great coming out first in the draw because you get the pick of all the swims. That doesn't mean to say you are going to win it though. Not all competitors who come out first win it. Same tactics as before spreading the rods around the swim with different baits. My rigs consisted of a size 6 Deception DX Curve hook tied to six inches of Katran Garza hook link material. Katran is new company on the market and they have some really

## Key Tackle Items



These hooks are the sharpest we've ever had.



Our hook link of choice is Gurza from Katran.



SM Square Leads are just the job for us.



Off the mark in the match with a 29lb common



Ben put us in the lead with this 24lb 5oz common



From nowhere, we were now in the lead with this 41lb 3oz mirror known as The Little Lin.



10 minutes before the end and Ben sealed our win with this 38lb 2oz mirror

good tackle. My set up consisted of a Deception safety clip and tail rubber and an SM Leads 3oz square lead. Ben used the same set up but used components from the Nash stable with an SM Square lead on the clip.

The match started at 10.30am and at 11.45am I had a 29.00 common on the bank caught on TNT. It gave me a bit of a row before I got it under control and it went into the net. About an hour later and Ben was playing a carp which he got in and it weighed 24lb 5oz. It too was a Common. This one was caught on Krill and Bloodworm. With only these two fish caught we were in the lead. A carp of 31lb 5oz was the next fish out to young Curtis Lawrence. We then had a small Ghosty at 12lb 5oz before night fell upon us. During the night I was woken by the sound of my alarms. Rushing out of the bivvy I found Ben was playing another carp. He'd pulled my alarms to wake me up to net it. This one was also a common and went 14lb 6oz and was caught on TNT. On the Saturday Scott Sterry had a 21lb 5oz mirror. Scotty always seems to nick one. We had a 20lb 8oz mirror the same day that also fell to TNT. By Sunday midday no more carp were caught so we'd won the match with a total of 100lb 1oz and winning us £1000. Peg 2 in October had given us nothing. This time it was very kind to us.

February was the next winter Elite. The draw wasn't too bad this time. We came out fourth and chose to go back in peg 2. Having done ok in the January match we just had

to give it another go. It was a no brainer. Our rods were still clipped up to the spots we caught from in that match. We went back on the TNT and the Krill and Bloodworm the baits that had caught for us in the last match. Out went the hook baits and a scattering of freebies followed. Although four carp had been out during the match none of them were caught by us. It wasn't until the last morning at 7.30am that we had a bite. It was a mirror and weighed in at 19lb 2oz and was enough to put us into third place.



Mark Hall's 37lb 8oz mirror helped put his team in the lead.



Ady Tulley's 31lb 10oz mirror helped his team in to 2nd place

Curtis Lawrence banked this nice 31lb 5oz mirror.



Scotty always manages to nick one



Ash managed a 23lb 6oz mirror



We were happy with that. As we were sitting chatting one of Ben's rods was away. This carp was taking line and going all over the place. It just didn't want to come in. Ben eventually managed to get it under control and gradually brought it towards me where I engulfed it in the net. It looked big very big. In these matches obviously we can't weigh our own fish. We get the anglers in the next swim to weigh them. They got the carp onto the unhooking mat and we could see it was a lump. The scales pointer stopped at 41lb 3oz. It was the Little Linear. It was caught at 11.25am thirty five minutes before the end of the match. It put us straight in to the lead. From zero to hero.

Except for our rods our gear was packed up and ready to go when with just ten minutes to go the same rod went off again. Another battler once again taking line. It was going all over the place. After a bit of a tussle Ben was slowly gaining line while I was waiting patiently with the net. The carp tired and Ben pulled it over the net spreader. It was another big one. We called the boys in peg 3 to weigh it. They couldn't believe it. They'd been winning the match for most of the time and we'd just pipped them at the post. The scales recorded 38lb 2oz. This one had been caught with just ten minutes to go. The match ended and we'd won yet again with a total weight of 99lb 1oz. Another £1000 went into our fishing account.

The last match of the winter series was in March 2024. The weather

was of rain and sunshine. The draw began and would you believe it we came out first. Well with the previous results it was a no brainer we had to go back in peg 2. Could we carry on from where we left off in the last match? You can imagine how excited we were as we set up. The match started at 10.30am and at 10.35am Ben was doing battle with our first carp. The rod had gone off in his hand. He got it in and it went 19lb 5oz on the scales. How quick was that! The next two carp came to me. One at 17lb 1oz and the other at 26lb 12oz both commons. By 12.30pm we were in the lead with 63lb 2oz. No one else had caught as yet. A couple more fish came out to other competitors. In the afternoon Ben was away again which culminated with a 17lb 5oz common being netted.



Barry's 26lb 12oz common kept them in the game

We were flying! More carp were weighed for other competitors most notably a 37lb 8oz mirror to Mark Hall. During the night this was followed with a 23lb 8oz common and a 31lb 10oz mirror to Mark's partner Ady Tulley. This put them in to First place



Ady Tulley's 23lb 8oz common made it a close match.



just 12lb in front of us. A morning bite came to us in the shape of a 31lb 0oz mirror courtesy of Ben. We were now back in the lead with a cushion of 16lb. Not to be outdone I chipped in with a 17lb 11oz common in the early hours of the last morning. This gave us a bit of a breathing space knowing that Mark and Ady were right behind us. We needn't have worried as Ben had another one an hour later that went 14lb 5oz. We were now pulling away from second place. It didn't finish there either with four hours to

go I had a 23lb 0oz mirror which certainly sealed the win for us. We finished the match with a total weight of 163lb 13oz for eight fish. Mark and Ady finished with 92lb 10oz. Third was on 49lb 13oz. The win secured us the £1000 first prize.

Throughout this year's winter series of carp matches we'd fished in some different weather conditions including rain, frost, cold temperatures sun and wind. Most were not conditions that were good for carp fishing. It rained most of the time

which in turn caused the very muddy conditions in the swims. It was a relief to get your wellies off at the end of each match.

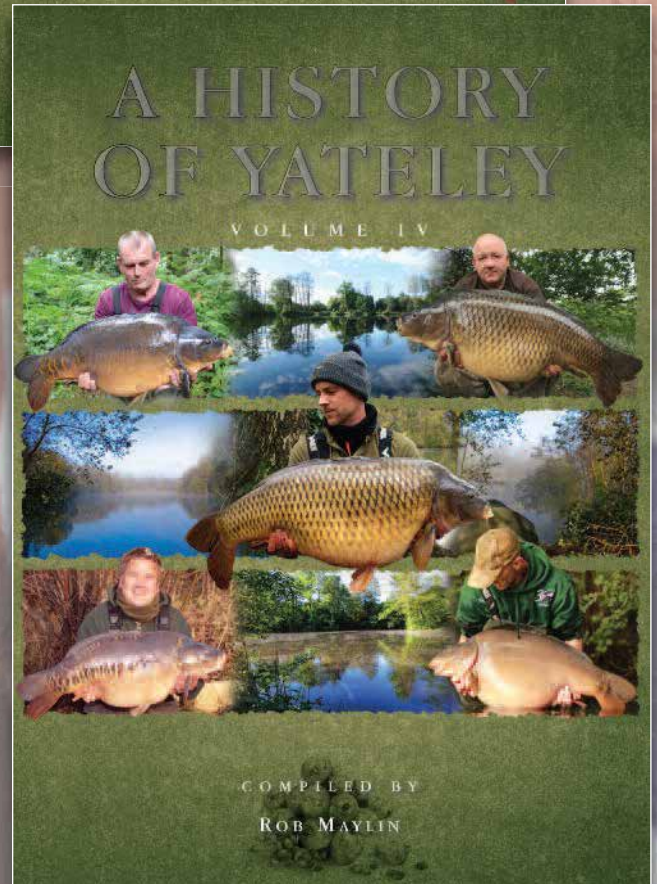
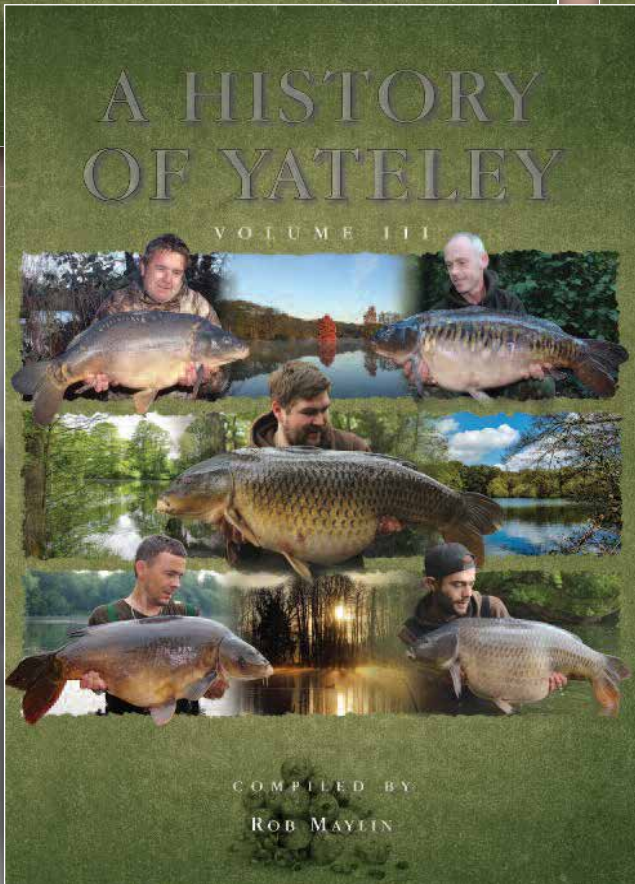
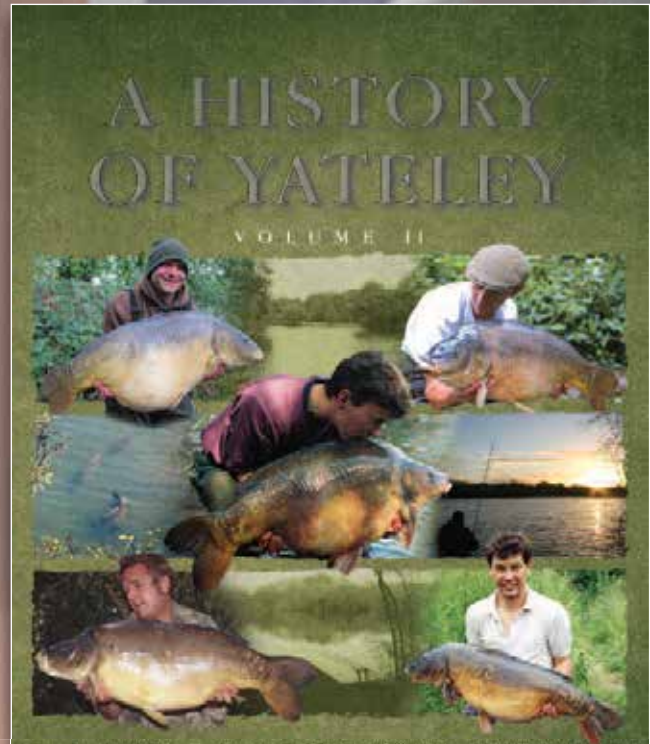
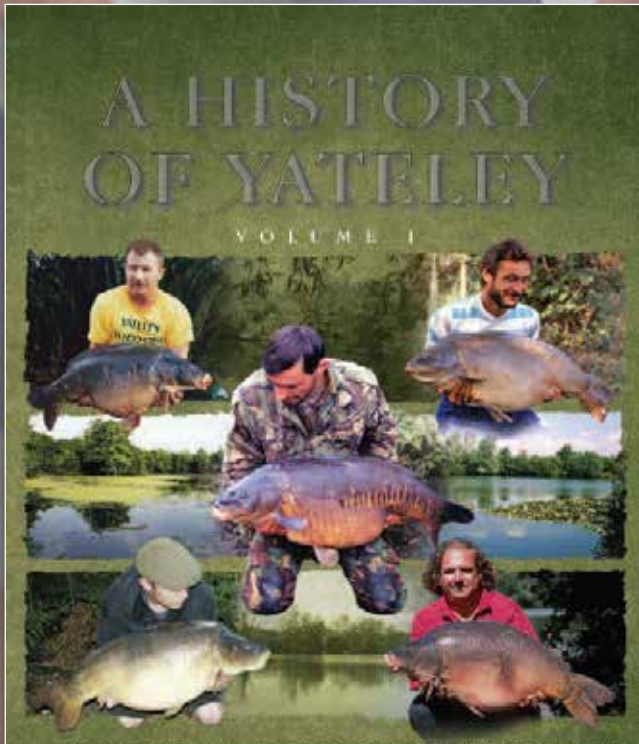
By the time the winter matches had finished we'd paid out £12300 in prize money. Out of six matches we had won three and come second in two winning us a total of £4400. We were well pleased with that. In all our winter matches all the competitors were only one fish away from winning some money, such are the odds in our winter carp fishing matches of getting on the podium.

**If you would like to take part in any of our matches please contact Ben on 07737254503 or Barry on 07890143952.**



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# ST. IVES SUCCESS

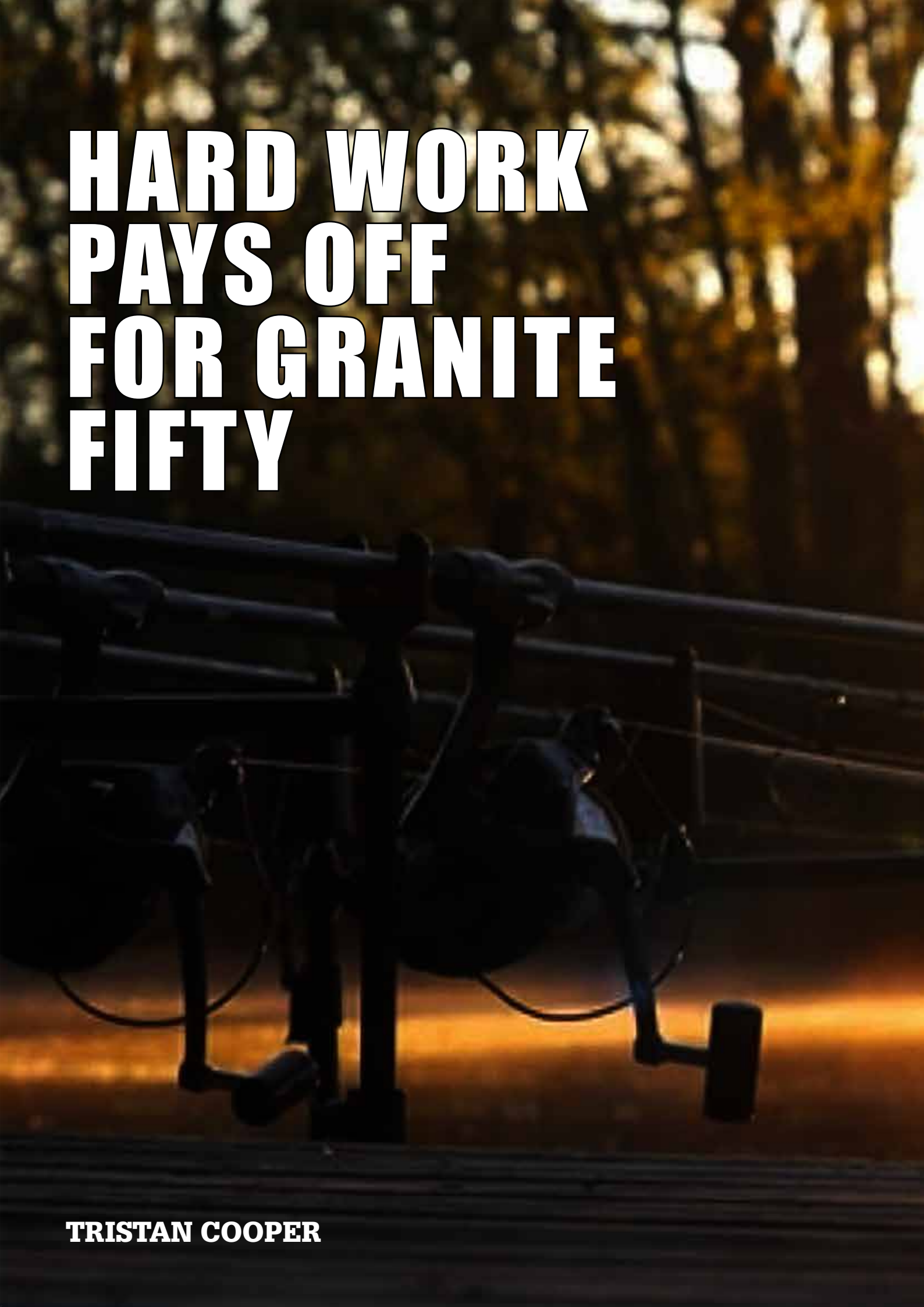
DANIEL and DONNA STAFF-HOWES



Congratulations to Daniel Staff-Howes on the capture of a new PB with this lovely 41lb 7oz common along with Donna's first and second carp from the new venue. He told us: "St Ives success on the new Super Buoyant Pop-Ups. Had an absolutely fantastic weekend on St Ives with Donna catching her first (and second) of the new season and me catching my first UK 40. I was lucky enough to take photos of this fish a couple of years ago for a friend and have wanted it in my album ever since. Little did I know the carp gods would smile down on me and let it grace my net at its top weight of 41lb 7oz. To say I was and still am buzzing is an understatement.



All caught on the new of Cell and Link combo Super Buoyant Cell Pop-Ups over small handfuls with Cell and Link Smart Liquids. Brilliant!

A person is silhouetted against a bright sunset, climbing a rope. The person is positioned in the center-right of the frame, with their body angled towards the left. The background is a warm, golden glow from the setting sun, with dark, out-of-focus trees in the upper portion of the image. The overall mood is one of determination and achievement.

# **HARD WORK PAYS OFF FOR GRANITE FIFTY**

**TRISTAN COOPER**



Tristan Cooper had a recent trip to Angling Lines Granite Lake in search of a 50+ carp. His efforts were duly rewarded when this 53lb mirror woofed down his Essential Baits GS10 boilie.



**EXCLUSIVE**

# CLARIDGE CATCHES CROC ON A CHOD





John Claridge has finished his Spring campaign in the best way imaginable! Landing one of the finest in the land, 'The Croc' at a huge 46lb 10oz and looking as healthy as ever.

Using Chod Rigs tied with 30lb Rigidity to Size 5 Edges Stiff Rig Beaked Hooks, JC started the spring well, landing several carp before capturing the finale.

Epic carp, fantastic result, huge well-done John.

A scenic view of a river or lake with trees and a rainbow in the sky. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding greenery and the sky. A faint rainbow is visible in the distance, arching over the water. The trees are lush and green, with some showing signs of autumn. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

# THE SUTTON HUNT

**DEAN BRAY**





Sutton is situated in the Darenth Valley. It is now part of the well known DDAPS club which along with Horton Kirby, Sutton Big Lake and Car Park Lake, is one of the most iconic lakes in carp fishing history in the UK. It is a real shame but as time moves along the true old English carp will naturally disappear. That said, Sutton still holds some magnificent old, legendary carp, that tick all my boxes. Unfortunately it has lost a few to old age in previous years including the famous "Big Fully", "The Unknown" and the ancient "The Brown". I was lucky enough to hold the Fully and The Unknown in my arms in previous years amongst some of the other

originals: "Jackson's", "The Beast" and some of the old original 30 plus commons. But this little diary is about our last autumn campaign from September to mid November 2023. This turned out much better than we expected. In our case, it's with limited time at the lake with both having busy working and family lives to work around too. I should say the 'we' is myself and one of my long-term fishing buds "Dan the Can". Yes he was named this after apparently always having a can in his hand.

Sutton 2, or as it is now known as, Devon Road, has always had some time restrictions in place. This can make the tricky pond even harder. If you

didn't already know it has a day's only rule - 3.30 am to 10.30pm. Then you must leave the complex. So if you planned to do a few days, which I add, I cannot do anymore as it's far too hard working around running my own lake and having a young family - I would need four of me. I admire some of the guys who sometimes do a full week or even two with this routine. This is a savage way of angling and truly takes it out of your body and soul. The times suit myself and Dan's life so our fishing just about fits around all the other life stuff we have to endure with some lovely chunks to go at.

Generally we try to do a Monday and a Wednesday evening after work with

First one falling to the donkey choker approach



maybe the odd full day here and there when possible. That's always nice as we like to get on the gate at 3.30am get the rods out, have a nice kip till about 9 am then at about 1am we pop round to the Jolly Millers Arms for a nice pub lunch and maybe a couple of swift pints. This breaks up the fishing or it becomes just like work and we wouldn't want that would we? Also alcohol is now banned on all the clubs waters unfortunately so the local it is.

So after a few walks here and there through the summer, our family holidays and after our successful excursions to catch carp in France and Germany, we were ready to have a little go at Sutton again. The time is right and the fish should be at

a real good weight - with the possibility of having a 40lb plus old scaley that's always a real draw for me personally. I've had a 40lb plus common from our time on Tonford a few years back and had many English 37lb. 38lb and 39 lb carp mirrors and commons but a real pukka 40lb mirror has eluded me to date. Our target was to both catch a 40lb carp each this campaign. To be honest a carp each would be ok. You certainly cannot choose the fish that pick up the rig but that's the lottery that is carp fishing - unless your stalking I suppose. All you can do is try and let the carp gods do the rest.

Our first few trips were at the end of September. It was still reasonably warm and the light was still with us a bit later on. I

think it does actually fish better when the it gets darker due to only being able to fish till 22.30 and these fish seem to know that they have a quiet time with no pressure on them. When it gets darker it seems to help let there guard down a little in my opinion when we are actually there. We wanted to fish in swims that were not that popular as that would give us the chance to get some regular baiting to the same spots over and over each time we visited. We were going for something different and decided on fishing 30mm donkey chokers. Not sure if this has been done but this lake has seen absolutely everything, as many good anglers have been on here from day dot. We would fish the 30mm bait with a

15mm topper. We opted for a pink type dumbbell. We would just keep getting these huge baits to the spots over and over and hopefully this would get us a big ol' Sutton scaley and hope really was the word! There are a lot of bream in the other DDAPS waters, catering for all course anglers, not just carp. It was nice to know that only carp would be feeding on these much larger baits and hopefully they would sit there a bit longer after we had left, giving us a better chance when returning.

So I went in a swim called the pier and Dan went in the Reedy which are also the two furthest walks from the Car park, a tactic to try keep the swims unfished in-between our two trips a

week. We found some nice close in spots no more than 4 wraps out and we were going to keep on them no matter what else we saw - a bait and wait approach for sure. It's hard because they do tend to show themselves a lot, which can be rather frustrating. So ignoring 30 and 40 lb carp lunking in other swims was the way it was to be - but it is pretty painful to the eyes.

Plan hatched and we cracked on after work every Monday and Wednesday so 16.30 to the reel in time of 22.30 short and sweet. For the first four trips we didn't see anything in our water but we weren't to be deterred. There was a bit of a excitement when Dan had a couple of bleeps and when we looked with

the torch on the water a carp had swam through Dan's lines giving him a savage liner. If we hadn't of actually seen this happen we would have been convinced it was a take - not a nutty carp.

On the 5th trip we saw a carp roll in the dark pretty much over Dan's rods. His confidence was now sky high. He had two rods literally 4ft apart. We were sure they were eating the big balls of goodness! On the next session, same plan and Dan had a 29lb common off his spot around 21.00. We were both buzzing. Not really because of the fish, but we now had confidence in the bait and the way we were getting at them was looking very promising. This common funnily enough was one he

35lb 10oz of Sutton common for Dean.



had the previous season on his 1st ever trip to the lake. Like I said, you can't choose them!

I was beginning to feel as though the fish weren't really getting on my bait as much as Dan's and had seen some fish in one of my favourite haunts, a swim called the Dug Out. This is a nice expanse of water leading into Big Boyz Bay to where Dan was fishing in the the pier. On the next visit, I took the decision to carry on in there instead. One rod was fished to a tiny gravel spot to my left and the other a bit further out to the right fairly close to Dan's rods. This is a very clean silty area in front of some gravel that I've caught from before. I felt much more confident

in here and saw at least three fish show in the overall area just before dark. At about 21.00 the right hand rod had a nice slow take which I was on like a crazy frog, jumping up from the low chair and the usual battle began of trying to stop the fish kiting to the left or too the right. Sutton has some huge original snag tress pretty much in every swim either side. All the hard work and constant setting up and packing down in the dark, believe me you don't want to loose one of these fish when you get the chance because you truly do not know what it could have been on the end!!

I like to pull the tip low and basically point the tip at the snag and it

always seems to make to fish swim in the opposite direction away from the snag. Its a scary tactic to do but I've had a lot of success doing it this way. The fish was tired now and up with a gasp of air Dan was on hand to slip the net under the nice long Sutton common. On the scales it went 35lb 10oz. Pics done and two happy fellas were on their way for the 22.30 packed up. The donkey chokers were well and truly doing the job.

We were getting into October now, so the nights were well and truly in and a lot of moody weather was regularly with us. Wet set ups and wet packs downs were not the one. We cracked on doing the same process over and

The Quenn of the lake, The Peach common at 41lb 4oz



'Baby Cluster' took a liking to the 30mm baits



over; big baits to the same spots in the same swims, repeat, repeat, repeat. We were seeing fish every time we went either over Dan's rods or mine, but this was very common on all over the lake but the time just seemed to run out. 22.30 always came around to quickly. However, we were ultra confident of more fish to come all the same.

The second week into October we made our way round to the swims and my swim the Dug Out was well and truly under water. Maybe that's why the swim was named this? The river Darent behind and the lake were now one and probably 10 inches on the deepest part. I went back to the van to get the wellies and

get the rods back out onto the spots fly fisherman style. This was to be the case pretty much every session from now on. The good thing was, it would really deter others from fishing the swim as it was not comfortable to say the least.

Whilst standing in between the swims to avoid the flooded area Dan had a take around 21.45 pm on one of his rods. We both ran to the swim like looneys and he picked up the rod pulling into the fish with nervous arms. Seriously there is no feeling like playing a Sutton carp. It's like being a 12 year old again and hooking you first carp all over -pukka stuff. That's why we do it. The buzz, the hunt and the

challenge - with hopefully a fish of your dreams in the net. Dan now had it beat, or so he thought until I saw a very big common in the torch light. The fish turned, dived and had another go at the snag to the right. He piled on the pressure and thankfully it came back and I scooped it up. What a fish this was. Dan was doing his normal crazy excited laugh with a 'yes' every now and again as he scampered around getting his bits together ready for the pics and weighing. I just stared at this leviathan in the net - it was the Queen of the lake the "Peach Common" -a very old, legendary carp for sure. One I had on my list to catch, but I was so made up for Dan. We have always seen captures as

a team effort, although it's nice when it's your own haha. On the scales she went 41lb 4oz - a new PB for Dan 'the can'. An amazing moment for sure. With her Majesty returned, we put more bait in and pack up. Off we trotted, in the dark, wet night 'till the next visit.

There were other fish coming out, but every time we heard it was a 20 or 30 we were cool and slightly relieved. We felt we were one step closer to hopefully bagging that sort after true English PB and the forty I had waited to catch all these years, to complete our mini mission this campaign.

A couple more trips went by with nothing but we continued seeing the odd fish show, so kept to the plan and kept the big balls going in to the very

same spots. On Monday November 6th I went alone as Dan couldn't make it. I got into the dugout, and as per normal it was flooded. Rods out, all good on the spots and then it was time to sit and chill in my puddle. The owls were out in force on this night and it was deadly still. Temperatures were dropping now and it was probably about 9 degrees. I was well wrapped up and had a stack of cuppa soups to keep me warm.

I had a bit of an occurrence about 22.15, but I had to start packing all my stuff and get it on the porter. At 22.25 I put my buzzers and other bits away leaving the rods in the reeds 'til the reel in time of 22.30. At 22.26 I reeled in the right hand rod and put it on the porter. At 22.28 I've heard my

right rod spool flying off and the tip hooping over with another savage large Sutton carp attached. Same process every time. It was kiting towards the snag. I pointed the rod at it and applied nice slow pressure and round she came. These fish sit deep and just plod where they like basically but I don't like to rush them in the net. Then they're usually better behaved on the mat. As quick as I wanted it landed, it's less stress for the carp and me not getting a hiding from the carp either is always nice.

Fish beat, gasp of air and net under what I could see was definitely a big mirror and definitely an upper 30 at least. I bent down to have a proper look and to unclip the hook link and 'WOW!!' it was bigger than I thought and possibly that



A fish each was a fitting end to the mini campaign

Big Scaley I had waited for. Still buzzing, I was running round like the crazy frog. I grabbed all my bits; scales, mat and got the sling ready to put the net into it, all in preparation for the big girls pics. Luckily there was a guy in the swim next door. With the net secured I went and grabbed him and proudly asked him to do the snaps. When I lifted it out I was like 'WOW!!' that's a lump. It turned out to be Baby Cluster at 43lb 1oz and the neeeeeewwwwww PB mirror. I was buzzing and feeling very proud of my perseverance and keeping to the plan and the big baits, which were definitely doing the do now.

My rig set up, as I'm not a secret squirrel and luv to see others do well on something, I've used and had full confidence in. Basically I like a large lead around 4oz and always an inline on pretty much anything but weedy lakes. I then had a 8-10inch coated braid hooklink, size 6 hook, always sharp, if In doubt I bin it. It makes such a difference between catching and not in my opinion. On the hook I knotless knot it then use a shrink tube aligner but I've recently changed to the ready made aligners. With no steaming required it's a lot easier. Then I use a small micro ring with some 6lb mono as a hair on it with a rubber hook stop on the end of the shank. I like the play it has and a bit more chance of it catching on the blow out. So the inline lead I bore it out a little at the bottom so that I can push a tail rubber into it upside down and over my easy clip at the bottom. The tubing pushes in neatly into the top of the tail

rubber, inside the lead and the lead snugly fits over the tail. It literally holds it all in place nicely. Now, this is the key part. When on the bottom, the fish can pick up the bait the super sharp hook pricks them, but they if they try to shake it, as they do, that makes the lead pull out making the lead completely running on the slack line. They cannot shake the lead whatsoever and are nailed. The takes usually represent this normally as a couple of bleeps then the panic screamer to follow. Nothing too complicated, but easy to set up and something that has always produced the goods for myself.

We were back Weds and nothing happened for either of us. The evening was spent talking over the Monday night success - good times. More bait was put to the spots on pack up and then we waited 'til the following Monday to go again. There was a lot of rain that lead up to the following week. On arrival the swim was even more flooded, but I had waders and was going to persevere. I knew we were probably only going to possibly do another two weeks of this then back to my own lake for the comfort of the lodge, heating and the TV with Lola the carp dog. I'm getting on now so fishing has to be fun and standing in large wet puddles for 6 hrs is not fun for months on end.

The rods were out just before dark and we stood and watched the areas. Probably 5 or 6 fish rolled in total over our spots but time ran out and no bites came. Same again - more

donkey chokers in ready for our return in two a couple of days.

On Wednesday 15th November we arrived as usual and cracked on with the now very smooth process of getting the rods on the money. One cast for each of our 4 rods and then sit and wait. It felt good, but Sutton always feels good. It has a certain buzz about it and just oozes the history when you are there. Around 19.30 Dan's rod was away and he was into another crazy fish taking line for fun. He gingerly played it between the two sets of trees each side and we eventually slipped the net under a probable mid 20 common. This wasn't huge by Sutton standards but another bite was very welcome. Now usually it won't really do another bite during one evening across the whole lake. Two is rare and three is virtually unheard off. All weighed, photos taken it was 27lb and Dan was happy as Larry. He got the rods back out and we had a nice cuppa soup to celebrate.

Out of the blue, at 21.45 I had the early alert of two or three bleeps and the left hand rod has taken off. I jumped up, running through the puddle/lake of a swim and pulled into the fish. This fish was really kiting on the long line and was moving to the left far to much for my liking. There was a big chance of it getting to the massive underwater snag tree to my left. I just keep winding and winding trying to keep up with it and gain any line as quickly as possible. All the while knowing that any moment I would feel the horrible grating on the branches. I put pressure

on it and it boiled up on the edge of the snag and thankfully started to play ball. 'Jesus' my heart continued beating again. The carp was deep and chugging up and down slowly. I thought this is a good fish and when Dan's headtorch caught it under the net we saw another long large Sutton mirror. Now my heart was pumping again and the adrenaline was free flowing. The standard 'please please don't come off' whispers began. It was a tense few moments - the type you don't enjoy whatsoever 'til it's over. Luckily the huge lips came over the cord and then the massive old tail flopped into the net with a little shake by Dan. Ah, the absolute relief. I was so

happy to get another one and possibly another 40lb mirror, literally a week apart. This was the stuff of dreams it really was.

The net was rolled into the sling and the weighty carp was lifted it out - it was certainly heavy. I didn't actually know this fish but got the snaps done but it looked so old. What a carp it was. We got it on the scales and it went 42lb 2oz. Bloody hell, I was jumping up and down, fist pumping the cold November sky. It was just such an amazing feeling - the type non-anglers will never know. I later found out it was one of the old originals known as "Buttons". It had a real old look with big, old, red patches all over it and just screams history.

Well that was it really. Six fish between us, three forties and a PB each. We went back for another week after that but felt we had well and truly accomplished what we set out to do over 19 trips. We'd had more blanks than catching but that is just how I like it - that's the drug. It's called fishing not catching and there has to be a hunt involved or it's simply doesn't get my veins pumping. We had had enough of wading through a river to fish and the cold nights were coming in. Now it was time to get the slippers on and sit in the warm lodge on my own pond. A nice well deserved cold beer and some football on the TV, not really fishing but very nice all the same.

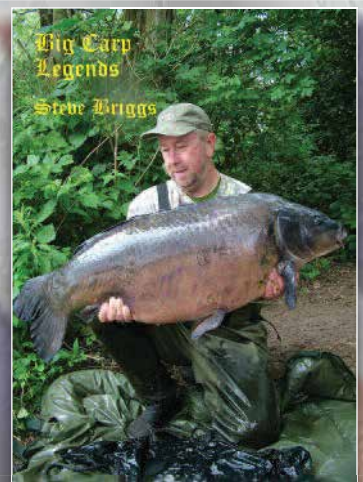
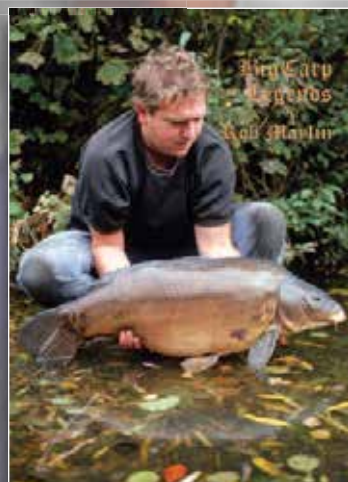
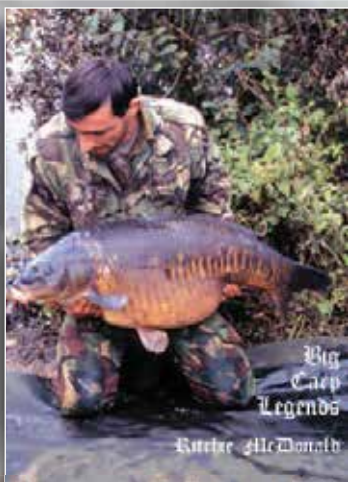
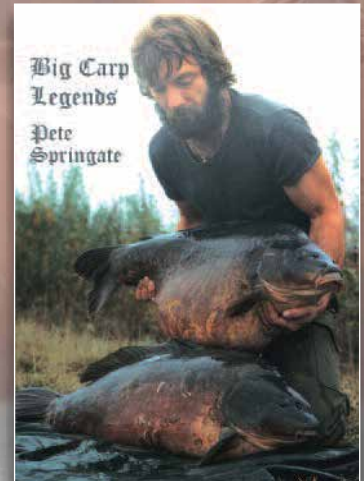
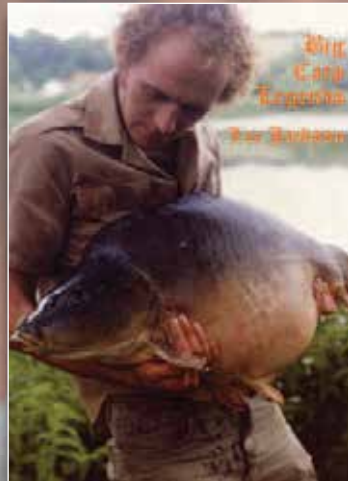
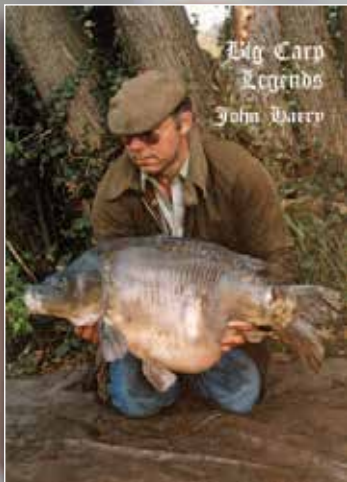
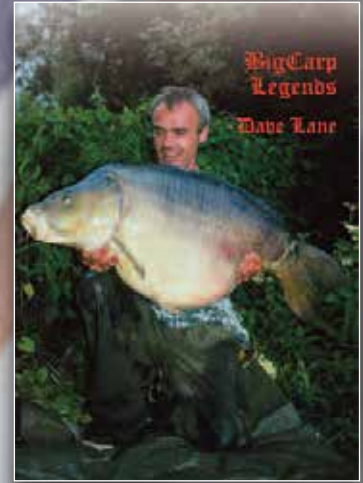
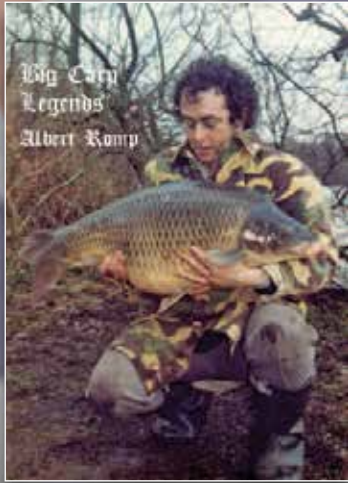


We'd done what we set out to do. I dream like end



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# STARS ALIGN FOR SHAUN



**SHAUN MCSPADDEN**

The stars truly aligned for me recently when I landed this 54lb giant, but the fact it was a lake record is just a small part of a heart-warming and incredible turn of events leading up to the capture!

So, rewinding to 2023, myself and good friend Christian Hoyle were fishing together when Christian caught the biggest fish in the lake, "Single Scale" at 52lb 8oz's, and it was never seen again. Tragically late last year Christian suddenly passed away, so with rumours of the fish possibly being lost in the floods I declared I would catch the fish and rename it in Christian's honour as despite not seeing the carp, I was convinced it was still there.

Early March 2024, and coincidentally another good

friend of Christian's, Phil, was at the lake, and at the same time I was guesting Christian's brother, Carl, for a couple of nights.

On the first night Carl managed to catch a huge 41lb mirror which was a great result. During the second evening, when we were all sat together, enjoying a bottle of Christian's favourite wine. a Robin landed in the swim and comments were made regarding catching Single Scale and renaming it.

The evening drew in and as the sun began to rise at 6am, my middle rod was away and after a heavy slow fight in the margin I had my first glimpse of the fish. As much as I tried to convince myself otherwise, there was no denying what was on the end...

After plodding around

for a while longer in the margin, I netted it at the first time of asking.

As I looked down into the net to confirm it was what I thought it was, Carl walked into my swim, in his typical Mancunian accent said, "Cheesington 'r kid, cheesington?" I couldn't really speak at this point, and just looked at him for a while. "What's up with you?" he asked.

"It's Single Scale!" After emotionally staring at each other for around 20 seconds, Carl simply told me to 'F off then checked himself" Sure enough, it was Single Scale and at its biggest weight ever at 54lb 10oz's, incredible! I earned the right to rename it, so she will now be known forever more as 'Chinook' a much more fitting name for such a brute of a Carp! ■

# JOHN'S HUNCH PAYS OFF



**JOHN PAYNE**

I knew Monks Pit was going to be busy over the weekend, so made sure I got down as early as possible.

After a quiet 24 hours with very few shows and the lake getting busier and busier, I wasn't that hopeful of any action. However, going into the second night, the wind dropped and a few nearby shows were close enough to have me feeling hopeful of some action as I got into my bag.

After a restless night, I was watching the water at first light and was encouraged when a huge slick appeared over my 'hunch' spot. I didn't have to wait long before the swinger hit the rod and a one-toner signalled

an angry carp had fallen foul of my trap! I always fish back-leads and fairly tight clutches, so was surprised to see line being taken freely and the tip alarmingly bent down. Upon picking up the rod, I almost had it ripped out of my hand and promptly had 50 yards of line stripped from me. Thirty-five minutes later, after a hard-fought battle under the rod in the deep margins, she was finally in the net! Peering down in the net and seeing the width of its back, I knew it was a good one and was going to be a two-man job. Fortunately, in the swim next door was Phil Candlish, another DNA team member, so with his help we got things ready

for the weighing.

Neither of us could work out the fish's identity, but we knew it had to be one of the A team. On the scales it went 46lb 2oz and we were not surprised, as it looked every ounce of it. It was my second biggest UK fish ever and I was over the moon to say the least.

The winning method was a solid bag of Crayfish Mini Mix pellets and Crayfish Meal powder pumped full of BetaStim and Crayfish Bait Soak, along with a Pink Peril wafter hookbait. This was fished over a bed of whole 12mm Bug and chopped 15mm S7 that had all been soaked in BetaStim and Salmon Oil. ■

# ZIGS HIT THE SPOT FOR STEVE



**STEVE HAYLETT**

There were a lot of fish showing up the deep end, so that's where I set up. With it being the last night of us being able to use four rods, I opted for two on zigs and two over bait on the deck, one of which was on the marginal shelf to my left. I fished over this spot with a PB pop-up soaked in matching PB Intense Booster, which yielded a stunning 30lb 6oz scaly mirror with an hour of the rod being in the water!

Both rods my PB rods were baited with pre-soaked and mulched-up Bug boilies, Crayfish Maxi Mix pellets and corn for the colour, over which I added a good amount of Molasses and Bug Liquid Food.

My two zigs were Candy Sticks pre-soaked in

Molasses. For my zigs, I had them set up for morning bites, as strange as that sounds.

Waking up at 6.15 the next morning, fish were crashing everywhere and I was sitting on my hands waiting. Now came a funny phone call and a memorable event! Firstly, I had an occurrence on one of the zigs, but nothing came of it, so I cast it back out. Before this, I was speaking to a member on the opposite bank about football, as my team, Arsenal, were playing Manchester City later in the day. I said to him I'd take my team losing for a 50-pounder. He laughed and jested how I wanted my team to lose!

Well, the zig that I recast was only out there

20 minutes before it was off! In fact, it took longer to bring the fish in, as it beasted me, taking out my other lines! Rory netted it and said, 'Mate, you've caught Black Spot!' It was a beautiful carp and weighed 56lb 8oz, which was a new PB. I was in shock, as it was a moment





I'd dreamed of since joining the lake.

The baited spot I hoped would produce sadly stayed quiet, so I opted for only one rod on the bottom and kept the other two on zigs. The next morning, I had another bite on a zig, which turned out to be the smallest of the session, a mirror of 20lb 8oz.

Waking up early on the last morning, I decided to reel in the Pink Peril pop-up that had done nothing in open water and cast it to a decent fish that showed four rod-lengths off the margin. However, a few minutes after this, one of the zigs was away! The mornings really were the one! Mick, a fellow member, turned up as I was playing a lovely mirror, which weighed in at 37lb.

The zig went back out and two hours later it was away again, this time producing a 25lb 9oz mirror. A new member, Josh, who was just down from me, kindly came up to do the photos, but no

sooner had I lifted up the fish, the single Pink Peril I had cast out roared off, this one being a linear of exactly 26lb.

It was a memorable trip and one last will last in the memory bank for sure! ■



# BILLY BANKS BANK- HOLIDAY BANGER

## BILLY WELLS

Arriving at the car park and seeing a few cars parked up, I wasn't surprised, as the Monk's had been throwing up some good results, not least for my good friend, Perry Alabaster.

After a good look around, and seen a couple fish roll. I opted for a swim called the Underpass.

At around 11.30pm, the right-hand rod tightened up and I was into my first fish of the session. After bit of a scrap, the fish slipped over the net cord and I was chuffed to bits. Looking into the net, I could see it was a good one. I asked another member to assist me getting her on the bank and we watched as she sent the scales round to 42lb 15oz! Once on the mat, we recognised the fish as the Northern Lin, one I hadn't caught yet. Buzzing! After getting

some nice photos, we treated the hook hold and carefully let her swim back into her home.

That night's action still wasn't over, as I had two further takes, one from a 16lb stockie and the other from a 20lb mirror. Just as the sun was starting to rise, my middle rod went into meltdown and I was into another Monks pit lump. After another good battle, I got the fish into the net and looking down could see it was a lovely looking scaly banger. As I was getting my camera set up, the left-hand rod tightened up and I was in again! Another rod-bending battle resulted in yet another cracking-looking scaly mirror, which went 30lb 4oz, completing a brace of thirties with the 31lb 6oz on the other rod.

Now for the crazy bit... That morning, I had put

a bucket in another swim and some people thought I was mad to move as I was on fish, but I went with my gut. I quickly got the rods out to a far-margin spot in my new swim and the left-hand rod was away within 10 minutes, resulting in a nice common. I didn't want to hang about, so while the fish was resting, I quickly got the rod straight back out to the same spot and three hours later it was off again with my last fish of the session, a nice 20lb 5oz common to go with the 25lb 10oz I'd caught previously.

All the fish were caught on Wraysberry Pink Peril wafers in bags over a bed of Crayfish Maxi Mix and Crayfish Mini Mix pellets, all soaked in Crayfish Hydro Spod Syrup, with two scoops of S7 crumb to pull them down the water column, which clearly worked well for me. ■

# TASTY TRIO FOR TOM

**TOM O'MAHONY**

Travelling down to the lake in what seemed like a monsoon, the skies cleared, giving me enough time to get both rods out tight on the spot and accurately baited with 15-20 spombs of house pellets and boilies all soaked in plenty of Hydro Wheat.

No sooner had I finished spodding the heavens opened again, but within an hour of the rods being out, a 31lb mirror was in the net. At 2.30am, the alarm gave two single beeps and seeing the bobbin tight against the rod, I knew I was in. Instantly I could tell it was a good fish, as I wasn't able to gain any line. It held its own in the centre of the lake but 10 or so minutes later the fight was over and she was in the net. Looking down, I knew which fish it was and my legs went to jelly - Trio and she

went 45lb 14oz. With the pictures done and the fish released, I topped up the spot again.

First light came along with my third take in 12 hours, yielding a 34lb 6oz mirror. The spot was then topped up. Mid-afternoon, totally out of the blue, a pristine 31lb 10oz common

was sulking in the bottom of the net.

Four fish all over 30lb and a new PB to boot. Unbelievable!

Bug Corker wafers used in conjunction with the matching Bug Intense Booster and Insect Meal, have been an awesome game-changer. ■



**EXCLUSIVE**

# HESELTINE'S SECOND SIXTY



**PAUL HESELTINE**





Yep, I got to name the beast as this is a new 60 for the lake. Bit of a story to this capture the main part of it been borrowed time. On my last morning I'd clocked a couple of shows over my baited area on this rod, one of which sounded like a cow had been thrown in!!! I knew if my rig was sitting right, it was only going to be a matter of time before the bite came... Well as time passed 1pm my 72hrs was up however with nobody waiting to get into the swim a slow pack down was in order. Come 3pm, everything was packed into the van; it was just a matter of reeling the rods in! So, as I usually do, it's my least favourite for a bite that comes in 1st.

It's worth pointing out

that I now had two swans in my swim - heads down, arses up over the two remaining rods. So, when my alarm registered a drop back, I thought "bloody swans" walked over to the rods only to realise it's actually a bite and lifted into a solid weight. I knew straight away it was a good fish. My thoughts at this point urnd to the big one called Pashley's.....

My Heart was going ten to the dozen by now but the fish behaved itself and came in as most big fish do - slow and plodding. When it went into the net I looked and shouted out to the fish 'YOU BIG FAT PIG - GET IN'.

Wow is all I can say after this capture two UK 60's and a UK 70lber under my belt!!! Never

ever did I imagine this possible and sometimes I have to pinch myself! BUT!!!! It just fuels my fire for more..

I also had a brace of 40's. Caught on the multi rig, some might say scaled down, with a size 8 Armorok Wide Gape and 10mm ASM topper. Light baiting approach 6 to 7 spombs over each spot which consisted of ASM Crumb, Corn, maggots & matching stim liquid.

Successful Tactics, Big Fish Little Fish.....

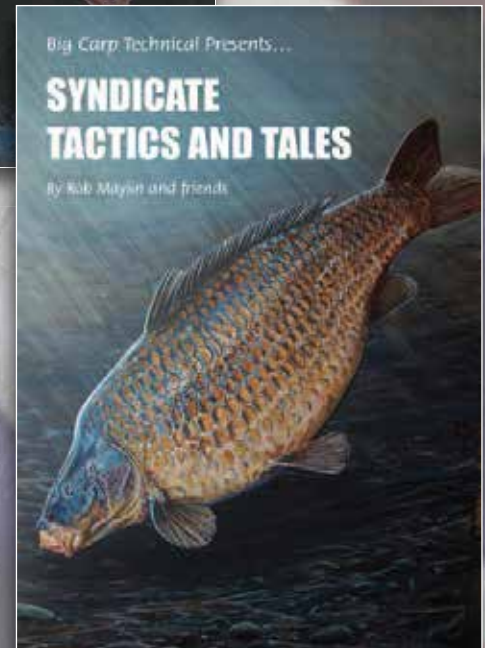
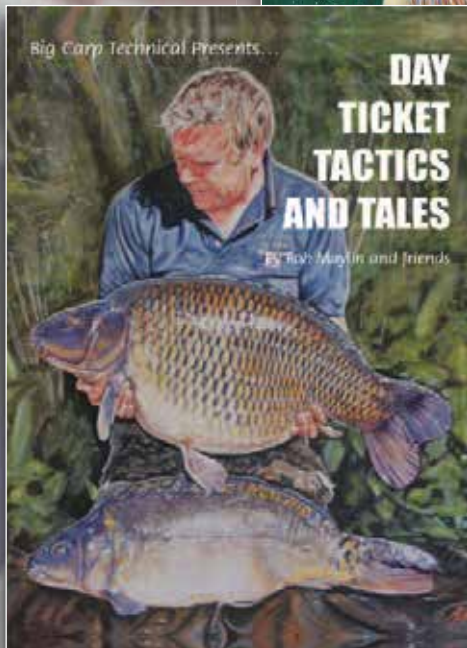
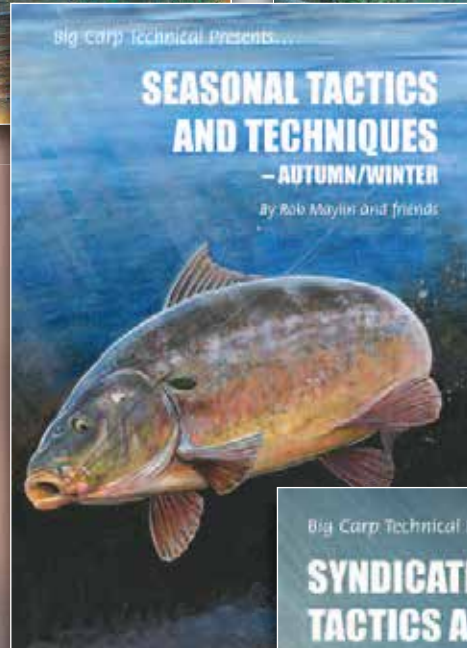
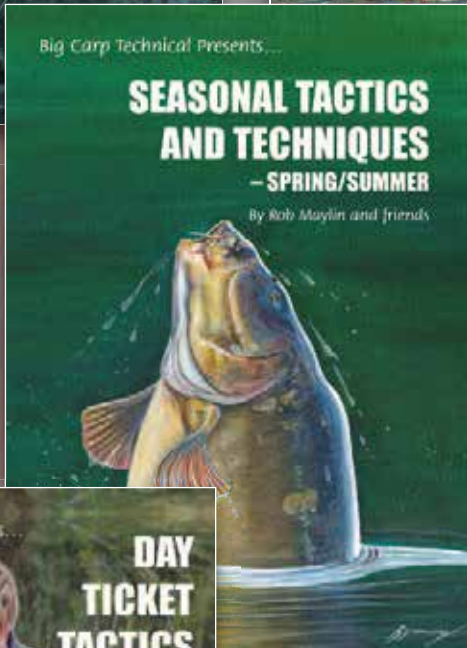
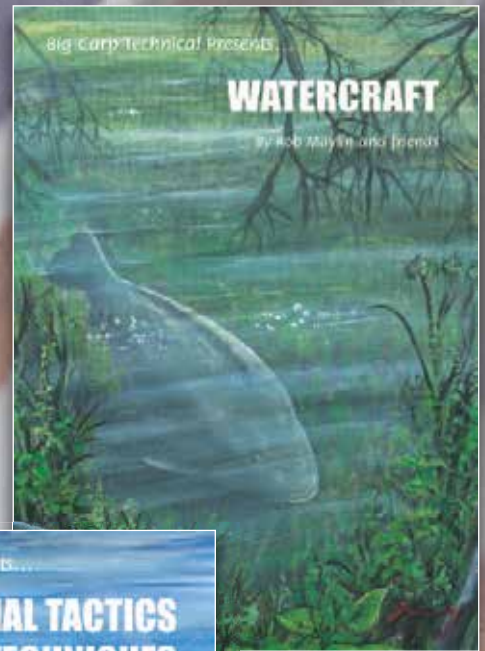
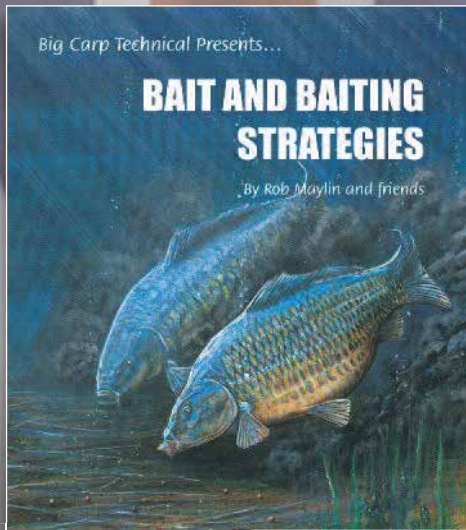
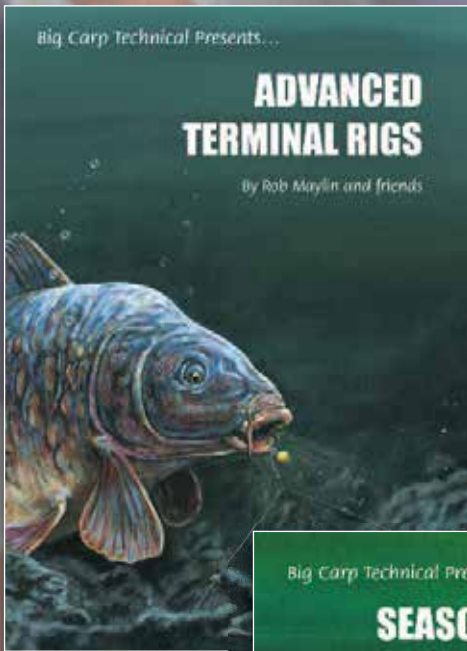
Well, I know I've said it before small baits for big fish on some lakes just catch them all way through the year! I'm not for one second saying that big baits don't work I'm just highlighting what has worked for me.. ■



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**EXCLUSIVE**

# BOW DOWN TO BOWER'S BEAUTY



**LES BOWERS**



Some fish mean more than others, no matter their size. Where I'm fishing now is probably, no, IS the hardest water I've ever fished. I love every minute I can be there.

It's everything about it, the place, the extremely low stock of fish (40 odd) in a huge expanse of water. It's ran correctly, no silly rules, just common sense. The swims aren't swims as such, just openings. No bark swims here lol.

Working full time I only get to fish every other weekend if I'm lucky, but if you put in the graft, it's still possible to catch em occasionally, even on rock hard waters. Don't step on others toes and do your own thing. You just hope others are the same way

of thinking.

This particular weekend it came good. I even said to a couple of friends I felt like something was gonna happen.

When at 4.30am the rod roared into life. The clutch screaming. I gently cupped the spool to slow it down and eventually turned its head. Lots of pumping and winding ensued as I was fishing at distance. Then it decided it wasn't ready for this and went off on another 50-60 yard run. Slowly I got it back only for it to run again and again. Then I saw it break surface. That's when the adrenaline kicked in big style. My heart was in my mouth hoping the hook and tackle held as every single fish from here is

special. Into the net he went at the first attempt and a huge feeling of relief overcame me. I made a couple of calls to two lads on the lake and got Alan to come do the pics. (thank you again mate). We weighed him and the needle was bouncing between 39lb 12oz and 40lb 8oz - I was happy with 39lb 12oz as I wanted to get him back as quick as possible without waiting for needle to stop still.

I've caught many carp bigger, but this one for me is right up there with the best of them. To think, I've always turned down this ticket before and now wish I'd taken it sooner. Thank you, Nick, for allowing me to enjoy the lake. It's my solitude. ■

# Big Carp Magazine!

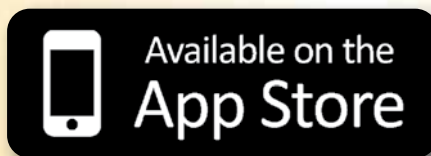
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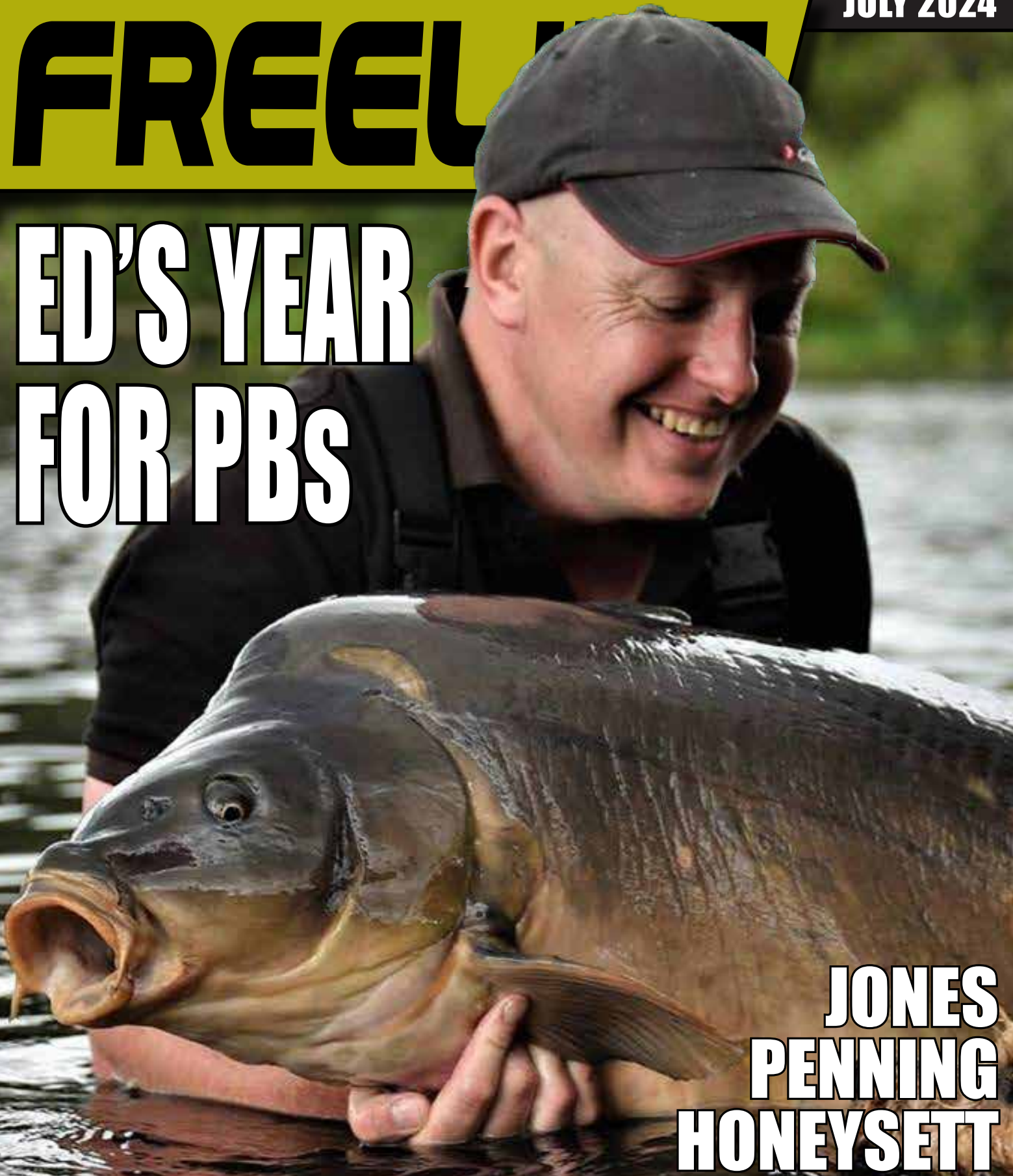
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JULY 2024

# FREELANCE

## ED'S YEAR FOR PBs



**JONES  
PENNING  
HONEYSETT**



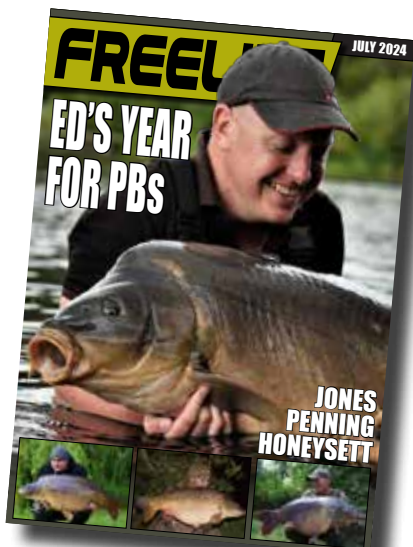
# Rob's Ramblings

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Rob Maylin  
Bountyhunter  
Publications  
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Cove, Hampshire  
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bigcarpstudio@hotmail.  
co.uk

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Front Cover:  
Ed Betteridge cradles a  
PB mirror.



There's no denying that angling is under attack from many quarters. Pollution being a topic that's very much in the public eye again recently. Thankfully we do have the Angling Trust working tirelessly in this country to make sure all elements of angling have a voice at all levels. From grass roots projects to the highest political arena, the Angling Trust is there representing anglers.

When I was a kid we didn't have all these pressures working against angling. We want our angling protected not just for ourselves but for the next generations of budding anglers. By joining the Angling Trust you are:

1. helping to fight pollution via the Anglers Against Pollution scheme and work with Fish Legal
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6. CARP CHAT

16. CARP SCENE

22. ADAM PENNING

32. RYAN BUTT

34. DEREK THE DON  
RITCHIE

42. CRAIG RUNHAM

46. KASIE NELSON

50. ED BETTERIDGE

52. KEITH TUCKER

58. TERRY DEMPSEY

64. ADAM  
HARRISON

66. ADAM  
HONEYSETT

72. GAZ JONES

82. JAKE ANDERSON



# TNT

TOP-NOTCH TACKLE



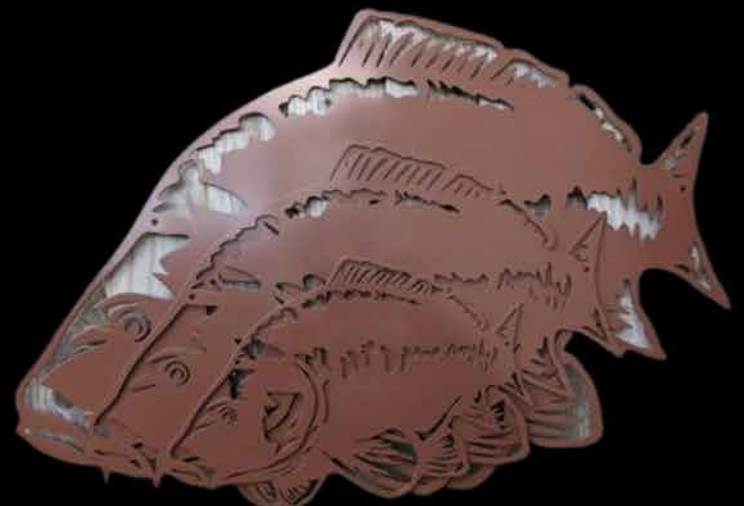
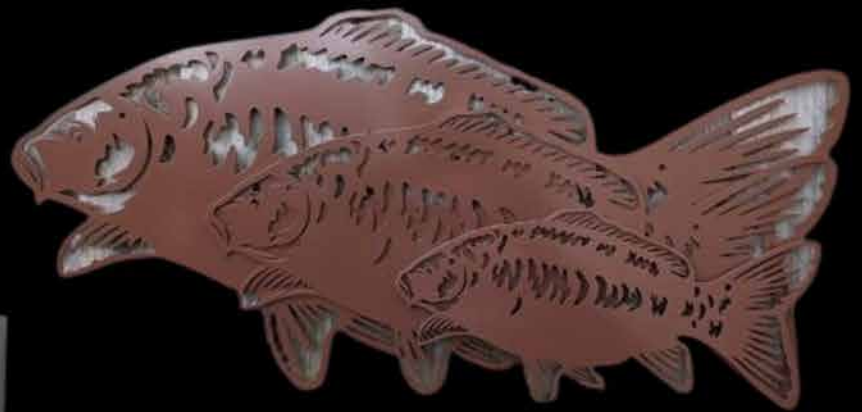
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# ANGLING TRUST ON THE UK GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED BAN ON WET WIPES CONTAINING PLASTIC

The Angling Trust welcomes the UK Government's announcement to introduce long overdue legislation banning the supply and sale of wet wipes containing plastic. This decision marks significant progress in tackling the scourge of plastic pollution within our waterways, reflecting the urgent need to address environmental pollution which threatens aquatic life and water quality.

While we strongly support this initiative, as expressed during the consultation phase, we maintain that this legislation is only one small step towards addressing the broader environmental impacts of wet wipes. We wish to highlight several concerns and recommendations that need addressing to make this legislation truly effective in preserving our environment.

**Continued Risk of Non-Plastic Wet Wipes:** The proposed ban focuses on plastic components yet does not address the environmental and infrastructural issues caused by other types of single-use wipes, such as those made from lyocell and viscose. These materials, often labelled as biodegradable, still pose risks for blockages in our sewage systems and can persist in the environment.



We urge the Government to ensure rigorous environmental impact assessments of these semi-synthetic fibres and to be prepared to extend the ban to these products if they prove harmful.

**Clarification and Standardisation of Disposal Information:** Current labelling standards are inadequate and often misleading, with terms like "flushable" encouraging harmful consumer behaviour. It is crucial that all wet wipe packaging includes clear, standardised instructions stating 'do not flush' prominently. This will help reduce the incidence of wipes entering and harming our aquatic ecosystems.

**Promotion of Sustainable Alternatives:** Finally, we advocate for broader systemic changes beyond banning single-use items. The introduction of this ban should coincide with efforts to promote a circular economy, emphasising the development

and use of sustainable, reusable alternatives to single-use products. Government support for initiatives that increase the accessibility and affordability of reusable options is essential to reduce overall consumption and waste, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals and commitments by all devolved nations.

Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns at the Angling Trust commented: "True sustainability will require comprehensive solutions that address the root causes of environmental degradation. The Angling Trust is committed to working with the Government and other stakeholders to ensure that our waters and their biodiversity are protected for future generations. We look forward to continued dialogue and action that will lead to effective and sustainable management of all types of wet wipes and other similar

## FARNHAM ANGLING SOCIETY NEWS

### ENVIRONMENT AGENCY FENLAND AND GREAT OUSE



**R**enewing or joining Farnham AS for the 2024 - 2025 season. Please remember that although all applications are turned around within 48-Hrs of us receiving them, all handbooks are posted using 2nd Class stamps and we are wholly reliant upon the Royal Mail to get them to you. As such, the sooner you apply, the better chance you have of ensuring you receive your handbook.

Online: Members may apply via our website: <https://www.farnhamanglingsociety.com/join-us/> In person: This is only available at Gold Valley, Gold Lane, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 2PT. This will be between 10:00am - 4:00pm on Fridays & Saturdays

until the end of July 2024, starting Friday 1st March & Saturday 2nd March. Postal applications: These may be made using the Renewal Form on Page 89 of your 2023 - 2024 handbook or by downloading an Application Form from our website: [www.farnhamanglingsociety.com](http://www.farnhamanglingsociety.com). Please note: Applications for membership of the BCAA (Basingstoke Canal Anglers Association), have been stopped as unfortunately the decision has been taken by the BCAA to wind up (close down), due to the BCAA's ability to undertake any maintenance being so limited and with them receiving very little support in seeking to bailiff the 32-mile length of the canal. All those who bought BCAA membership for the 2024 - 2025 season will be fully refunded. ■

**A**nother above average fine. The angler pictured below was found fishing on the River Great Ouse through Bedford in October 2023 and not only was he fishing without a valid licence, but also with multiple rods with the distance between the outermost rods exceeding the three-metre national rod fishing byelaw limit. On the 16 April 2024 at Hastings Magistrates Court, Benone Balota, of Fenlake Road Bedford, was found guilty and received a fine of £751. For more information regarding the national rod fishing byelaws, see link below: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-rod-fishing-byelaws-for-england-freshwater-fishing-with-a-rod-and-line>

# ANGLERS AGAINST LITTER SURVEY



Since its inception in 2020, the Angling Trust's "Anglers Against Litter" campaign has mobilised over 1,370 volunteers across more than 147 clubs to tackle the escalating issue of litter in and beside our waterways.

This year, we're expanding our efforts with a structured survey that will help us understand the specific challenges posed by riverside rubbish. The data gathered through this initiative will not only provide insights into the types of litter affecting different regions, and waterways, but will also track trends, such as the recent surge in disposable vape litter. This information is crucial as we develop targeted strategies to reduce pollution and advocate for cleaner, healthier ecosystems. ■

## RSPCA SUSPEND RELEASE OF SEALS AT SUTTON BRIDGE

The RSPCA have agreed to suspend the release of rescued seals into the tidal River Nene at Sutton Bridge following concerns expressed by the Angling Trust that some have become resident in the waters around Peterborough, causing significant damage to freshwater fish stocks.

In a letter to the Angling Trust's CEO Jamie Cook, the RSPCA said they were implementing a pause to "focus on gathering data and evidence concerning released seals and release sites, consult on alternative options and speak with relevant partners."

Currently, there are five

examples of tagged seals living around Peterborough, some 30 miles from the coast. ■






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**CUSTOM**  
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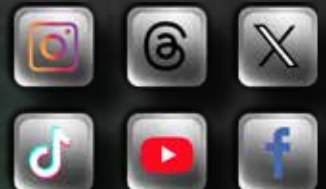
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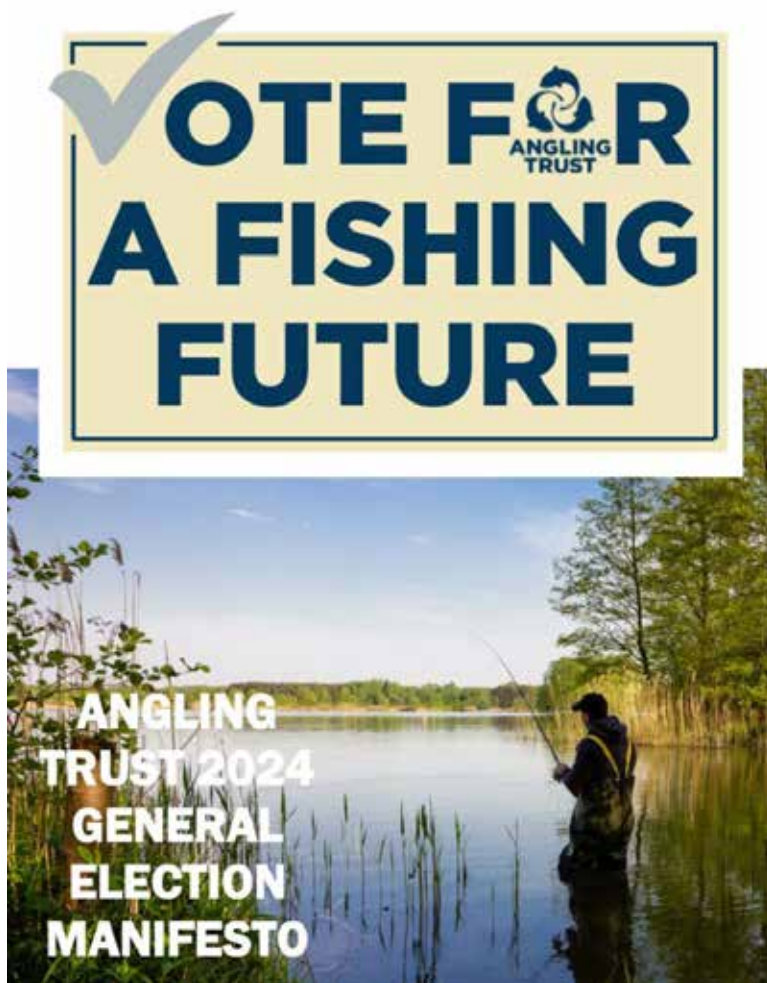


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**A**ngling Trust challenges political parties to secure Britain's fishing future

The Angling Trust has issued a challenge to all the major political parties vying for the votes of Britain's two million anglers. The Trust calls on the parties to demonstrate their commitment to protecting the environment upon which the sport depends, support policies that protect and promote angling, and maximise the economic and social benefits angling delivers.

Currently, our rivers are blighted by agricultural and sewage pollution, and many are threatened by over-abstraction due to the failure of successive governments to build sufficient reservoir

capacity or properly regulate the farming and water industries. Our seas are over-fished and poorly managed, with vital habitats disappearing.

The Angling Trust manifesto, entitled 'Vote for a Fishing Future', presents 10 specific policy asks aimed at protecting, promoting, and developing angling for all. These policy areas include pollution, regulation, marine conservation, angling access, participation, economic and social benefits of angling, anglers' rights, reviving salmon stocks, and addressing threats from predation.

The angling manifesto has attracted the support of high-profile figures from the fishing world, including broadcaster and actor Paul Whitehouse who said:

"Get behind the Angling

Trust Manifesto. We all need clean water, so for the life of me I can't understand why we allow our rivers to be polluted, abused, and abstracted. As anglers, we see it first-hand. Enough talk. We need action."

Jamie Cook, CEO of the Angling Trust, stated:

"Anglers see the decline in our rivers, lakes and seas every day we're out on and by the water. An 88% decline in freshwater species since 1970, hundreds of thousands of fish killed by sewage pollution last year, Atlantic salmon now listed as endangered, a quarter of our marine fish stocks in a critical condition, just 5% of our marine environment protected from damaging bottom trawling, a climate and biodiversity crisis.

"Over the life of the next Parliament, this ever-accelerating decline must stop, things must improve. The Angling Trust manifesto sets out what needs to be done to protect fish, fishing, and the environment."

Our 10 policy asks to protect, promote and develop angling for all:

- Reform the water industry to stop pollution of our rivers and seas.

- Abolish OFWAT and replace it with a single water regulator, accountable to the public, who puts the protection of the environment as its first priority.

- Beef up the EA, the MMO and local IFCAs to ensure they have the resources, expertise and power to properly enforce the law and protect angling.

- Ensure taxpayers' money given to farmers is used to improve the



water environment and does not support actions that damage it.

- Ensure government, include devolved and local government, support policies that protect and promote angling and maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits it delivers.

- Support actions aimed at supporting broad and diverse participation in angling through schools, community centres, youth clubs, and social prescribing.

- Support the rights of all anglers to go fishing and protect and develop angling access.

- Recognise recreationally important species in sea fisheries management and the socio-economic benefits sea angling brings to coastal communities.

- Take concerted action to reverse the decline in salmon stocks throughout the UK.

- Address the damage caused to inland fisheries by invasive species and support fishery managers' efforts to protect their waters and businesses from unsustainable predation.

The Angling Trust manifesto has been sent to all the main parties representing English constituencies in the House of Commons ahead of the General Election to establish their commitment to securing Britain's fishing future. The Angling Trust encourages its members to engage with local candidates to seek pledges of support for angling in the next Parliament. ■

## BCAC SEMI FINALS

The semifinals have been announced. Pairs of anglers have been battling it out in regional qualifiers and now it's getting serious. Barston, Brasenose 1 and Horcott are

the three venues that will host the upcoming action. £20,000 is up for grabs for the first placed pair. The final will be held at the legendary Broadlands Lake just outside Southamton later in the year.

**catch** **BCAC** **REUBEN HEATON**

**SEMI FINALISTS**

**BARSTON**

1. KEVIN CLOKE & BEN CLOKE
2. MATT WENT & WES COLE
3. STEPHEN COE & FINLEY TODHUNTER
4. DANIEL HOLLIS & DAN POTTLE
5. ROB BURGESS & KARL PALMER
6. TOM CUTHBERTSON & DANNY MARSHALL
7. STE ALFORD & DEAN CRUST
8. MATT PEPPERELL & CHRIS HUDSON
9. GEORGE WEST & ANDREW WOON
10. MARK BRETT & SCOTT BOWDEN
11. JAMES ANDERSON & KIERREN WATERS
12. GRAHAM MATEY & JAMIE VINEY
13. PERRY HAWKINS & BRAD SEARS
14. MIKE ASHFORD & JAMIE MOSS
15. DAMIEN WATTS & MATT WHITTINGTON
16. JAMIE KEYS & RYAN BETTLE

**catch** **BCAC** **REUBEN HEATON**

**SEMI FINALISTS**

**BRASENOSE 1**

1. CARL RIMMER & PERRY WEBB
2. PAUL GORDON & VERNON KEARL
3. JOSH STEER & BEN HUNT
4. JAMIE TAYLOR-LEARD & DON BUTTON
5. PHIL BURY & MARC CROWTHER
6. MATTHEW LOWER & JASON SIGGS
7. DAVID BARLOW & MATT BARLOW
8. DAN MOORCROFT & MICK LEDGER
9. CHARLIE STEARN & JAMES TAYLOR
10. OVI BLANKAS & AIRIDAS GERIKAS
11. JACK MEYER & LEWIS SWIFT
12. ANDY WILMOT & MIKE FEATHER
13. LEE JOLLEY & JAMIE KEY
14. DANNY UDEN & ADRIAN TALLON
15. SCOTT HACKETT & MATTHEW WALSH
16. JIM THOMAS & DAVE JONES

**catch** **BCAC** **REUBEN HEATON**

**SEMI FINALISTS**

**HORCOTT**

1. WAYNE FEARON & LIAM MORGAN
2. JAMES FLOYD & BRAISE PRICE
3. JOE SALLIS & ANDREW ROBERTS
4. JOFF TERRY & KYLE SPAVINS
5. JOHN BOWMAN & BEN MOORE
6. TOM PRICE & DANNY PARTON
7. SIMON WHEELER & MARK SAWYER
8. DWAYNE CHIN & LEE PRICE
9. AMY EMERY & AIMEE EATON
10. JASON GUTTERIDGE & TERRY DONALDSON
11. LEE BRUCE & NATHAN CROWDER
12. SEAN DULSON & LEE SIMS
13. ASH TAYLOR & ROB JULYAN
14. DARREN PEARSE & JOHN FLEWIN
15. CARL BRYAN & LIAM GREEN
16. BILLY FLOWERS & JAMIE LONDERS

## THE INSURANCE EMPORIUM - PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE ANGLING TRUST'S ANGLERS AGAINST LITTER CAMPAIGN



The Insurance Emporium is proud to be a supporting sponsor of the Angling Trust Anglers Against Litter campaign. Having become a Trade Association member of the Angling Trust in 2023, the extended partnership marks a positive step in both organisations' commitment to the conservation of the nation's waterways.

Who is The Insurance Emporium?

The Insurance Emporium is an award-winning insurer based in Thorpe Underwood, York and has over 90 years' experience in the insurance industry. During that time, they have helped bring certainty and security to millions of UK residents by protecting the things that really matter to them.

Customers benefit from personal lines insurance on specialist products such as pet, caravan, horses and trailers, fishing equipment, camera equipment, and more. In short, The Insurance Emporium protects the things you love. ■

## GET FISHING WATCH: WHAT WE DO ABOUT PARTICIPATION



Inspiring the next generation of anglers and ensuring that fishing is a sport that is enjoyed by a diverse range of people are among the Angling Trust's key aims. In this film we take a look at how we work with clubs and fisheries to inspire people to get on the banks and Get Fishing!

This April to June book a free place for Spring Into Fishing beginner events where tackle, bait, instruction and a one-day fishing licence are all included FREE on the day. ■

## RIVER WYE ACTION PLAN SHOWS LACK OF CO-ORDINATION



The government's £35 million action plan for the River Wye is small compensation for the size of the task needed to clean up this majestic river that flows from the hills of mid-Wales to the Bristol Channel. The plan, announced by Defra last month, shows a complete lack of co-ordination with their Welsh counterparts.

Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns at the Angling Trust, said: "If both the UK and Welsh governments were serious about sorting out the Wye's many problems, they should be coming together to ensure proper investment and proper enforcement of the regulations." ■

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# PETROMAX UNVEILS NEW MENU OF OUTDOOR COOKING PRODUCTS FOR 2024

As the camping season approaches, Petromax has launched a range of new outdoor cooking and storage products. From portable, durable and compact cookware to versatile storage, the latest additions to the extensive collection are designed to enhance the camping, van life or bushcraft experience, in whatever form that takes.  
Stockists: [www.berryuseful.co.uk](http://www.berryuseful.co.uk)

## Atago Gas Grill, £194.95



The Petromax Atago Gas Grill is the ultimate companion for outdoor enthusiasts. With its space-saving design and quick setup, this grill is perfect for campers seeking convenience and efficiency. Crafted from stainless steel for easy cleaning and durability, it features foldable legs and a dishwasher-safe drip tray for hassle-free use. It has a generous grilling surface, so multiple campers can cook at the same time without having to wait, and has a maximum heat output of 3.8kW. The Atago Gas Grill measures 19 x 38 x 38cm with a 34cm diameter grill and weighs 3.7kg.



## Dimego Camping Oven, £79.95

The Petromax Dimego Camping Oven is a reliable choice for outdoor culinary adventures. With a compact design and a generous 2L capacity, this oven is ideal for creating a wide range of alfresco meals. Features include triple air circulation for even cooking, a high-quality ceramic coating for non-stick performance, and folding heat-insulated handles for safety. Designed for easy storage and transportation, the Dimego Camping Oven is a practical solution for adventurers on the go. It measures 14 x 27 x 27cm and weighs 1.44g



## Dimego Camping Cookware, £89.95

Petromax's Dimego Camping Cookware is tailor-made for cooking on-the-go. Featuring a special coating, the pans cater to campers, bushcrafters, anglers, festival-goers and other outdoor enthusiasts alike, offering a lightweight, space-saving design with foldable, heat-insulated handles. The scratch-resistant coating ensures perfect cooking results, while built-in measuring scales and pouring aids enhance convenience. The Dimego Camping Cookware comes complete with a transport strap for secure storage. It measures 10.25 x 21.8 x 21.8cm and weighs 1.45kg.



## Stove Cup, £39.95

The Petromax Stove Cup is a compact and simple all-in-one solution for outdoor cooking. Ideal for campers, bushcrafters and backpackers, this 2-in-1 set features a 750ml cup with lid and an integrated stove, perfect for hot drinks or small meals, using firewood, a spirit stove or other fuel. Its space-saving design and stacking feature make it easy to transport, while the rapid cooling stainless steel is great for a quick clean up and getaway. The Stove Cup has a measuring scale for easy fill level determination and comes with a handy transport bag. It measures 10 x 11.5 x 11.5cm and weighs 321g.



## Carp Scene

### Catago Box 50, £89.95

The Catago Box 50 offers the perfect storage solution for camping essentials. Tailored for campers with plenty of cooking and dining gear, the Catago features robust side walls and dimensions based on standard Euroboxes, and there's a waterproof base, keeping the contents dry wherever the Catago is used. Its flexible divider securely accommodates multiple combinations of camping cookers, cookware, food, and percolators, while side handles and a shoulder strap mean it's easy and comfortable to carry. The Catago Box 50 measures 27 x 50 x 38cm.



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SURGE**



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ENIGMA**



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MIX**



**PASTE &  
POP UPS**

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AND SOME VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE IN THE  
BACKGROUND OVER A GOOD PERIOD OF TIME WE BECAME  
CONFIDENT AND HAPPY ENOUGH WITH RESULTS THAT WE  
ARE ALSO VERY CONFIDENT THESE BAITS WILL SUIT YOUR  
EVERY CARPY NEEDS...

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# 9 Expert Tips to Help Stop Pollen Reeling in Anglers this Summer

1. "Breathe in less pollen when you're by the river or lake. Apply a drug-free allergen barrier balm such as HayMax around the rim of your nostrils and bones of your eyes to trap pollen before it is breathed in through the nose or gets in your eyes – less pollen means less reaction, and for many, none at all. Apply before going out fishing and as necessary during the day. HayMax organic drug-free allergen barrier balm has been proven to trap over one third of pollen before it enters the body [1]."

2. "Create your own Hay Fever First Aid Kit. If your symptoms are particularly bad or nothing seems to work try combining one or more products – in other words create your own Hay Fever First Aid Kit. Many products are complementary to each other and can be taken together. My ideal combination is one (and only one) antihistamine, an allergen barrier balm, one (and only one) steroid nasal spray and one or more other natural products. It is advisable to check with a pharmacist or GP if you are combining products."

3. "Keep pollen off your body when you're out fishing. Wear wraparound sunglasses to help stop pollen getting in your eyes and a hat, cap or other head cover while you're fishing to prevent pollen

getting caught in your hair."

4. "Wash away pollen when you return home. Wash your face or better still take a shower when you return home after fishing. This will remove pollen from your body and hair."

5. "Keep pollen out of your home. Remove footwear at your front or back door so you don't bring pollen indoors with you. Keep doors and windows closed as much as possible. If you have a pet keep it well-groomed and shampoo it regularly to remove pollen from its coat. Vacuum and damp dust your home regularly – damp dusting helps prevent pollen being dispersed back into the air."

6. "Eat and drink for your hay fever. Some foods such as red onions, kale, cherry tomatoes, broccoli, blueberries and apples, contain quercetin, a natural antihistamine. Avoid alcohol, dairy drinks and chocolate. Beer wine and spirits all contain histamine, as does chocolate. Avoid mucus-producing dairy drinks; excess mucus is exactly what you don't need if you suffer from hay fever. Drink ginger, peppermint or green tea instead, as all are said to reduce hay fever symptoms. Ginger and green tea work as natural antihistamines

whilst peppermint reduces congestion."

7. "Check the pollen count forecast. The pollen count measures the amount of pollen in the air and is the number of pollen grains per cubic metre of air. Pollen count forecasts can help you judge if your hay fever symptoms will be particularly severe on any given day. As a general guide, the pollen count tends to be lower on rainy days and higher when it's hot and sunny. Many hay fever sufferers start to experience symptoms when the count reaches 'medium'. Counts will be higher near to large sources of grass pollen including hay meadows."

8. "Try to time your fishing trip when there's less pollen. Pollen levels tend to be higher in the early morning and early evening. It is released by grass in the morning then rises during the day, before falling back down to head height as the air cools in the early evening."

9. "Check out the Allergy Guides on my website. There are many other treatments and remedies available for hay fever sufferers and simple lifestyle changes and practical steps you can take to help reduce the effects. Check out my website [www.haymax.biz/hay-fever/](http://www.haymax.biz/hay-fever/) for more help and advice."



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# FRYERNING

By Adam Penning

I'd long been aware of the reputation carried by Fryerning as a serious big fish water, and being local to me, I had been meaning to check it out for a long time. At the back end of 2012, I had a bit of spare time on my hands and so decided to give the management a call and see if I could book a walk round.

After winding the van down some delightful country lanes in darkest Essex, I arrived at an impressive looking set of gates. Chris, the owner, came out to meet me and made me a cup of tea in the old carp lodge. Looking out of the window while sipping the brew and chatting with Chris, I was immediately taken with the vista and general feel of the place.

It transpired that there were even more big fish in the lake than I'd thought with a considerable number of thirty pounders topped by several forties, the biggest of which was fast closing in on fifty pounds. The lake



has a 'secret garden' type of vibe to it, and Chris, son Charlie and Scott have nurtured the surroundings and dappled them here and there with various artefacts, which range from glacial obelisks to huge maritime anchors, little benches and even a Carp God,

which stands on the dam wall, carved from solid stone and standing nearly ten feet tall!

It's fair to say the lake is pretty unique and so is the stocking/rearing project that has helped to establish the place as one of the leading carp

**(Top) The incomparable Fryerning.**  
**(Below) The amazing Stripe at 40lbs.**



# Adam Penning



39lb 4oz surface best.



Amazing linear on a zig.

# Storm Free Fishery

**A great challenge, stealth required!**



I am proud to announce the opening of a new and exciting venue called Storm Free Fishery! The lake is located near Limoges, France and It is steeped in history, dating back to the Napoleonic period. It is approximately three acres in size, set in a beautiful and remote wooded valley full of beech, ash and oak trees. Please feel free to contact me with your enquiries. Kind regards,

**Mark Gibson**



- Exclusive lake booking for up to four anglers (price TBC).
- Previously held a good number of 30s, 40s and some 50s but the stock is unknown.
- New facilities will include summer house, kitchen, shower, toilet and newly refurbished swims.
- Lake record (from over 15 years ago) 56lbs.
- Restaurants, shops and supermarkets within 15 minutes.
- Large fully stocked tackle shop within 15 minutes.
- Quiet valley with no light pollution.
  - Stock size: approximately 80-100 carp.
  - Un-fished for over 15 years!
  - 40 mins drive from Limoges.
  - Three acres in size.
  - 300 years old.
  - Catfish over 100lb.

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# Adam Penning

waters in the UK. The roots of the fishery stretch back over thirty years and span the building of an onsite research lab that enabled the team to breed their own strain of carp. Crossing Leney and Redmire strains while mixing in faster growing elements such as the Mark Simmonds variety, they were able to evolve strains that were both good looking and with the potential to grow to monstrous sizes.

Fast forward a few decades, and the 18-acre main lake is home to an amazing head of giant fish that are growing steadily, year on year. The site isn't just home to the main lake either, and being flanked by the Valley and Car Park Lakes ensures that there is a level of fishing to suit everybody. The Car Park Lake is very much a 'lads and dads' water – crammed with feisty doubles and twenties, a bite is almost guaranteed whatever the time of year. The neighbouring



**(Top) Rods out in the Lodge.**  
**(Below) The Gurm – now over 55lbs!**

Valley Lake is home to some fabulously scaly fish, many of which are well over twenty pounds with a good number of thirties too. In fact this lake

has just produced its first forty in the shape of a 41lb common carp!

One thing that a lot of anglers (me included) struggled with in the early







The Nunn looking amazing at 46lb 12oz.



Part of a brace of forties.

# Adam Penning

years was the huge population of Turkish crayfish. These critters had really taken a hold on all of the lakes, and at times they could make the fishing very difficult indeed. The management took the decision to address this in 2016, and in conjunction with the EA, they were able to completely eradicate crayfish from the entire site! The effect this had on the quality of the fishing was remarkable, and the number of fish caught in the first year was many times higher than previous years.

Now that the carp were able to eat all the bait anglers were putting in, and due in part to a radical pellet feeding policy, the weights of the fish suddenly surged to the point that now, as I write in summer 2017, the lake is home to no less than 18 different forty-pound fish, which is a forty for every acre! In addition, there are three fish that have eclipsed the fifty-pound mark with the biggest two having surpassed mid fifties – a sixty suddenly looks a real possibility in the coming years. The current fourth biggest fish is one worthy of special mention, known as the Netted Fish. This amazing creature is a genetic leather carp, and at over 49lbs, I think it must be the largest of its type in the country. I fully expect that within the next year, Fryerning will hold fifty pound mirror, leather and common carp – a truly remarkable achieve-



ment and one that I believe would be unrivalled by any other UK fishery.

The syndicate has a friendly, relaxed feel with many of the members having been there for years. The team is always working around the lake, a bit of pruning, a bit of watering,

a bit of grass cutting; something is always going on, and not being ones to rest on their laurels, the lake and its surroundings are always moving forwards.

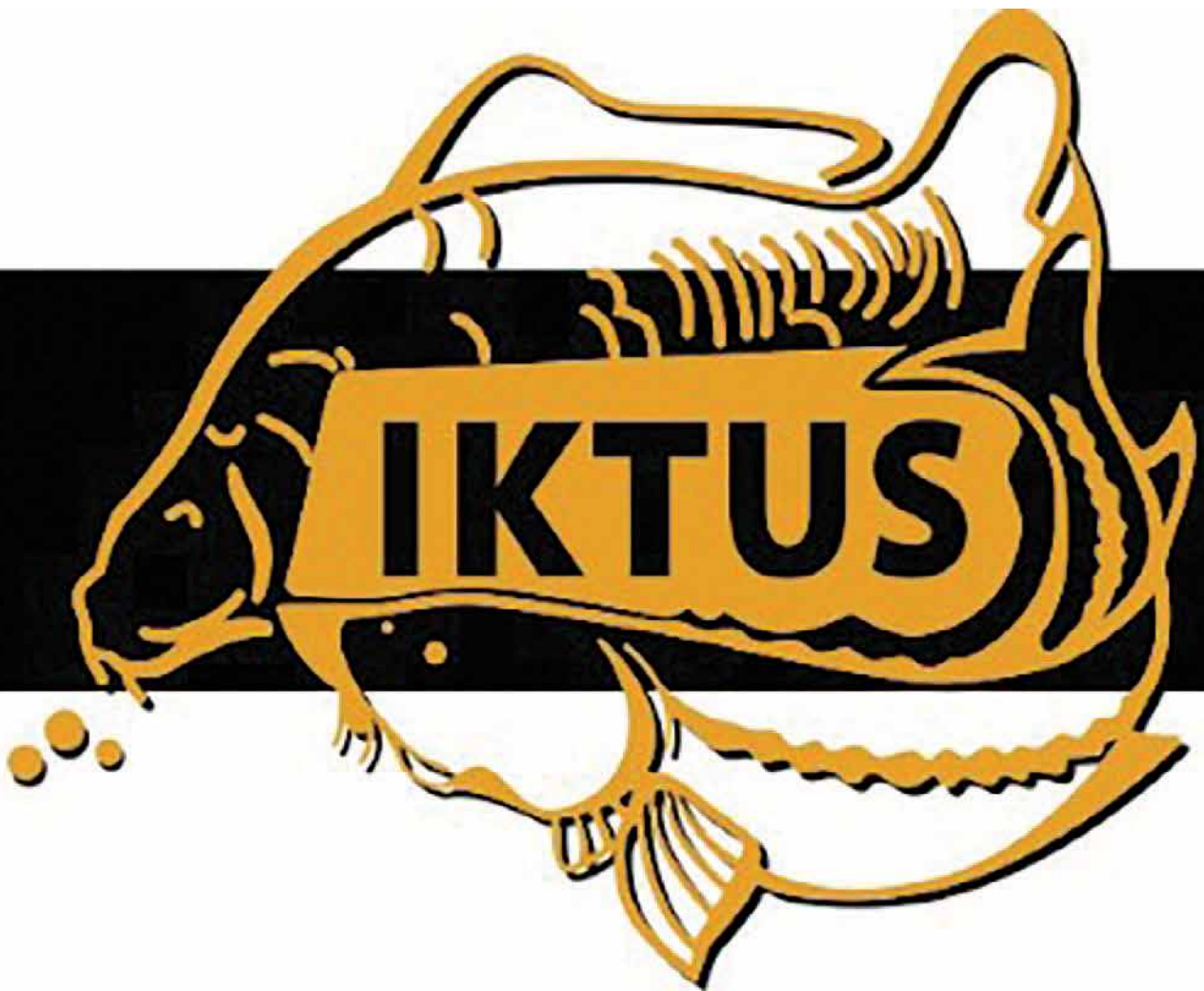
The fishing can be tricky at times, but what do you expect? At the same time the fish can be very catchable too, and with a phenomenal winter track record, you have a realistic chance at subduing that rarest of things – a winter forty-pound carp!

Most tactics work, and the carp do love their boilies! If you fish well and manage to get in tune with the place then some truly extraordinary catches are possible. Over the years, the lake has been very kind to me even though I hadn't really fished it all that much, usually numbering a handful of nights a year. In that time it has been generous enough to provide me with a personal best mirror, a surface best, my biggest on a zig and also my first (and second!) brace of forties!

It's a truly remarkable place that is carving out a rightful place in carp fishing history. Hopefully I will see you down there one day, and if I do, mine's an Earl Grey! ■

**(Top) The Emperor at 42lbs.  
(Left) Waiting...**





# FISHING RESORT



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A very clean 32lb common was one of 11 fish caught on one rod today by team member Grant Walters, using his own Infusion bait on our Size 6 Scorpion Curved hook and other end tackle items. Well done Grant.



Lovely old Chard reservoir carp of 24lb for team member Tim Thornton. Taken at 112 yards on our Size 4 Scorpion Crank hook tied in his usual IQ2 D rig. Check out Tim's article in the lates



Team member Lee Oxley is certainly on a roll recently with yet another wide gape victim. Size 4 Scorpion Wide gape hook tied on blow back rig using PTO pro hook link, shrink tube, putty and anti tangle sleeve. This fish is called gills. Still fighting fit going just over 30 at 30lb 5oz. Lee Oxley is on a roll and has managed to bag these beauties! All caught using our Scorpion Wide Gape hooks, Tungsten Rig Putty, Anti Tangle Sleeves & Shrink Tube. Going 27lb, 29lb, and topped off with 30lb 8oz leather! Well done Lee, great angling



Congratulations to team member Chevy Reid for joining the 30's club with this big framed 33lb 5oz mirror. Our size 4 Scorpion Wide Gape hooks and a variety of other end tackle got in the net safely.



Congratulations to team member James Johnson on the new PB common at 36lb 4oz! Backed up with a couple more fish, including this 20lb mirror. James used a size 6 Scorpion Crank hook tied in a ronnie rig to nail his PB. Well done James.



A nice mid double for Paul Gill. He used our size 4 Curved hook tied blowback style.



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**WATCH THIS SPACE**



# Baby Poolies



I arrived at Linch Hill early Sunday morning, as it tends to get extremely busy. I headed down the path with my bucket, and the wind was a SW. There was a lot of pressure with lines in the water that end, and with the weather turning hot over the next few days, I decided to fish on the back of it closer to the shallow end. Not seeing much to go on, I found myself three spots – two on hard gravel and one slightly in the silt. I started off with eight Spombs on each spot using Monster Particles Ghost and Nature's Baits Alpha chops. It was slow with nothing showing and only a few liners.

The morning soon came around, and there were fish smashing approx 70 yards out in the middle of the lake. I quickly packed up and moved into a swim directly in front of them. I put two singles out, but nothing was happening, so I decided to put 25 Spombs out at 70 yards. The weather was getting warmer, so I wound the rods in and headed off for a breakfast so I could leave the swim to rest and the carp to try and feed freely. At 7pm, the

rods went back out. I decided to use a helicopter setup with a D-rig on all rods using Deception Angling size 6 Curve and bait screws with Nature's Baits Berry Bite wafter!

At 5am, I woke to a serious liner and decided to just sit and watch the water for any signs of fizzing or shows in any way!! At 8am, my right rod ripped off. I hit into it, and she was on.

It felt big, and using braided mainline, my heart dropped every time it clipped the dorsal. 20 minutes later, she was beginning to tire. I waded out further, as there was so much weed in front of me and placed the net ready. There she was – a sight I will never forget – slowly easing her way into the net. It was Baby Poolie's at 44lb 4oz. ■



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Located in Essex, Creedence Fishery hosts one of the finest fishing lakes in the area. Created in 1922 and opened in 2020, the fishery boasts a stunning two acre carp lake, stocked with fish up to 44lb, with at least 30 x 30lb carp up to 39lb and at least six different 40s, backed up with another 30 x upper 20s. A handful of other 30lb fish and some fast growers to back them up. We are proud to offer you an excellent fishing environment and with accommodating facilities to help you get that new personal best!

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Creedence Fishery: A Year of Remarkable Growth In the few years since its inception, Creedence Fishery, located in picturesque Essex surroundings, has quickly distinguished itself as a premier destination for carp angling enthusiasts. This two-acre modern carp fishery has seen a flurry of activity and development over the last 12 months, significantly enhancing the angling experience and bolstering its presence within the community. At the heart of Creedence Fishery are its unique offerings that cater to the comfort and convenience of anglers. Each of the four meticulously designed swims (one of which one is a double) houses a wooden cabin equipped with modern amenities including heating, a fridge, TV, power, and Wi-Fi.

This innovative approach ensures that anglers can focus on their passion without the hassle of setting up bivvies, regardless of the weather conditions. In order to prevent unsightly angling tackle hanging from the trees along its margins, and to protect the cabins and wildlife, Creedence Fishery is a bait-boat only venue which adds to the excitement and challenge of catching big carp from its waters. Furthermore, the inclusion of essential carp care equipment, along with toilets, shower and vending machine, underscores the fishery's commitment to both angler satisfaction and fish welfare.

A pivotal development this year has been the introduction of a communal BBQ and social area, fostering a sense of community among visitors. The integration of the 'swimbooker' app for easy online booking has also streamlined the booking process, reflecting the fishery's embrace of technology to enhance user experience. The stocking program represents another significant milestone, with the addition of over 15x 30lb carp and

3x 40lb carp to the lake. This initiative not only promises thrilling challenges for anglers aiming to catch these magnificent specimens, but with the recent nettings removing huge numbers of smaller fish, allows for the backup stock to grow through too.

The impact of these developments is evident in the surge of anglers flocking to Creedence Fishery, drawn by the allure of its massive specimen carp and the enhanced fishing experience. The attention from mainstream angling media further validates the fishery's growing reputation as a premier destination. Looking ahead, Creedence Fishery plans to continue its trajectory of growth with a focus on nurturing huge specimen carp.

A scheduled netting at the year's end aims to curate the lake's population, ensuring that only carp above 25lb remain, alongside the introduction of even more 40lb carp. A testament to the fishery's appeal is a special feature by 'AJ Spooner' of swimbooker, whose YouTube session capturing multiple 30lb catches in a single winter outing has captivated the angling community.

This event, emblematic of the fishery's potential, can be easily accessed through the QR code link, as we invite you to witness the thrill of angling at Creedence Fishery. As Creedence Fishery continues to evolve, its blend of comfort, community, and carp sets it apart, promising memorable experiences for all who visit. With bookings already matching last year's total by February 2024, the fishery's future looks as bright as the reflective scales of its prized carp. Every new booking also includes 3KG of free feed pellet for every angler! Check the live availability of Creedence Fishery via the swimbooker app, and, if you're looking for a comfortable place to target huge carp in Essex, get it booked!



swimbooker

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*We look forward to welcoming you to Creedence Fishery!*

# MORE FROM MONKS PIT

By Derek 'The Don' Ritchie





I have been trying to get Dave White (Blanko) down on Monks Pit to do some filming for Carping Around all season, but every time we made plans to do a 48-hour session something would crop up and the plans ended up going down the pan. School holidays were upon us, and Dave had plenty of time on his hands, so I was determined to get him on there hunting for monsters.

A few weeks earlier, I landed Porky, a new PB, and I was confident that I'd get him a Monks Pit carp. I like to get to the lake around 5am to make sure I get a good look around and I'm there to see the fish giving themselves away at first light. I told Dave to be at mine at 4am, but with 20 minutes before he was expected, I got a text that he was in the car park. Somebody was a tad excited, and it turned out that he had had about 20 minutes' kip – told ya!

The journey to the lake was uneventful due to there being only light traffic at that time of the morning and by ten past five we were stood at the gate looking over the lake with Dave itching to get a bait in the water. After a walk around, it was

obvious that there were a few carp out in front of the Swamp swim, and seeing as I'd had multiple catches from that swim on more than one occasion, I stuck Blanko in there and gave him the lowdown on spots that often produce. I did warn him that he could get swamp fever though. I set up in the next swim called the Underpass, a swim I had never fished before and knew very little about.

Luckily as I was setting up I saw a couple of fish top out, and as I didn't want to disturb them too much, I estimated how far out they were showing. I wrapped two rods at 22 wraps. The first rod got banged out, and I was pleased to see that the lead hit the water exactly where the fish had shown themselves. I instantly got a rush of confidence and a little "COME ONNNNNN" slipped out. Proper happy with where the first rod went, I put the other wrapped-up rod right next to it about six feet to the side and then wrapped the third rod, which went six feet to the left of the second rod. Over the next 48 hours I had an absolutely brilliant session... Blanko, however, struggled a bit.

That first evening, I was setting up for my live show on Facebook. It's not

everyone's cup of tea, but it's fun and brings a lot of enjoyment to a lot of people, and fishing is supposed to be fun after all. Blanko was on his way down to me, camera rolling to get some footage of me setting up. He came around from the side and was coming into the bivvy to sit down, music already playing and the live show broadcasting. As he was halfway in, I jumped up and barged him out of the way. It was a funny moment, me rushing to the rod and him wondering what the heck was going on!

I hit the rod and was instantly in contact with an angry Monks Pit carp. I managed to keep the fish away from the weedbeds and soon had it wallowing just in front of the boards. Blanko did the business with the net, and my first carp of that trip was waiting for the scales – a lovely 28lb 12oz that fell for a bag of mixed pellet and chopped boilies and some banging tunes.

After the live broadcast, we had a BBQ and sat chatting all things carpy, basically having a bit of banter and lots of laughs. The rest of the night the rods were motionless, and I got some much-needed sleep. Getting up



33lb 12oz battle-scarred warrior.



**A monster plucked from the weed.**

early and working at your angling gets harder as you get older!

Just as it was getting light, the same rod ripped off again. This time a stockie was attached to the other end, and I managed to land that without the help of a boat. Boat battles are strength sapping, and I try to land as many fish from the bank as I can. Fish nestled in the mesh, I legged it down to Blanko so he could get some footage for the video. I wanted this session to be great for two reasons: one, the most important, was to get him fishing for lumps, and two was to make a great little video for Carping Around's YouTube channel. So far I was pleased, even though Dave hadn't caught one yet. During the day, we were visited by a fair few of the members, and every single one of them spoke to Blanko offering advice and really trying to help him get amongst them. The guys on here are absolute diamonds.

We did another live broadcast, and after the tunes had been turned off, we sat chatting to viewers about the session so far and our bait and tactics that we were using when yet again the rod ripped off and battle commenced. This fish seemed unstoppable, and it soon made its way to one of the huge weedbeds out in front of

me. Now I was going to struggle, and I contemplated jumping in the boat. I persevered though, and was soon making headway, bringing in a huge, I mean proper huge, clump of weed. Every so often I felt the carp kick, and I knew this fish had a lot of power at its disposal. I gradually moved the carp and weed to within netting distance, and I made sure Blanko knew he had to do this right the first time, as any wrong move could result in not having another chance. His netting skills were spot-on, and after both of us lying on the boards removing weed, we got our first proper look at what was lying there beaten.

As I looked at it, I was grinning like a cat that had got the cream. Blanko was looking at me... "That's bloody enormous!" Blanko and I were then transported back in time to our youth and were bouncing round the boards like kids. "That's a chunkasuarus, Del; it's enormous!" Dave kept repeating. Blanko got the sling and scales ready, and we were ready to see how big our prize was. I say our prize, as when we fish together, we are over the moon when either of us catches. It went 42lb on the dial and another one of the A-team. We were buzzing – this was going to make an entertaining video. SUCK MY STEEL!

Tony the bailiff came down to see the fish, as he lives very close, and we found out, after some deliberation, that the fish was known as the Demon, which was funny, as the far bank marker that the rod was in line with was a tree that looked like it had a couple of horns – strange how things work out sometimes.

With the carp back in its watery home, I got the rod back out while Blanko got the BBQ on, as by now we were famished, and it was getting late. Before the burgers could even be consumed, my rod ramped off, and I was into yet another chunk. It was an easier battle than the 42, but I was still puffing and panting as large chunks of weed were ripped from the lakebed and started floating about in front of me. A lot of the fish on Monks are landed from the boat due to the kelp and Canadian pond weed that thrives in the rich water, so not having to use a boat for any of my fish so far was really pleasing and surprising. This fish was still a chunk at 36lb... Wanger on the banger! We were proper buzzing now, and after the footage was done and dusted and pictures taken, we sat back down and ate our BBQ and chatted late into the night.

Another screaming run woke me



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# Derek Ritchie

the next morning, again as it was getting light. As I was playing that fish in, I started to feel sorry for poor old Blanko. He'd been sitting there in a great swim, bait on the sweet spots doing nothing wrong, but the fish just weren't out in front of him. Meanwhile I'm battling a carp, and this one felt heavy yet again. I didn't need to get in the boat and soon had it under control. In the net, we both knew that it was another 30-plus fish, and the scales made us right at 33lb 12oz, Get it ONNNNNNN!

Our last morning, after the night before, I was still half asleep and all wrapped up in my bag when an excited Blanko came in to my swim to tell me he had just landed his first Monks Pit carp, a little 16lb common, but I was nearly as happy as he was. He had really put the effort in, and it was the least he deserved. We got ourselves packed away apart from the rods, and just before we reeled in to make our way back, my rod ripped off, and I was rewarded with a last gasp 18lb common. As we left Monks, we left with great memories and a burning desire to get back over for another session later in the year. Thanks to



28lb 12oz getting the party started.

Rob for putting this in print for me and to Mainline, Bait-Tech and the Avid guys and finally to Tony the head bailiff and Mick Richardson for letting us do a video. Don't forget to get on

YouTube and subscribe to Carping Around for more escapades from Blanko and The Don.

GET ITTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTT ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN! ■



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Great week on Willow 1, B3 last week for Mark Anderson and Leigh Horwood who was celebrating his 70th birthday. Leigh couldn't have had a better celebration of his 70th with more fish than years in La Belle France with Mark Anderson. Thanks for showing him how to winkle more than just the garlicky snails from their shells. Happy birthday Leigh.

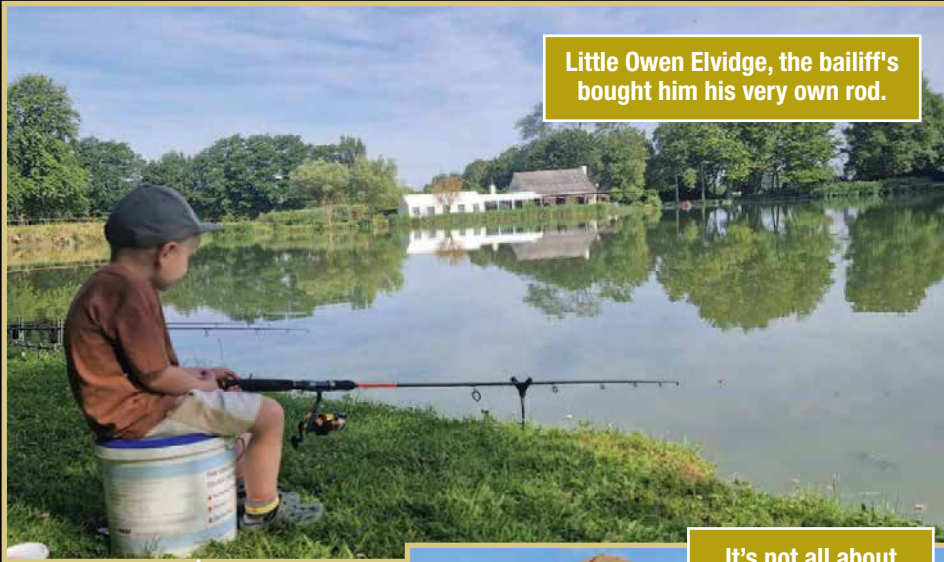




Did somebody say Social Night? Champions league night at Bounty. It's not ALL about fishing eh!?



Oliver with some chunks last week on barn bank post 2 b1. With a new 50lb common for b1 a 44lb and 46lb common. As well as the big mirror at 51lb 5oz. And lots of others, good angling.



Little Owen Elvidge, the bailiff's bought him his very own rod.



New website coming soon



It's not all about monsters, 24lbs of stunning mirror for Stuart Cox.



Jordan Daniel and Steven had a great week on b2 posts 5, 6, 7 resulting in some big carp at the top spawn weight. 2 x 49lb commons 1 x 47lb mirror, plus lots of others and a big cat at 130s. Well done gents!

# THE PARROT

By Craig Runham





**F**ollowing the capture of the Floppy Tail Linear, I felt I needed to solely concentrate on the Parrot. I felt I was close the previous day before moving into End Beat and capturing Floppy. I knew the rigs were working; it was just a matter of locating him... or so I hoped anyway. The weather was warm on the Tuesday, and after awakening from a sleep after a long night shift at work, I decided to drive down the lake for a mooch. Of course I prepared a bucket of bait to come along, as I was to top up a spot in a certain area I had seen the Parrot at the weekend. I had baited a short spot that I could bait up by hand and lower a rig onto the spot should it look right for it and the fish was in the area.

Luckily the swim known as Lifebuoy was free on arrival, so I climbed the tree to check if the spot had been cleaned since baiting it at the weekend. Through the crystal clear water, I could see the spot had trebled in size. The weed had been pushed away and the stones were standing out like a beacon. I slipped down the tree, grabbed the waders from the car and grabbed the bucket

of chopped Maxinut Key Bait Solutions boilies. I had a large bucket of Hinders slips that Bryan Jarrett had kindly given me. I slipped the waders on and made my way to the edge of the marginal gully. The spot was perfect for an underarm throw, and I had soon deposited five kilos of chops and around five kilos of pellet on the area.

As I was rinsing out the bucket, something caught my eye only twenty yards away from my position. I watched the area for around a minute but saw nothing. I clambered back up the bank, slipped my trainers on and climbed the tree to see what had caught my eye previously. A slight ripple began blowing into the swim, and the sun was being blocked by the clouds, so it was making it hard to view into the depths. I peered up at the clouds and noticed some blue sky on its way. I looked at the spot I had just dropped all the bait on and thought it looked ridiculously bigger than the previous week. It had clearly been fed on since my departure at the weekend. The sun began breaking through the clouds, and the shallows in front of me began to illuminate. Suddenly I noticed a dark shape gliding across a sandy patch, and as it got nearer to my position

from up the tree, I started to realise I was once again looking at the Parrot. I admired its perfect shape as it drifted through the swim and past the spot I had just baited. I could almost see his eyes clock the bait as he drifted past and disappeared into a gully by some trees. I left fully pumped up with adrenaline by watching that amazing beast of a carp.

As I was working nights, I couldn't get down till the Saturday. I planned to be down straight from night shift without going to sleep. I would finish at 2am, load the car up, have a shower and a few teas and arrive for 4am at first light. As expected as I pulled through the gate, I noticed it was busy as usual. I prayed for the Lifebuoy swim to be free, but not surprisingly there was a car pulled into the swim. I decided to have a lap or two and ponce some tea off any anglers on my way round whilst waiting for the angler to awaken to find out if he was leaving. I completed the lap of the lake by 7am and thought I would see if the angler had stirred. Much to my amazement, despite the sun glaring into his bivvy, he was still fast asleep. I looked at his lines and I could tell he was fishing at range,



# Craig Runham

which made me smile.

I figured a quick climb up the tree wouldn't hurt, as he wouldn't even hear me if I was super quiet. I felt like a naughty kid as I climbed the tree to the vantage spot. With the sun beaming on the shallows and no breeze, instantly I could see fish moving over the sandy area. I peered down at the spot I had primed a few days prior, and this time it appeared to be even bigger than before, and the stones appeared polished. Another glance out further, and there he was once again gliding through a weedbed as his immense frame sparkled in the sunlight. My legs began shaking as it neared the spot I had baited before. He suddenly turned around and went the way he came. I was gagging to get a rod in position, as I knew this was a massive chance and didn't want to miss it.

#### Tackle used:

- Hinge stiff rig.
- 30lb boom material.
- 25lb Mouth Trap
- Size 6 choddy hook.
- Helisafe lead system.
- 2.5oz helisafe lead.
- Korda Touchdown 20lb line.
- Bait used: Key Bait Solutions Maxinut.
- Hookbait 14mm nut pop-up.

Soon Matt woke up in Lifebuoy, and he confirmed he was off in the next few hours. I didn't actually start to get the gear out of the car till around 1pm, and the first thing was to get the rods out, so I clipped on three new hinge type rigs – two soft hinges on the rods going further out and a stiff hinge on the spot I had prepped. I pulled up the chesties, grabbed the rod and waded out along the margin. The spot was glowing, and I decided to place it on the edge of the spot just as the light weed was growing. The lead landed perfectly with a clean thud, and I could make out through the surface glare the rig sat perfectly. I waded the rod back, sinking the line perfectly through the weed. Over the area I decided to give it some bait, and around a kilo of mixed sized Maxinut were deposited on the area. A few palms of hemp, pellet and crushed tigers completed the trap. I was totally buzzing – nothing could have gone better.

Ten minutes had passed, and I

decided to climb the tree to see if he was still around. Half way up the bow of the tree I could make out a dark shape on the spot. Expecting to see a small common as the culprit, I climbed higher. That's when I noticed it was the Parrot, tail up and troughing my bait like it was going out of fashion. I could see the giant carp sifting silt out from its gills as it sampled away at the pellet. My knees were knocking and my mouth was bone dry – this could be it. Suddenly I heard a few bleeps from the alarm. I could see the bobbin at the blank but not moving. I could see the Parrot, and it was still feeding. I didn't know what was going on. The Parrot was still stuffing its face, making the most of the buffet of goodies to eat.

After thirty more of the longest seconds ever, I watched him rise in the water, shake his head and bolt off following the scream of the Delkim. I fell out of the tree, landing with a thump of the floor, all the time the Delkim alerting me that he was hooked. The bobbin wedged into the alarm, and the tight clutch was ticking line. I picked up the rod, and a massive bow wave picked up pace across the shallows. I was simply bricking it as I piled on pressure to stop it from getting in the weed too much. The pressure worked, and I soon had the fish heading my way. A large tail began slapping the surface as I led it across the shallow water.

The Parrot is known for head-butting the deck and trying to shed the hook. This makes the fight very nerve-wracking indeed. Soon the fish was in front of me on a short line, and

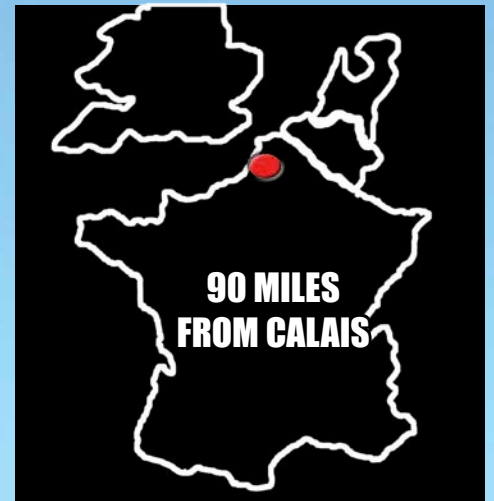
I could tell it was tiring. As it came into the near gully I got my first proper view of the amazing carp. Through the clear water I could tell my hook was nailed right back, as the size six choddy hook and Maxinut pop-up were barely noticeable. After a few more nervous moments, it bobbed up on the surface like a cork. I simply fell apart as I slid the net out, praying for the carp gods to shine down on me. The width of the fish as I lifted the net had to be seen to be believed. The moment it was over the cord, I screamed out "PARROT!"

It was in the net and looked incredible. Luckily I soon had people around me, as they had heard the shout go up. We all readied all the gear and treated the fish with the care it deserves. On the scales we all agreed a weight of 64lbs. It's hard to take in if I'm honest, and I'm still on cloud nine. I felt truly honoured to hold a carp of such epic proportions. It was job done for me – the Parrot was mine, the biggest fish in the country, and it was mine. What a massive buzz.

As I peeled back the mesh, we all simply stared in awe of such an incredible creature. The fish behaved impeccably for the shots and swam back strongly as I watched my dream disappear into the dark water. I had spent a total of 32 nights on Cranwells, banking 56 carp before the incredible Parrot took a liking for the bait. What an amazing two weeks I have had, banking both of the Wasing big linears a week apart. I would like to say a massive thanks to Dan Gilbert, Carl Dance and Mike Patric who took some wicked shots. ■



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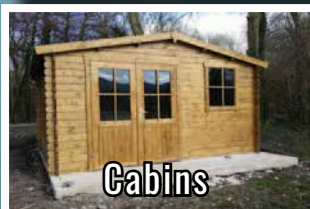
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# The Big Lin and The Silver Common

By Kasie Nelson

## The Big Lin

I first found out about the Woolpack when I was around 20 years old and was fortunate enough to witness the capture of the Big Lin at a then new weight of 36lb-plus. After seeing her on the bank, I could only hope and dream that one day I would have the opportunity to catch her for myself. Little did I know that a few years later, I would go on to do exactly that.

After a short absence away from the fishery, I was lucky enough to regain my ticket for Pit 7 and decided there and then that I wasn't going anywhere until she was mine. So a plan was hatched, and a freezer full of Red Seal was purchased.



The winning hook baits.



Big Lin – 41lb 8oz.



A few sessions passed, and I was lucky enough to land some stunning commons to just under the 30lb mark. The following weekend, I was stood in the swim watching the water when two good Pals, Chopper and Neil turned up for a random visit, as they were fishing a water nearby.

Whilst sinking a few beers and having a chat, we started to notice a few fish crashing out in front of a swim on

the opposite side of the lake.

There must have been five shows before we all looked at each other, and decided that I was in need of a move. 30 minutes later, and after convincing Chopper and Neil into helping me carry all my gear round to the new swim in the pissing rain, I was on 'em and fishing again.

Probably no longer than an hour after the lads had left, the left hand

rod rattled off with a small tench being the culprit. With all the disturbance from the tench and getting the rod back on the spot, I went to bed feeling sorry for myself and thinking that the chance had gone. I was completely wrong and couldn't believe it when I was woken at 5am to the sound of a screaming Neville. I grabbed the rod and managed to gain control of what felt like a decent fish.

It was only when she popped up that I could see just how big she really was, and as soon as she rolled over the net cord, I knew it was her. Once I knew she was safe and couldn't escape with the net, I was buzzing, so I sat on the bedchair and stuck the kettle on to calm my nerves before ringing anyone that would answer to give them the news.

A short while later, Chopper and Neil were back to help with the honours, and as we weighed her, I was shocked to see the needle spin to a massive 41lb 6oz. This was followed by the obligatory pictures, but before I finally let her go, I held her for the camera once more and said my thanks as I realised there and then that I was ready for a new challenge and that my Woolpack adventure had come to an end.



Woolpack Common.

# Kasie Nelson



28lb common



Silver Common 39lb 8oz.

## The Silver Common

After the capture of the Big Lin, I decided that the next challenge would be to try and catch a 40lb common. So as soon as the new ticket started, I jumped in my van and was on my way to the new water. It would seem that my lucky streak would continue, and over the course of the next few weeks, I went on to land a handful of fish up to 28lb. As the last session came to an end, I received a phone call from a friend asking if I could take some pictures, which I was more than happy to do.

I arrived in his swim and was ecstatic when he lifted this huge common up for the camera, whilst praying that the pictures would do it justice. After a few returns, I congratulated James and left for work, gobsmacked at what I had just seen.

The following week I was due to go to Carp in the Park, but as luck would have it, the plans fell through, and I was on my way fishing once again. The first night passed with little action, but I decided that I would stay put anyway and go heavy on the bait



after seeing a lot of activity throughout the day. Once the rods were out and 7kg of Red Seal was scattered over the area, I decided to get an early night, as I felt I might need the sleep.

Next thing I knew, it was 4am and I was stood up to my tits in water playing a small carp, or so I thought. It

wasn't until I went to unhook it in the net that I realised what had happened. It turned out I had caught the same fish that I photographed the previous trip.

The Silver Common was mine at a spawned-out but very impressive 39lb 8oz. ■



Ed Betteridge

# A YEAR FOR PERSONAL BESTS



What a season!! Back on May 17th this year, Ed banked the fish known as Leeches this morning at 46lb 10oz from a 60-acre gravel pit. Ed said: "My new PB common sulking in the net! I'm blown away after a tough few months!"





# Ed Betteridge



## Featuring Ed Betteridge

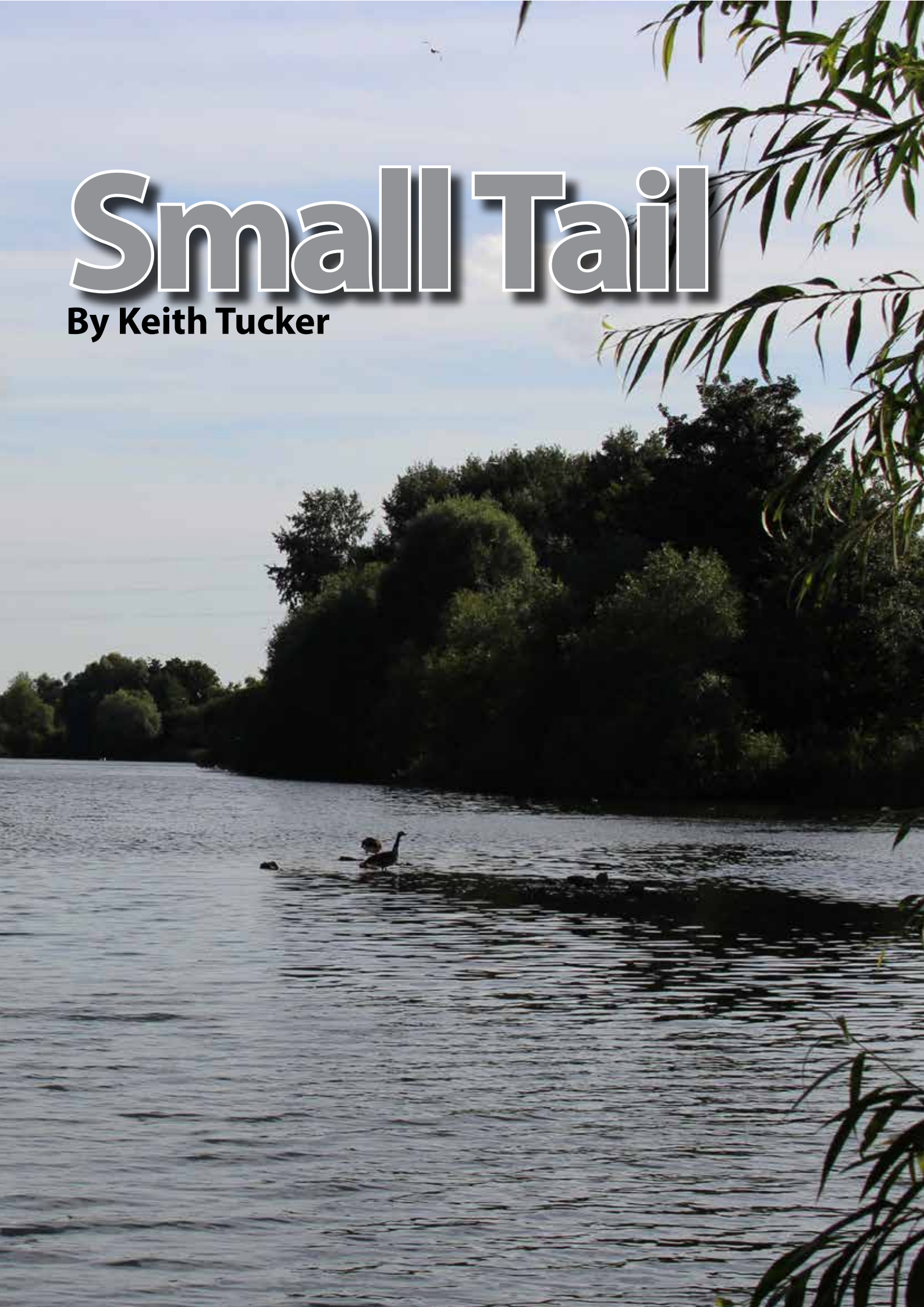
Ed Betteridge landed a new PB this morning at 50lb 12oz from a boating lake he has been fishing this year. Ed is blown away by the result, and he can't believe he has caught a PB common and now a PB mirror within a few weeks of each other.

Here she is, Roids at 50lb 12oz! A new PB! I'm still buzzing at the result and looking forward to a celebratory pint!

Ed said: "I've just landed a new PB and my first 50! I can't believe it! After years of trying and catching my targets down in weight, I've finally done it! I'm blown away and a little lost for words!"

# Small Tail

By Keith Tucker



I joined the Larkfield complex late spring 2014 in search of old original carp that I had learned graced the beautiful historic complex. I decided on Larky 2, but soon realised it was not going to be an easy journey, knowing the original stock had thinned considerably, and those left had naturally become cute and quite an enigma of their own kind. Crossing over the QE2 bridge from the top of Essex was another part of the campaign that made walking the lake on free evenings a convenience I would not be afforded too often. Looking back I done okay the first couple of seasons; I managed a few of the originals plus some of the back up fish, as well as two runs of almost 30 nights blank that also added to the wisdom I now have.

This year I decided on my third boilie choice of the campaign. I had previously used a nut meal based food and a fish meal, so after looking at and tasting Baitech's new Triple Nut, I was sure the fish would approve. In springtime, I learned they are not interested in any considerable bed of bait, so with keeping things light, I managed three good commons.

The month post spawning was when I felt I was able to feed a little



harder to try and get something going. Over the seasons of admiring the mirrors, known as the scaly family, there was a carp that also just jumped out the more I looked at her by the name of Small Tail with a long, lightly scaled wrinkled body and a head like a mastiff, all followed by a tiny paintbrush tail. She was certainly a unique character. I guess over the first two seasons she just got in my head, as she had many anglers previously.

She was a nomadic fish with many places to find refuge in an odd-shaped lake.

Early summer was soon at the door, and it was time to start my plan. The area I chose was where I had learned they liked to be at this time of year. I

chose two swims I was going to bait. These swims were almost always fished long to the far tree and reed lined margin, but I baited halfway across at fifty yards, knowing that if someone was to be in there, that they would be fishing well past my spots, plus I like the adage of trying to fish a swim differently to the norm. I baited at the start of a session whilst fishing another swim and also crept back in there and baited again at the end of my session.

The following week I dropped onto one of my new spots ready for a three-night session. The spots were re-fed, and after my god knows how many tench, the first night came and went. The second morning, the east



# Keith Tucker



facing swim's sun soon had me stirring, and soon after my first cup of Yorkshire, my left rod was away. After a short battle, I had a nice dark upper 20 common, shortly followed by a mid twenty common. The morning was rocking after having a low twenty mirror and my third bite of the day, something I had not experienced before, during all of my campaign.

The third night we had an extreme low coming in with a lot of rain forecast too, definitely the best conditions of the year so far. Usually we would all be rubbing our hands together with this weather, but Larky, by my and others' experience, never really seemed to do much in such weather. My best times during the summer had been on those glorious booming sunny mornings. Still, I topped up my spots and got settled for my final evening.

The rain that was promised came, and it rained like it had not rained for a year. From 7pm until 5am it was relentless, and I woke through the night several times, so when my left rod burst into life at 7am, I was sound asleep. I scrambled out and lifted into

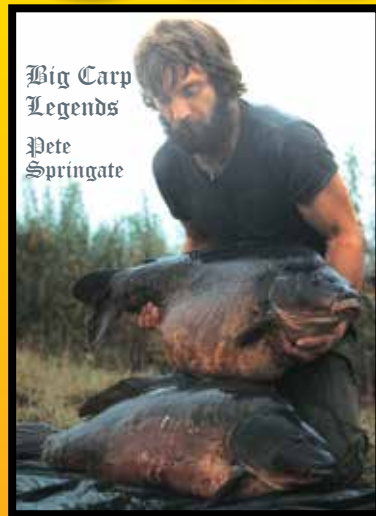
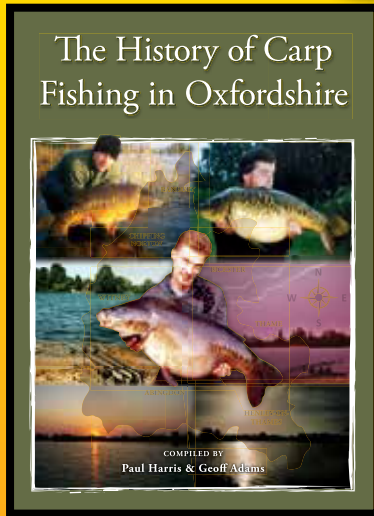


what felt like a decent fish. It swerved side to side at first, but fishing at 50 yards it was soon in and around my deep margin. It managed to get around my middle line, and though my wires were not touching, I instinctively opened the bail arm of the rod. I managed a glimpse of the flank and knew it was probably an old mirror, but it wasn't until I saw that huge head coming towards me that I knew it was Small Tail. A few nervous seconds passed, and then she was in my net... no one else's but my net.

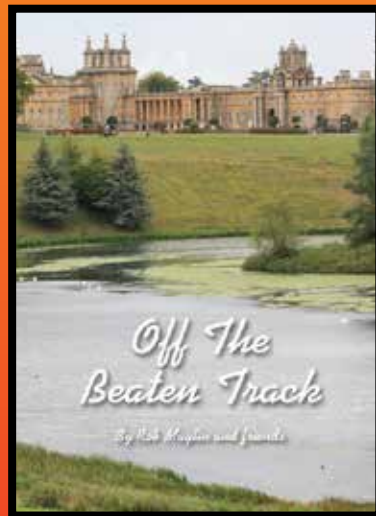
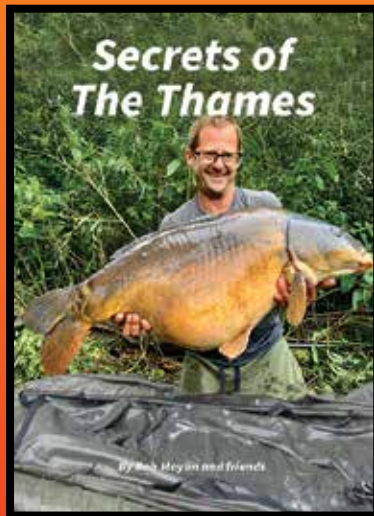
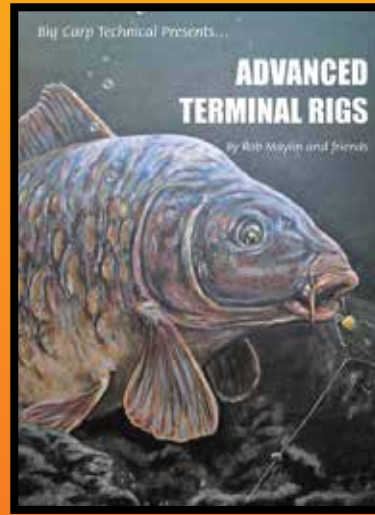
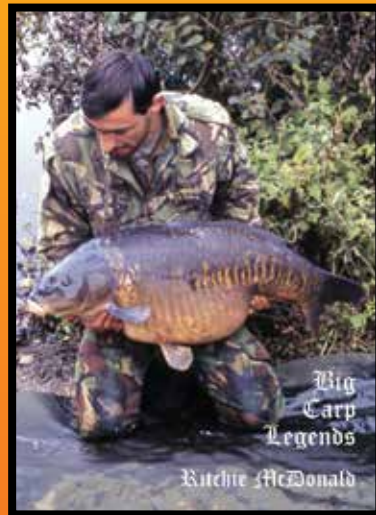
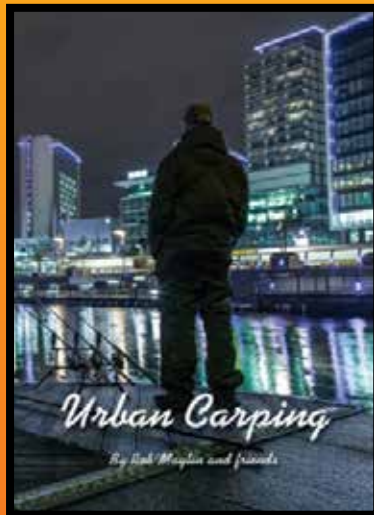
Those first glimpses at her resting up was the best feeling I have felt over many years of angling, even more so than completing the dream of visiting Cassien and catching a 55lb common from my first ever take there because Small tail had become more than just a dream; she had become an obsession, a large part of my life, and as the seasons pass you begin to think it just not going to be, but it did happen, and I know it is a memory that I will take to the end of my days. ■



# SUMMER S

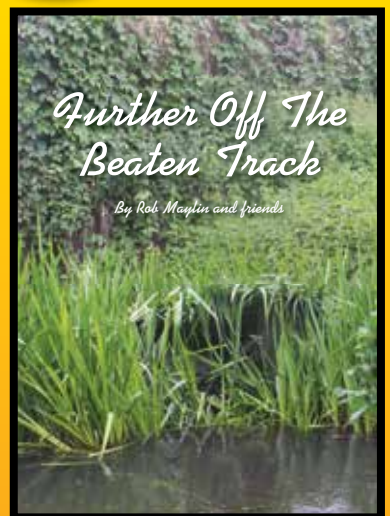
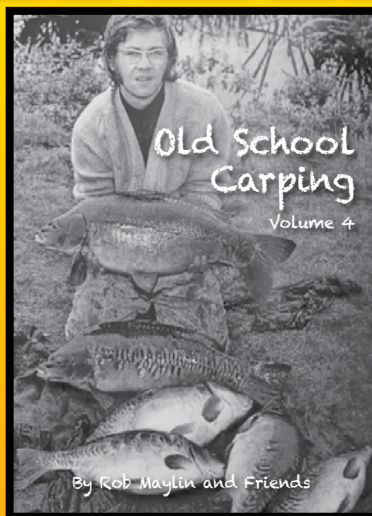
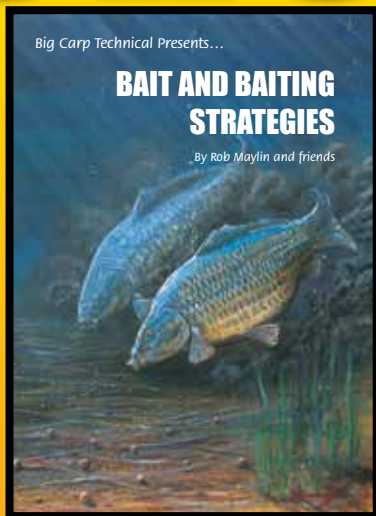


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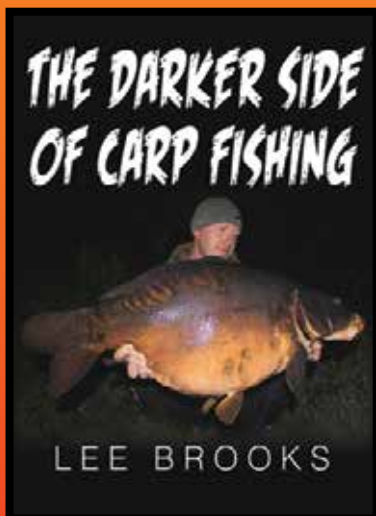
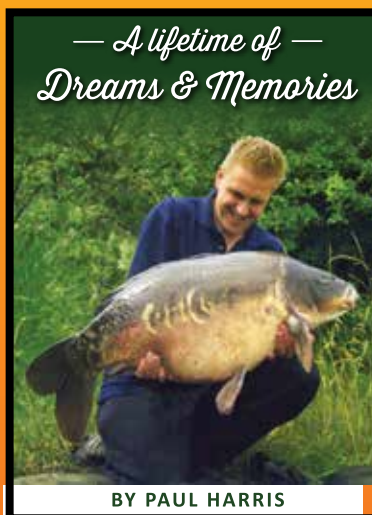
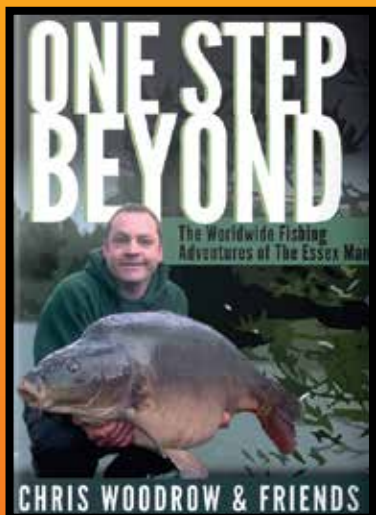
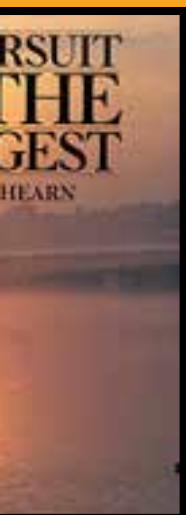


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## Secret Diary Of The Urban Myth

July 2017 – Rob Maylin talks to Terry Dempsey

**R**ob: So it's the end of June, and I'm meeting up again with one of Big Carp's favourite anglers, Terry Dempsey, this time at his empire just this side of the Dartford Tunnel. It is the first time I have been down here, and I have picked a good day to come down because they are actually moving.

Terry is going to tell you all about that in a minute. They have bought some new units and new offices, and it all sounds very, very good for Urban Baits. When I last met up with Terry several months ago, we were still in the cold weather, and we haven't caught up with Terry for his spring fishing down on his syndicate water. We will be hearing about that, and of course he also has his Savay ticket

now, so I am expecting some big fish from there sooner or later. The bait is absolutely taking the waters apart at the moment, especially the Tuna and Garlic. I've heard of some huge fish, so we will be hearing about that and other things from Terry. Anyway I will pass you on to the man himself.

**Terry:** Hi, Rob. Good to see you! It doesn't seem like it has been six to seven months, but it probably is. I



**Tomo McFahn** Last weekend at Myths Pool Fishery in Essex. Caught on 14mm Nutcracker topped with a 12mm washed-out yellow Nutcracker both over a bed of 3kg of 15mm bottom baits.



**22lb scattered lin.**



**3kg of Nutcracker spodded tight in the middle** stopped this ancient mirror in its tracks. A washed out yellow pop-up did the rest!! Get on the Nutcracker!!



**Brian Jorgensen, 27th June, with a right old character at 26lb** from his syndicate in Denmark, taken on Urban Bait Nutcracker





**Harry Willats and a 31lb mirror from a club water in Essex. This was his new PB, caught on an Urban Bait Tuna and Garlic pop-up with matching freebies spread in a large area around the hookbait.**



**Dean Mason, Raker Lakes York with a fish of 20lb 4oz. Urban Bait used was Nutcracker freezer bait 10 and 14mm boilies, whole and chopped baits, fished to a marginal tree line. Hookbait was a critically balanced snowman rig with a Nutcracker 12mm washed-out pink pop-up trimmed down. Length of session was 48 hours.**



**Urbanist Louis Cuomo with this 34lb carp taken on the ever-deadly Nutcracker. He used a snowman rig inside a solid PVA bag with crushed boilie.**



**Danny Stanmore with a 45lb Italian mirror taken on the Red Spicy Fish!**

haven't done as much fishing this spring as I would have liked to. I have had a few personal problems that I have had to deal with. The times that I have managed to go fishing, I have enjoyed.

At the beginning of April it was really cold, and I decided to get back on my syndicate lake in Kent. When I went down there, I was happy because it hadn't done a fish in the last six months. It had fished really hard, but at least I knew that the few target fish I was after would be fresh and hadn't seen a rig for ages.

The first time I went there, I took my son, Daniel, with me, as he loves it down there. We spent two nights fishing in one my favourite swims down there. It has a lot of features in front of it – a big island running up to the right, two or three big gravel bars and so many good spots.

We set three rods out, put a bit of bait out there and we got hammered by the ducks. The water is so clear over there that you can literally see the bottom out in the middle from the bank in places. The birds just kept coming in diving, diving, and that was that trip.

A couple of weeks later, we went back again, probably mid-April, and again the lake hadn't done a fish. But a friend of mine was down there, Bob MacGregor, and he caught a 36lb common out of the corner. So that gave Daniel and me a bit of confidence. He had some time off school because of half-term, so we sat it out. I think it was on our third night when we saw one fish swim out of the middle, so we put 5 or 6kg of bait out there.

The birds were diving on it, but we kept putting more bait in all the time.

I have been using the pop down rig over there, and I feel really confident with it. I had pop-down on all three rods, and at two o'clock in the morning I got a belting take.

Playing this fish in, I was shouting out to Daniel, "Chuck me my slippers!" because all my feet were wet and cold in the mud. Anyway, we have two beds in the bivvy, and he woke up and threw the slippers out to me. Then I shouted, "Throw the torch out to me!" It was quite a foggy night, and I don't know what time it was or what I was playing. The next thing, he shouted out, "Dad, leave me alone! I am going back to sleep!" So I never got the torch. I got the fish in, got it in the net, and I ran up to the tent, jumping up and down with joy and shouted, "Daniel, Daniel! I've got a fish!"

His eyes lit up like saucers, and he

# Terry Dempsey



Louis Cuomo had a brace of thirties and a 29 from Waterside Fisheries in Chesham. 14mm Nutcracker hardened hookbaits topped with a 12mm white Nutcracker pop-up fooled two of the more elusive residents, which hadn't been out for over eighteen months. Whilst photographing the brace of 30s, the remaining rod ripped off – a morning that'll never be forgotten.



Dave Coward, the Beauty Queen at 39lb 8oz.



Dave Coward, 37lb 4oz.



Here's the lovely Louise Bowes with a recently caught 33lb 2oz common that couldn't resist a bright Nutcracker pop-up placed along a patrol route!



**David "Bank Tramp" Prictor, 35lb 5oz, to a yellow Nutcracker pop-up over a big bed of Nutcracker.**



**David "Bank Tramp" Prictor, 35lb 2oz, to a yellow Nutcracker pop-up over a big bed of Nutcracker, both from a local club water.**

put his boots on and ran as fast as he could to the net, because he knows how hard it is to catch a fish out of my Kent syndicate. To see a fish, after doing a few nights' blanking was great. It was an absolute belter; it was netted and with only a couple of hours till daytime, I said we would leave it in the net and do a couple of photos with it as it gets light because my flash wasn't working.

He would not leave me alone though! I said, "Come on, let's have an hour's kip; we will put the alarm on and wake up when it is light," but he drove me mad... "Dad, let's get it out! Come on, Dad! Let's get it out!" Anyway, we got it out, and it was an absolute belter, a 33lb linear, a beautiful fish, and that was it for that trip. We did not get any more action, and to be honest it was fishing quite slow.

The following trip, I went down there and fished in the same spot where I had caught the linear. I sat there for a night and didn't see a

thing. On the second night, I moved round to the shallows. It was freezing cold easterly wind blowing right in my face, and it did not look good, but because I blanked, I thought I would try the shallow water. So I went there and fanned three rods out. There are lots of bars running along in that swim, and I put them right on top of the bars in the shallow water all along this bay. At two o'clock in the morning, I got a belting take, and I struggled to get out of my sleeping bag. My mate said the line was going for ages, but I was just battling to get out of my bag.

Anyway, I played the fish and got it in, and it was a beautiful fully scaled just under 30lbs, an absolutely stunning carp. I was well happy with it, and as it got light, we did the photos and stuck it back in the water. A lad called Jay came down to the photos for me. He was fishing another lake just up the road. I got the rod back out there, and we were sitting there hav-

ing a cup of tea when all of a sudden, the same rod just melted off with an absolute belter of a take, literally ripping the rod off the buzzers. Jay was standing closer to the road than I was. I was about to lose the rods when he caught the butt. I picked the rod up and it just flattened in my arms. You know, there are some big fish in this lake, some 50s, and it just ripped 40 yards of line off me even though I was just holding onto the spool, and the spool was quite tight as well. That is how powerful it was, and then all of sudden it stopped and went solid. I was giving it little bit of pressure, and nothing, but then the rod started going off again and the fish was moving at speed, and it cut my line.

Even after catching the fully, I went home totally broken, and since then Rob I haven't really done a great deal, mainly because the bait has been doing really well. We are really busy, and we have lot of anglers all over



**Richard Mills – 34lb 8oz, London reservoir.**



**DM Dean McLeod, Monks Pit.**

# Terry Dempsey

Europe who are catching on the bait, so we are getting lots of different orders from all over. It's not just the Nutcracker catching – now the fish-meals have been catching really well. Even though I knew all the time that

they were just as good and would catch just as many fish, it was harder for me to encourage others to use the fishmeal. The Tuna and Garlic are not used enough in my opinion, because of how good it is has been doing lots

of big fish, including fish out of the Colne Valley up to 54lbs this spring including a 49 and other 40s. So with the Nutcracker we don't need to push it, as it is doing 50-40lbs catches in the UK all the time.



**Nutcracker – 36lb 4oz.**



**Daniel Scranage just shy of 29lb 4oz, north Manchester, on the deadly Nutcracker and a washed-out pink pop-up.**



**Urban's ever-consistent Louise Bowes strikes again with this 29lb 8oz mirror caught on a Nutcracker pop-up coated in Liver Cracker powder.**



**A 50-plus caught on the deadly Nutcracker – Daniel Scranage.**



**Kai Richards, 35lb 10oz from New Forest water park.**



**Kai Richards, 36lb 8oz from New Forest water park.**

We just had a message this morning to say a guy has just had an 86 on our bait. He was only here a couple of days ago, and he went off to France with a big order for himself and his friends and got an 86lbs, so yeah the bait is doing really well still. The fish are monsters over there, aren't they? I have a couple of options myself: I have an Austrian guy who orders off me, and I have got to know him quite well.

He has a lake booked out in Croatia in the middle of July for a whole week, and the fish in there are colossal – 80-90lbs – and he is begging me to come, as it is very hard to get on this lake. So that is an option, but the only thing that keeps holding me back from all these great trips that I am being offered is Savay.

It is so hard for me to have this Savay ticket and find the time to fish there. It's a priority really, because you know those old Savay fish ain't gonna be there forever – you are talking

about some 50-year-old carp, and it is such a great lake to fish, so that is my main priority this summer. I plan to do as much as I can on Savay, and I would love a trip to Croatia. I have been offered to go to Rainbow with different people too. I am getting offers all the time to go to these amazing lakes, but I just have to save my time up and try to go to Savay. Anyway, that's how I feel at the minute, Rob.

**Rob:** What about moving factory?

**Terry:** Well, we have been in this place here for four years. As you all know, I first started Urban Baits from one freezer out of my back garden. I had so many people knocking on my door that in the end the police were knocking on my door wondering what we were doing. Even the neighbours were knocking on my door wondering what we were doing! I was selling half a ton of Nutcracker out of my back garden. We had half of the foxes of south London showing up in my

back garden trying to pick our locks because they knew the Nutcracker was there. We started in here with one container.

A friend of a friend got me this yard and one container, and as you can see now, we have five containers and an office, and now we are moving to much bigger and better premises, much cleaner for the girls who work for Urban Bait, so we are looking forward to the next stage.

**Rob:** Well it is onwards and upwards, Terry. It was always going to be a winner for you. You know about your bait, the Nutcracker is amazing, and I myself have used it on different waters and outside of the UK and never failed to catch on it. I've recently been using the Red Spicy Fish, and I have been catching just as well on that.

You have some excellent bait. Thanks for doing the stuff for Big Carp as well, and I will see you again next month. ■



Urban's Nigel Sharp has been out recently putting the Red Spicy Fish through its paces, and one of the rewards was this cracking common.



Nice Kent Fully scaled mirror from earlier in the year. Just minutes after I put it back the rod was away and a big fish stripped 50 yards off me before cutting me on a bar, but that's fishing!



Nice mirror from early April.



# My Personal Best

**I**fished a venue in Nottingham for the first time called Cromwell Lakes. My session was for 72 hours. On arrival found a nice back bay out of the wind with lots of overhanging willow trees and snags. I wasted no time in setting up the rods.

I used KD rigs, and the hook length was ESP Two Tone with Korda size 8 Crank hooks. I used a bait boat to place the rigs, one right under the

overhanging willow tree, one straight out to the right of a snag and the third rod was just to the left of me in the margin.

The two rods to the snag and willow tree were straight into action. I began the session with a 20 mirror on the dot followed by a 21lb 10oz mirror then a 22lb 1oz common, and the next was a lovely 19lb 4oz mirror.

Finally the willow tree rod screamed off, and as I hit into this one,

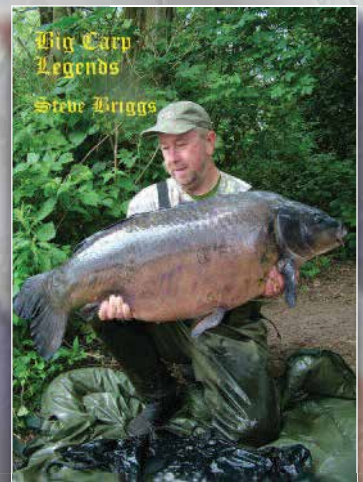
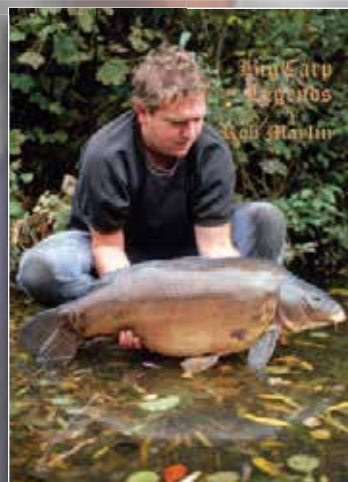
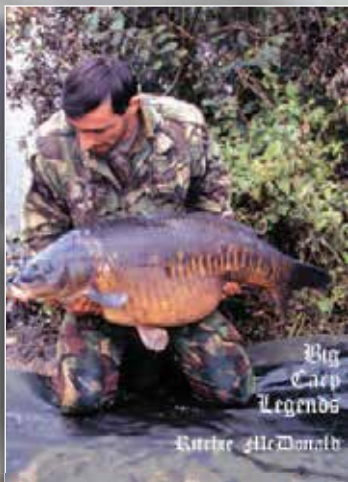
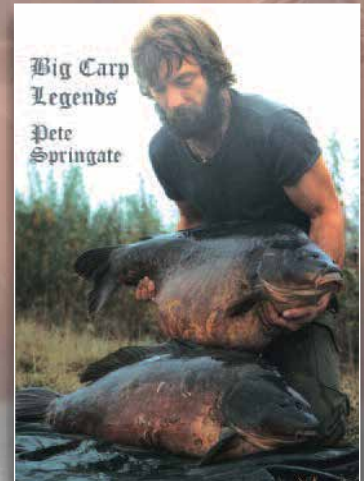
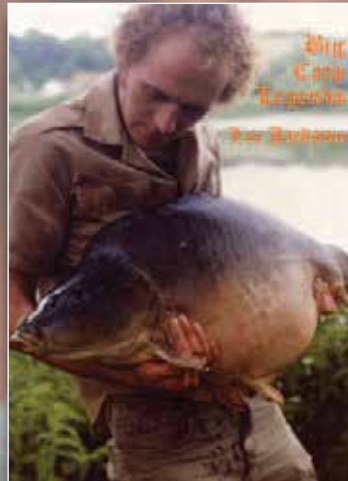
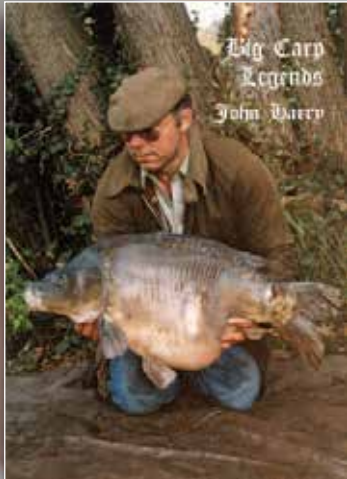
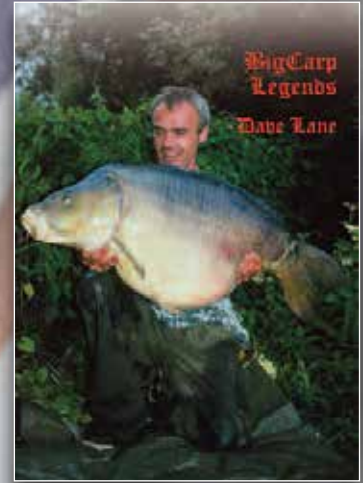
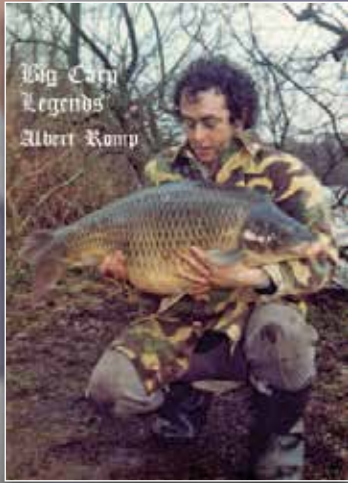
I immediately knew it was a bigger fish. After 15 minutes battling the fish, it graced the net weighing 37lb 14oz, which is a new UK PB for me. The fish was a stunning mirror and has not been out this year.

It's safe to say I was over the moon with this capture. I would highly recommend Cromwell Lakes and give the place five stars. The bailiffs were great, and the fishery is run to the highest standard. ■



# BIG CARP LEGENDS SERIES

*The anglers that shaped today's carp scene*

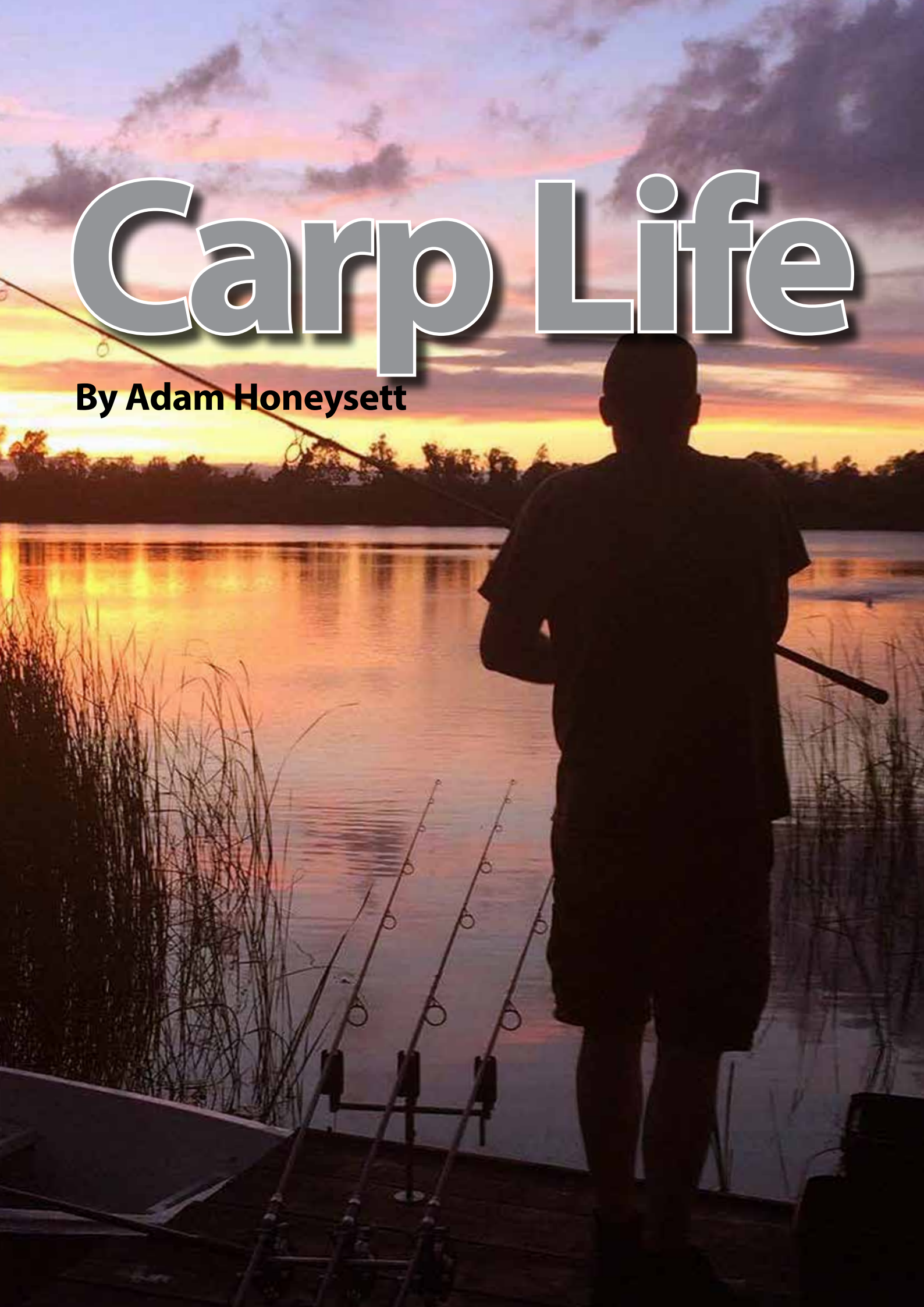


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# Carp Life

**By Adam Honeysett**





**I** started carp fishing when I was around 14 years old, not only on the lakes but rivers local to where I live in Kent. I have had several carp out of the River Medway up to just under 28lbs over the years doing the odd few nights a year. I have also enjoyed many nights on the old ballast pit over the years, which still has some carp over 50 years old in it today. Back in 1999, I briefly had a spring ticket on Larkfield, which only saw me do nine nights, but I managed to catch a couple, the biggest being a 26lb 11oz mirror.

My passion for carp fishing has just grown with age. I have helped run my local club waters now since I was 16 and have helped create in my opinion one of the best carp waters in Kent, as well as in the country, which holds a big place in my heart today and has kept my attention for the past 20-plus years. The only way to describe the place is the field of dreams that is Barden Lake. I have fished it on and off not only because I love the place and

I still have a few fish to catch, but because I had three jobs for a long time, which prevented me from moving on to waters that I wanted to fish, purely due to lack of time, but I said to myself one day I must spread my wings and make time to fish for other big carp around the country and hopefully one day abroad.

In 2014, I decided my days as a doorman (bouncer) were over, and I started to seriously get the bug for targeting large carp in new venues. This opened a window of opportunity for me, as for around 12 years I had only got a night or two per month, but this would give me a chance to fish for 24 hours on a weekly basis. This was my chance, so I looked around for a local venue with some large fish in to start. I didn't have to look far, as about 15 miles away there was a tricky little venue called Strawberry Fields, not everyone's cup of tea, but worth a go. I heard it was tricky but thought about it and what I could do to get bites on this heavily pressured little venue.

From the minute I set foot on there, which was on a February day, I studied the water, and within the first day I realised I had got the length of my rigs right (which were only  $\frac{3}{4}$ ins in length) because I noticed all the bubbling hardly moving – it was all done on the spot with the slightest of movement. I never baited up because it sees a lot of bait for the size of the lake, so I opted to fish a balanced half bait with a little PVA stick of one crushed boilie. On the second night, I knew the presentation was spot-on, as it hadn't done a fish for a while, and I had 34lb 8oz common in the net. It carried on working, and to cut a long story short, I had 17 fish in 16 nights. Just fishing there Saturday nights between February and June saw me have some nice fish including three 40s to 45lb 4oz, a fish called Dug, which I caught twice in the short time I spent on there.

I then spent the rest of 2014 and the beginning of 2015 on my beloved Barden Lake. While I spent the rest of the summer and winter there I was plot-



Strawberry Fields' Dug at 45lb 4oz.

# Adam Honeysett



Strawberry Fields' Cut Tail at 40lb 4oz, April '14'.



Barden's Friendly Mirror at 41lb 8oz.

# Adam Honeysett



Barden's Scaly at 41lb 10oz, November 2014.



Monks Pit's Fully Scaled at 43lb 5oz (RIP).

# Adam Honeysett



Monks Pit's Hertford Fish, September 2015, 41lb 2oz.



The Peach, 40lb 10oz, Monks Pit, July 2016.

ting my next move, watching clips on YouTube etc of Monks Pit as well as catching a fair few lumps along the way. I met up with Mick Richardson who runs Monks Pit in the January of 2015 and secured my place for the start of April.

My first session on Monks was a memorable one. Having pulled up in the car, I grabbed a bottle to go for a wander in search of carp. I didn't have to go far; in fact only a few swims up on the field bank, before I found them head and shouldering in the margin, so I shot back and grabbed the gear, swiftly got back and under-armed a rig with a small pink pop-up attached. I was shocked when in under an hour, I had my first Monks Pit carp on the bank.

I ended up with three fish in my first session to just under 33, and to be honest it has been kind to me ever since. I had the Hartford Fish in my first year at 41lb 2oz, the and Peach last year at 40lb 10oz. This year I was lucky enough to trick a very sought after fish, the Big Fully Scaled (RIP) at 43lb 5oz. Since I became a syndicate member, I have had well in excess of 160 carp with over 35 30s and the

three 40s in my quest for Porky.

Well, what can I say about Barden Lake? Having fished the place since I was a boy, I have seen them grow from 4 to 6lb into the incredible beasts they are today. It holds a good head of large fish; I have currently had nine forties from the venue, most of which I have caught in recent years, and there are a few more than that. It's never far from my thoughts wherever I am because it's on my doorstep, and I still have a couple of special ones in mind that I want to catch. I have always found with the lake, watching people come and go, that it can be tough on you for some-time but generally will give it all back to you in one hit.

One recent session on there that sticks in my mind is an unexpected 24-hour session I had. After packing the van full of kit for me and my son Jordan to go and fish a day ticket venue, I ended up nearly two hours later, after making a few phone calls, unpacking it, as everywhere was packed, and it was too late to head off to Monks Pit, so I decided on a 24-hour session on Barden. Little did I know what was about to happen, but

after putting around 15 Spombs out, I started receiving liners about 20 minutes later. Within the first hour I had the first one, and then it pretty much carried on like that, recasting, Spombing, tying rigs until I went home the following day after landing ten fish: a 16lb common, three 20s between 26 and 29, five 30s of 30lb 8oz, 32lb 12oz, 35lb 12oz, 38lbs and 38lb 14oz as well as a fish called the Brown fish at 45lb 2oz.

Since my time on the bank opened up for me, I have also been lucky enough to fish a cracking day ticket water in Kent, Cottingham Lakes, on a couple of occasions and have had lots of cracking scaly stunners to just under 40lb. Since 2014, having more time on the bank has seen me go from having caught just three 40-plus UK carp to now having caught 15.

I hope to have a go on the Essex Manor in the future as well as many others. I am pleased to say whilst writing this that I have just made more changes to further my carp fishing and now have a job where the every weekend will be mine. Happy days!

All the best. ■



Barden's Brown Fish at 45lb 2oz, July 2017.

# The Quest For An Ending

By Gaz Jones



**A**t the start of 2017, I decided I would have ago again for a big mirror known as Dave in Swan Lake on the Bluebell complex. Swan can be tricky at the best of times, being a very busy day ticket lake with a high turnover of anglers. I have been fishing on and off on Swan since 2013; I never really got around to doing much time due to other commitments, but I decided that I would give it my best shot this year and see how things went. I had a few walks around Swan in the February, but I decided to wait till the weather started to warm up before make my first trip. It was mid-March, and the weather was starting to turn mild, so I knew the fish would soon start to be on the move again, and a trip was planned for the following week.

It was the Tuesday morning as I turned up for my first trip of the year. As I come down the track to the Swan Lake, I was surprised to see only three other anglers on the lake, and one of them was packing up. I had a good look about that morning but saw nothing, so I decided to set up in a central peg on the lake, so if anything showed itself, I could move onto them. I soon had three rods out in different areas of the swim to cover as much water as possible, all on zigs, as I had a feeling that they would be sitting in midwater somewhere, and I've always done well on zigs at this time of the year. The day soon passed, and I saw nothing show itself till that evening just as it was getting dark when one popped out down to my right only 30 yards out. I soon had my right hand rod on a zig in the area of where the fish and shown.

The night pasted by uneventfully, and it was around 8am that morning when another fish popped his head out over the rod I had redone the night before, so I decided to just sit tight to see what happened. It was around 11am, and few hours had passed with a few more shows in that area. I decided that I would redo the rods and put another rod in the area around to my right as well. I soon had two rods out there, but I dropped the depth of the zigs just a bit, and within five minutes, the right hand rod was away and I was into my first Swan carp of the year.



**19lb, zig, March.**

The fish just moved out in to open water, not really doing much, and he was soon in the net. I secured the fish in the net so I could get my unhooking mat and scales sorted and get a lad a few pegs down the bank from me to do a few photos. It was one of the small residents of Swan at just over 19lb, but I was happy to get my first fish from the lake on my very first trip of the year. A few photos were taken, and I soon had him returned to his home. I went about making a new zig up and cast back to the same spot I'd just had the fish from. I just sat there to see if I could see anything, and over the next few hours I did see a few more shows, but they seemed to be a bit further out.

I was just completing redoing one of the rods when the middle rod was away. I was soon on the rod, and within 20 seconds it was off – the hooked had pulled. I was gutted! You just never know what it could be on the end in a lake like Swan – it could be a double or a 50lb'er! A new zig was made up and back on the spot. It was soon getting dark, and the night soon passed by without a bleep. I never saw another fish show after losing that one, and it was time to pack up and head off home.

I couldn't get back down the following week due to other commitments, but a trip was planned for the

week after, returning on the Tuesday morning again.

It was now the start of April, and as I came down the track to Swan, I could see it was a lot busier than the trip before. I parked up and had a look around to find the odd swim free in between people. I could see the swim I was in on the last trip was free, and a decided I would go and have a look in there to see if anything would show itself. The peg itself controls a fair bit of water, so it could be a good starting point, as the lake was busy. I just sat in the swim for a little while, and it wasn't long before one popped its head out just on the middle line of the lake. Over the next 30 minutes, I had seen a handful of shows all just on the middle line and just this side of it. That's all I needed, and I dropped a bucket in the swim and went back and got the rods.

I soon had three rods all just my side of middle, all positioned where the fish were showing, and again all three rods were on zigs and different depths to try and find out where they were sitting in the water column. The fish continued to show over the next 24 hours, and despite moving the zigs up and down in the water column, a take just never materialised. It was on the Wednesday morning when I had to cut the session short, as I received a phone call from home that my mum

# Gaz Jones



had taken ill and she was on her way to hospital. The next week passed by, and the following Thursday, my mum passed away and lost her long battle against cancer.

It was mid-May before I was heading back down to Swan again with a mate for a social trip. Upon turning up to Swan, the lake was full with only one swim free, so we ended up on a different lake on the complex called Sandmartin. I had only ever fished on that lake a few times in the past, but knew it had a good head of 30lb'ers to have a go for. The first night passed by uneventfully, but the wind had turned in the night and started pushing down the other end of the lake. We were soon packed up and heading around there to get on the showing fish. As we got into the swims, the fish continued to show, and we soon had our rods out to where the fish were showing. It didn't take long before my mate had an 18lb common in the net. It took me a little bit longer, but at 4pm, I had 31lb 4oz common in the net followed by a 27lb 10oz common at first light the next morning. That session certainly got my head back in the game, and I couldn't wait to get back over to Swan for another go at one of its jewels.

It wasn't until the following week that I was able to get back down for a

couple of nights, and as I came down track, I could see that there were a few anglers on, but not as many as the week before. I packed up and had a few walks around the lake, as I'd been away from the lake for six or seven weeks by now, and things were certain to have changed from my last trip. All the anglers were at the top end of the lake, and nobody was down the bottom end of the lake. I knew the weather was due to change that night and into the following morning, so I

set up down the bottom end of the lake, hoping the weather would change just like the weatherman had said. I got the rods out, all on likely looking spots where I had taken fish from before. My mate was due down that night to join me, and he dropped in a few pegs up.

The day and night passed by uneventfully, and as I opened my eyes at first light the next morning, the weather man was proved right – the wind had changed and started to push down my end of the lake with rain in the air. I just sat there on the bedchair, looking out to see if I could see any signs of fish, and it was around 8:30am when I saw my first show. I had baited fairly heavily the day before, so I decided to leave my rods on the same spots, as I now knew there were fish in the area. Around 10:30 that morning I got a shout from my mate – he was into a fish. I popped my waders on and went up to his swim, offering a helping hand. It wasn't long before I netted a lovely mirror of 26lb 12oz for him. A few photos were done and back she went.

A few hours passed, and there seemed to be more fish showing in front of me now. The rain started to fall more and more when my right hand rod pulled up tight, the fish moved to the right about ten yards, and then all went solid. I just kept the pressure on, but it was still solid. A



(Top) 20lb 10oz, Swan.  
(Right) 24lb 4oz, Swan.





call up to the office soon had the bailiff bringing the boat and the life jacket down for me. Out in the boat I went, and I just pulled my way to the fish. As soon as I got over the fish, a mirror popped out of the weed, and into the net she went first time of asking. I rowed back to the bank, and I secured the fish in the net in the margins while I got the unhooking mat and sling ready. On the scales she went 24lb 4oz.

A few photos, and I was slipping the fish back to fight another day. I soon had the rod back out on the spot and topped up with bait. The fish continued to show, all in the area, and



around 7pm, the right hand rod was away again, this time with the fish stripping line from the reel. I soon had the fish under control, just kiting around to the left with me gaining line in the meantime. After a few minutes, the fish was soon just plodding around in front of the net. After a few more minutes, I soon had a long common over the net cord.

As before, I secured the common in the net in the margins and got everything sorted to weigh it and get a few photos. She went 27lb on the button on the scales. It was a mega common, and incredibly long. We soon had her slipped back.

At this point, I decided that I would

rebat all three rods for the last night ahead and top the spots up with bait. With all the rods and baiting up done, the rain had stopped, and before long there were a few fish still showing in the area, so things looked promising for the last night. As the light faded, I was in anticipation of what the night could bring as I dropped off to sleep.

At first light, I was awakened by my alarm signaling a take on my right hand rod, again with the bobbin just holding up tight and the rod tip pulling over. As I picked up the rod, I could feel the fish kicking, and then all went solid. The fish was in the weed, but after 15 seconds with steady pressure, I felt a kick, and the fish was back out of the weed and coming

**(Top)** 27lb 10oz, Sandmartin.  
**(Above)** 27lb common, Swan.  
**(Left)** 30lb 6oz common.





**(Above) Dave at 52lb 4oz.**  
**(Right) Dave on the mat.**

the bay. The fish weren't really having it, but after a few hours there were a few fish feeding with one of the fish looking really big. As it came up to take the floaters, its shoulders came out of the water long before its mouth, and I was sure I was looking at a mirror called Dave at the point. I soon had the big mirror taking the floaters like no tomorrow. I sorted the rod out and made my first cast, but I found it hard to present a bait properly, as the bay was covered in fluffy white bits that had come off the tree at that time of the year.

It wasn't long before the mirror stopped taking the floating pellets, and I had blown the chance. It was at that point I started to think about the night ahead and had a few walks around the lake, but there really wasn't much to go on, and I ended up in the swim just plotting up in the central area of the lake, fishing singles on clear spots, thinking I would be getting up at first light to see if I could

get the fish taking floaters again until I had to be off around 10am that morning.

As expected, the night passed uneventfully, and I was up and packed down with just the rods out for first light. I fed floaters most of that morning but could never really get anything going, and it was soon time to be on the way home. I decided I wasn't going to return till the weather turned to more favorable conditions.

Over the next week, I kept checking the weather, hoping it would turn soon. Then I saw that the weather was due to turn to better conditions on the following Monday, so I decided to get down on the Sunday afternoon for a three-night session. As I turned up to Swan, I could see there were only a few anglers on. I had a few laps around the lake to see if I could find a few fish, and on the second lap of the lake, I saw a few fish moving about down the bottom end where there was no angler pressure, so I went back and got my kit and got the rods out on clear spots that I knew from the trip before last. I decided I would go in steady with the bait for the time

being, as there were a few fish about.

Within a few hours, the left hand rod was away, and I soon had a 30lb 2oz common in the net. I popped the common in the retainer sling for a few minutes while I got everything sorted out. Kev Hewitt came walking into the swim, saying, "Have you got one, mate?" We soon had the fish on the





unhooking mat and photos done and had the fish back safely returned back to its home.

Nothing followed for the next two nights, but I was waiting for the weather to change. A little later than expected, the weather changed, and on the Tuesday morning, I woke up at first light to the wind pushing down to my end of the lake, and the rain was now starting to fall. I was up and about, looking to see if I could see anything move, and within five minutes I saw a fish show down to my left



in the bottom corner of the lake. Five minutes later, another one showed, and this time it looked a much bigger fish. That was all I needed, and I was packing up to get down there.

I got into the new swim and just sat there for a while to see exactly where the fish were showing, as I wanted to get the rods bang-on the first time. Within a short period of time, I saw a couple more shows just out in front, and I soon had a couple of rigs in place no more than 15 yards out from the bank. As I was sorting my third rod out, that's when I saw a much bigger fish show itself just in front of a set of reeds to my left, no more than ten yards out from the bank. That's all I needed, and I was soon was casting my third rod to where the fish had shown itself. I then just walked around the corner and put a handful of boilies around the area where my hookbait was. A short while passed by just sitting watching the water again to see if I could see any more shows.

An hour or so passed by, and I was on the phone to my mate Matt, just chatting about the morning and what I had seen and how this big fish had showed down to the left next to these reeds, and then the next minute my left hand rod pulled up tight... I was away, and I was soon on the rod, picking it up to a solid resistance with the

fish just moving out to the right in open water. Within a minute, I soon had the fish just out in front of me about ten yards out, and that's when I saw a big set of shoulders come out the water. I'm sure it was the same set of shoulders I was looking at that was taking the floaters only a few weeks before, and at that moment I realised which fish it was...

The fish just plodded just out in front for a little while and then just rose up in the water in front of the net. It then just glided over the net cord, and as I folded the mesh of the landing net back, I just couldn't believe what I was looking at. It was the one I had be chasing for the last five years



**(Top left) Dave on the mat.**  
**(Top right) The peg where I had Dave.**  
**(Left) Fish in the bay.**  
**(Right) One in the retainer.**

# Gaz Jones

on and off; it was the Dave, and the sheer size of the fish was unbelievable.

I soon had him secured in the net, and I knew Kev Hewitt was still fishing on the lake over the other side, so I went over to see if he would come and do some photos for me, as he had already done the photos of the 30lb common earlier in the session. He was soon around to offer a helping hand. I got the mat, scales and cameras sorted, and we soon had the fish on the mat. The rig had done its job perfectly with the hook an inch back just off the center of the bottom lip.

We lifted him on scales, and at 52lb 4oz, it was a new PB for me and my first 50. I just couldn't believe it, and I was truly blown away by this capture! I had been after this one for five years and a lot had happened in my life whilst chasing this fish – losing my mum to cancer only a few months before and also losing my dad in the September of 2014. This one is for both of you. ■

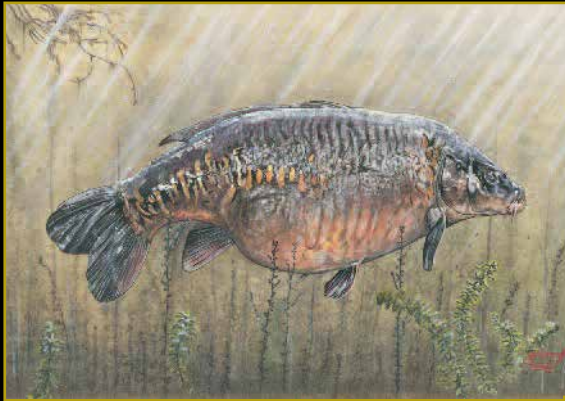


**Fish showing.** On the trip, I had three on Swan.



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# Fishing In The Stour Valley

**T**he Stour Valley is steeped in carp fishing history and within its surroundings has a multitude of venues offering up some of the best carp fishing in the country. My choice of target water for the coming season was one of the smaller lakes in the area, a suburban pit that sat just off the Ashford Rd and just four acres in size with around 35 known carp present including two rather large fully scaled carp that was just stuff of dreams at this point. Ton-

ford as it's known was a tricky little water with very wary old carp. It was a constant challenge that kept you thinking and evolving your angling at all times. The inconsistency between bites meant you were constantly developing new ways of catching these carp, and it does wonders for your angling. At the end of March, I started off my campaign for 2017, and this how it started out...

So after a bitterly cold week in the Champagne region of France and a journey filled with rain, once we arrived Folkestone side of the Chan-

nel tunnel there was sunshine and an essence of spring in the air, being two days from the spring equinox. The rays of sunshine energised me, and I felt nature waking up all around me.

On the Journey Home from Folkestone, I made a rash decision to unload my gear from France and throw it straight into the back of the little van, in the most unorganised state but in super efficient time. Within two hours of being back in the country, I was back on the road to Mid Kent Fisheries Tonford Lake, music inflating the vibe and signs of life



A lovely spring common.





**Guesty success! The Stunner at 33lb.**

awakening and flourishing all around me. Even after a week's straight angling, I still had a massive buzz to get back. Tonford just gives you this feeling when en route – a special buzz like no other lake has and a feeling of uncertainty for what might happen.

Once arriving at the lake, the weather was still holding out even as the evening drew closer. I picked to fish the Cushties swim at the far end of the lake on what seemed a warmish southerly wind. Hours of water watching later and as I felt the sun setting behind me in the distance, the temperature dropped quickly, and I became aware of how temporary the warmth of the sun could be felt. As it drew out of sight, the area I was fishing looked as it did a couple of weeks ago and seemed as though all life was sucked in with the sunset. Apart from the odd pike in the margins, I didn't see much, and apart from a quick overnight camping session, I thought there was nothing else to come of the trip.

After packing up that Sunday, on

the barrow walk back, I stopped in a couple of swims looking for signs of life. As I reached the far end from where I camped up for the night, the warmth felt a good 2-3 degrees warmer and due to where the sun was setting this time of the year, it would also see the sun for the most prolonged hours. After being slightly disheartened for my efforts, I had a game plan instantly and knew how I would go about tripping up some of those historic fish this lake held. I put 10-15 18mm Solar E12 flavoured freezer baits over a spot I had came across previously and left to return after work on Monday for a between shift session.

After I finished work on the Monday, I was down at the lake by just gone five – handy when the tackle shop you have to see last thing is five minutes from the lake you fish – BONUS! So with my gear loaded onto the barrow, it was only the distance between me and Tonford to overcome, and then I was angling. The lake fills you with more anticipation,

as with Tonford it really is the lake of the unexpected. There were four people on, all at the other end of the lake where I was on the previous session, and I had my own hideaway, full of solar rays and small hatches starting to form... After all this was the day of the spring equinox!

So I placed my two rods on the spots, along with ten freebies over each rod, and within one hour I had received a slow pick-up. Then the titanium head hit the rod blank, and I was away. After a few short runs, a chestnut common of lovely proportions was swimming angrily up and down the tree root covered margin, trying to free the Solar 101 from its bottom lip – no chance! The common was mine, a real character full of deep chestnut colours that still showed signs of its winter state. With the few leeches removed and a few snaps taken, the common of just over 22lb was returned. I decided on getting an early night, as I needed to be up early to get ready for the working day ahead.

# Jake Anderson



One of Chilham Mill's A-team, Starburst at 35lb.



The Unknown at 38lb.

The night was uneventful, and I awoke to my alarm at 6.15am. After making myself a strong coffee, I had a few bleeps in quick succession. Again the titanium head hit the blank, and I was away again. Hot having had my 9ft Scopes long, I didn't really know what a big fish felt like on them until a sizeable mirror flanked past me, dogging up and down in the open water, using nothing but its mass to try and free itself. Shortly after, it slid over the net cord, and I assumed it was a low 30, or maybe an upper 20. I prepped the mat, scales, sling and water for when the mighty old mirror graced the bank. When taking a closer look and seeing the width, I knew it was bigger than expected, and when I hoisted the leviathan from the depths, I knew it was the Unknown immediately. A weakness in my knees became apparent, as this was one of Tonford's rarer characters to grace the bank, and she was mine! The scales settled at 38lbs, and I could not have been happier going to work that day, buzzing just to get back there that night. I also managed another 22 that night too.

It just shows first hand how impor-

tant the start of spring is to nature and all its creatures and invertebrate alike and how 12 hours of daylight sunshine can awaken all sorts of creatures even the big carp in the depths of the lakes that we all dream of catching, effort really does equal reward so if there is effort to be made, make it and employ your dreams as a reality.

After my early season efforts, for the following weeks I had work commitments to attend to, with various shows to attend with Solar Tackle, so my fishing time had to be put on hold for a few weeks, during some of the best weeks of the year too. I started seeing various pictures throughout these weeks of some of the big girls that started hitting the bank, and by the Sunday of the last show, I really thought I had missed my best opportunity of catching one of the big fullies. The next opportunity I was presented with was the weekend of the Easter bank holiday, and as it was a four-day holiday, I wanted to make the most out of the time I had. Mid Kent Fisheries employ a 48 hour on/24 hour off rule, so I planned to get down to the lake Thursday after work until

early Saturday morning, meaning I could return Sunday morning and do another night.

Thursday soon came round, and I was at Solar HQ when a sample arrived of the original Quench with the Savay Seed base mix, which is soon to be re released. I took 5kg of the initial sample, and I knew straight away this was going to catch me a bank holiday carp. Upon arriving at the lake, half of the nine swims where already occupied. Four anglers resided on the railway bank with only one swim free in the middle. This meant that straight away I headed for the opposite bank and set about finding some of these elusive carp. After around 20 minutes' water watching, a few bubbles the size of 50 pence pieces arose from the chocolatey coloured depths, and less than 30 seconds later this was followed by the slightest show of a possible dorsal. But with the sun sitting low in the midst of the distance, the elusive creature was given away by a glimmer of light reflecting off the broken surface. My mind was made up, and I set about readying the rods and getting some bait on the spots.



**The Big Fully at 39lb 4oz.**

# Jake Anderson

Once I was all set up, I wrapped the rods to spots I had fished in the swim earlier in the year and deployed around 1kg over each rod. Normally I bait very lightly in Tonford, but I was hoping the increase in bait could keep the fish in the area and boost my chances at having more than one fish over the weekend. The next 36 hours passed without me managing to land a fish. The rods stayed untouched for this period, and I found myself sitting up drinking tea at around 4am on the Saturday morning. It was a dark, eerie morning, light slowly appearing in the distance, and I was trying to scan the water for signs, but visibility was heavily restricted.

I sat back and embraced how peaceful the lake was at this hour, this was until my E.C.U let out a violent one toner, line being stripped from the tight clutch, I looked over to see a silhouette of my rod hooped round. Immediately to my feet I leant into what was an extremely powerful carp using all of its mass to surge on powerful runs, twisting and turning throughout. After around 15 minutes a large shape eluded the depths and

soon resided in my net. It didn't take long for me to know what fish this was, it was a fish I have dreamt about catching for a number of years and an absolutely ancient fully scaled mirror. The Upfront Fully was mine, after getting some help from another angler Stuart, we hoisted her up and the needle settled on 39lb 7oz. Stuart done a few snaps and after putting her back. I was left absolutely blown away, it still felt as if it was all just a dream, adrenaline pumping I informed a few friends and set about making my way home to ensure I could get back the next day early morning.

I awoke on the Sunday, slightly later than intended, so I didn't get to the lake until around 10am. When arriving, I had a walk around the lake, and after having a quick chat to Mick and Charlie, I carried on my way to try and find some carp. It wasn't long after standing in the swim I had previously fished when I saw a huge carp give off a massive display less than half a rod length off the bank towards my left hand margin. A 14mm Bunspeice and Aniseed pop-up was rigged up and lowered into the margin fol-

lowed by four Quench boilies, just squeezed so the skin was split. As I was setting up the second rod to fish on the spot I'd had the Upfront from, the margin rod hooped round and let out a series of bleeps from the E.C.U. A battle of long powerful runs led to dogged headshaking up and down the margin. A large common surfaced, and I soon netted the carp at the first opportunity. I had caught one of the rarer commons to grace the bank, a fish known as One Pelvic. I couldn't believe I had been at the lake only 30 minutes and I had landed such a lovely old carp. I was on cloud nine and really thought there was nothing that could top this weekend's achievements.

I started cooking some food in the Ridge Monkey at around 4pm, and shortly after refuelling on some pasta bake, the rod in the open water was away. It was a shorter fight this time, and when the fish flanked, I saw once again big apple slice scales on the surface. Legs shaking at the knees, I managed to net the second of my targets for the year, the Big Fully. A call went out to a friend who made his



The elusive One Pelvic common at 36lb 8oz.



**My main target, the Upfront Fully at 39lb 7oz.**

way to do some shots. The light was soon fading, and by the time he arrived, daylight was no more. We weighed this incredible carp at 39lb 4oz. A few shots were done in the dark, and she was sent on her way. I once again found myself in an array of disbelief at what had just happened. I had landed three carp, and that last week was nothing more than a dream. This was a weekend's angling I will never forget, and it will always be at the forefront of my angling memories.

Another lake I really wanted to fish was Chilham Mill, around ten minutes from Tonford. I had never walked the lake, but I had seen several photos of some of the cracking carp it held as well as being given nothing but good reviews by other anglers. I arranged to do a guest ticket with good friend Josh Scoble, and when I arrived at the lake for the guest session, I was blown away. The lake was 26 acres of beautiful tree lined clear water full of weed and big carp. Since being taken over as a syndicate, so much work has been put into the lake – the swims are

a lot more comfortable and very secure, and facilities are top notch.

After doing a lap of the lake, we settled in swims 4 and 5 towards the mill end of the lake. I set up the marker rod and spent the next hour or so searching for what I believed to be good feeding areas. The main spot I found was among some low-lying weed with the marker float on the surface above a depth of 5.5ft. I deployed around 6kg of Solar Tackle's 20mm Club Mix and 14mm Red Herring boilies using a catapult and then topped the spot up with around 4kg of Hooked On Baits' Chilli Hemp and spod mix. Two rods were cast to the spot, and I set about finding the spot for my third rod. From experience I know some of the warier fish like to sit back away from the main shoal, so I set about finding a spot within a five-rod length distance of my main baited area to hopefully trip up one of the warier residents. I found a spot within around 16 yards of the main baited area, and I baited it with a 2kg mixture of boilies and particles using the Spomb to bait tightly.

I awoke at 5am after Josh managed to land an absolute pearler, a fish called Ringo. It was in perfect condition; its flank covered in big apple sliced scales and a perfect start to our session at the Mill. We weighed Ringo at 33lb, and after some pictures, she was released and left to sulk amongst the dense marginal weed. The morning passed without any more action, and after we both persevered with zigs during the day, we still didn't manage to land another carp going into the last night. With the rods re-rigged and cast back onto the baited spots and a few Spombs of bait over the top, I went to bed fairly confident knowing the rods were fishing well and we had some great weather coming in overnight.

Awakening the following morning to overcast skies and light drizzle, it felt like it should have happened... At around 9am, I had a slow take that led to me losing a fish in the weed from the spot off of the main baited area. The rod was recast, and twenty 14mm Red Herring baits followed, and the rod was reset in the rest. I put

# Jake Anderson

the loss down to the rig I was using, so before recasting, a few alterations were made, and I was sure if I managed to hook another, this time it would end in my favour. I would soon find out, as an hour later the same rod was away. This time the fish slowly plodded through the vast banks of weed. 15 minutes passed, and Josh netted what we instantly recognised as one of the lake's A-Team, a fish known as Starburst. I couldn't believe how lucky I was to catch such an historic carp. Once I had her on the mat, I could really appreciate every tiny scale on its leathery flanks. A truly remarkable carp and a fish that has really made my year so far, she weighed in at exactly 35lbs, and I appreciated every moment spent in the company of this special fish.

We were due to leave the lake at around 1pm, so I started packing down at 11.45. With most of the gear packed away and just the brolly left to take down before the rods were due to be wound in, the left hand alarm sprang into life. The main baited spot had done the job, and I was doing battle with another powerful carp. Josh helped with the net again, and a beautiful scaled mirror was my prize. Josh recognised the fish as the Stunner. As if catching the Starburst wasn't enough, I had caught this absolute pearler weighing in at 33lb. I packed the rest of the gear away in awe of the last 48 hours and felt privileged to have been able to fish for such lovely carp.

So the rest of my season will hopefully pan out like the start, and there are still a few old Kent crackers that I am keen to catch, so I will keep persevering and ensure I make the effort where required and hopefully land a few more of these special old carp. ■



The re-released originals have really helped to shape my season so far!

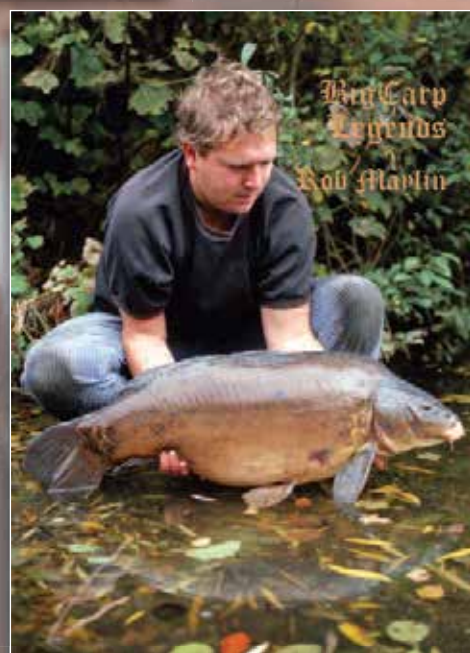
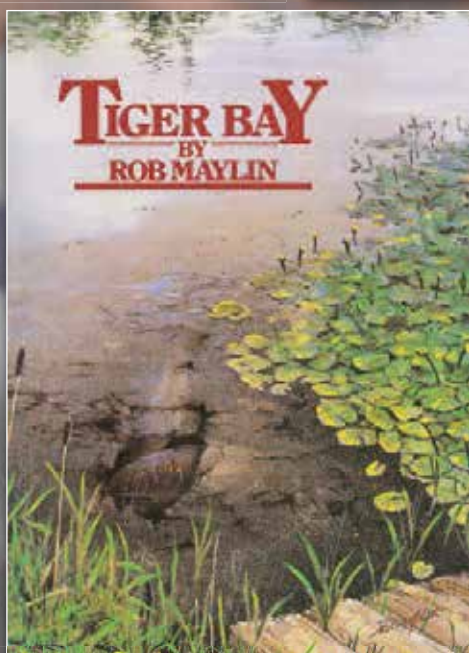
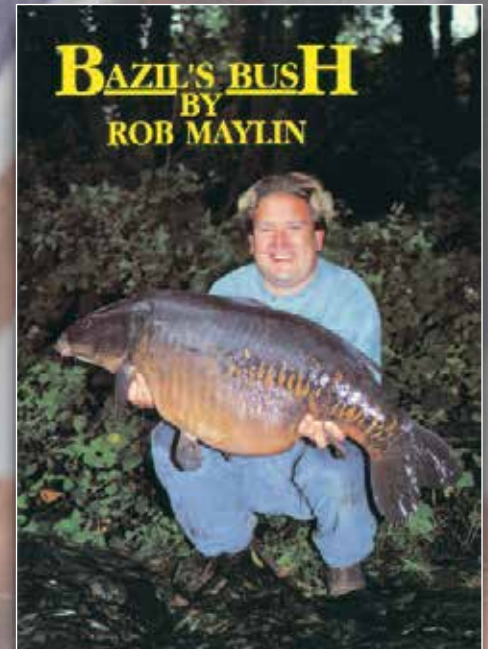
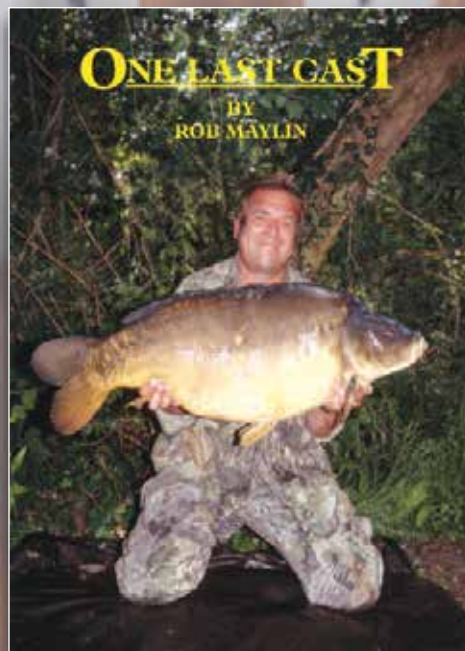
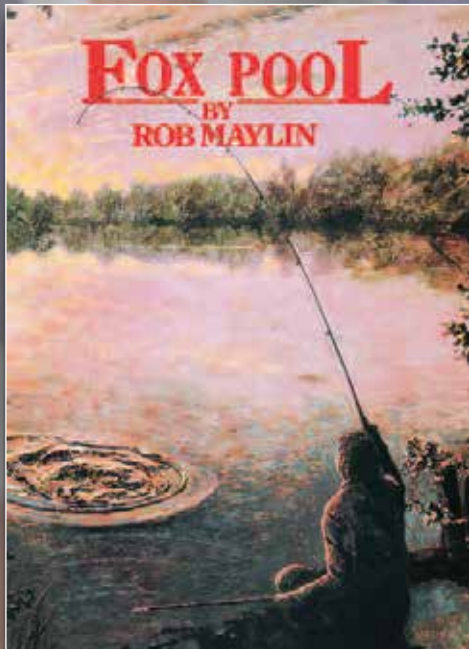


Say no more Lord, i get it I'm going fishing.



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# It Pays To Be Persistent

By Mark Foster





**A**t the start of a recent session on one of my local lakes, I decided to fish a swim called No Fish Corner. We all know that most lakes have one, and this may just be down to a swim that is very rarely fished or to being cut off by other swims. Don't ask me why I decided to fish this area, as there was only one other angler on the whole of the lake, but it just felt like a challenge. After a very disappointing night, no fish hit the bank, and there was a very good reason for this – one I have never come across before.

After turning up just before dark and setting up, I had a lead around and found a small clear area within the weed. This seemed as good a spot as any, so I started to trickle a little bait in while I was setting up. Within half an hour, the area was fizzing with activity, so I decided to place both my rigs on this tight area. All through the night I was receiving nonstop liners

and was baffled as to why I had not hooked anything by now, as I know my rigs are lethal and were freshly made on the bank. Being half asleep, I made a crucial error of not checking the reason why both my bobbins had been dancing throughout the night under the disco lights of my bite alarms.

Around 5am, I decided to bring one of my rods in to check what on earth was going on. As soon as I lifted the rod, I felt that it was caught on something solid. I gave the rod a little strain, and it began to slowly move while my other rod on the same area was indicating a drop back. I instantly knew that whatever this was, it was attached to both of my lines. I continued to slowly retrieve whatever this heavy weight was from the dark depths of the lake, and as it broke the surface of the water, someone's complete landing net appeared with both of my rigs' hooks tangled within it. I can only assume that all the activity I had throughout the night were carp picking my bait up but not being able

to allow my hooks to turn into their mouths.

Absolutely gutted, I decided to make a brew and compose myself. While doing so, on the far bank of the other side of the lake, there were at least two or three separate fish deciding to show themselves. This was very close to the other angler on the lake, and I can only assume this was probably an area he had baited. I could not believe my luck when I could see him packing up. While he was doing so, I worked out that the distance from my swim was approximately 145 yards, and I didn't fancy walking round to the other side when the other angler had left and possibly disturbing what I was witnessing.

About half an hour later, he was off in his van and probably heading for work. Bingo! I was now the only one on the lake. Over the last few months, I have been using a new rod made by Kodex called the KX-i. The Kodex KX-i allows you to cast to immense distances with unrivalled accuracy, yet there is no compromise with its fish-



# Mark Foster

playing capabilities, and the tip action will subdue fish to the net, reducing the risk of hook pulls. This is down to the construction of the rod's airforce-grade high-modular mesh and the latest Zepto-X carbon technology, ultralight titanium TG16 matte black guides, 50mm butt guide and an anti-frap tip guide.

This rod played a major part in what was about to happen with its sheer casting ability. I clipped up at 37 wraps, stood at the end of my swim, compressing the blank and launching a 4oz lead across to the opposite side of the lake. As the lead hit the clip on my reel, it looked as though it had fallen a rod length short of the reeds where I had anticipated it would fall. I was in two minds as to whether to reel in and have another cast to get it that little bit closer to the reed face, but I felt a nice solid donk and didn't want to disturb the area any more. Shortly afterwards, a carp head and shouldered directly over the top of my rig. It has been quite a common sight for me recently for the carp to show over my bait, and the fre-

quency at which this is happening cannot be coincidental. I am pretty sure this is down to one thing...

I have been working with Monster Baits on testing some prototype hookbaits over the last few months, and the results have been quite mind-blowing. The prototypes in conjunction with Monster's Ice, Beast and Fruit Fusion are lethal. In the areas I fish, I generally like to use a mixture of the Monster range unless obviously if I am casting a single hookbait to a showing fish. I prefer to present the carp a full roast dinner rather than just a bowl of chips. Certain fish will pick up certain baits, but by having a variety of flavouring and feeding triggers will excite them into eating everything that is in front of them. Monster Baits tick all the boxes for me.

A little while later, the rod on the other side of the lake tore off and the fish kited left. The fight seemed like it went on forever, as I had a lot of line to retrieve and several weedbeds between us. As the fish broke the surface about two rod lengths out, I could see for the first time it was a

good fish. At this time I began to feel a little bit nervous thinking to myself, "Please don't come off now" as it began to have a spurt of energy at the net, but my KX-i dealt with everything the fish could throw at it as usual. Finally the carp glided over the top of my net, and the battle was over. I wish I could put into words the relief I felt with this carp safely enclosed within the mesh of my landing net, but I can't. All I can tell you is that I had to sit down for five minutes just to get rid of the butterflies in my stomach.

After composing myself, I was able to unhook the rig from the fish's mouth in the net. I then tucked the fins in and rolled the net down to the top of the carp's back and slowly started to lift this beauty from its habitat... and then and only then I realised how big she actually was. Tipping the scales at 41lb 12oz, it was my fourth UK forty this year so far, and I was buzzing. After I quickly took some photos of this true specimen, I safely returned her to reunite with the other residents of the lake apart from



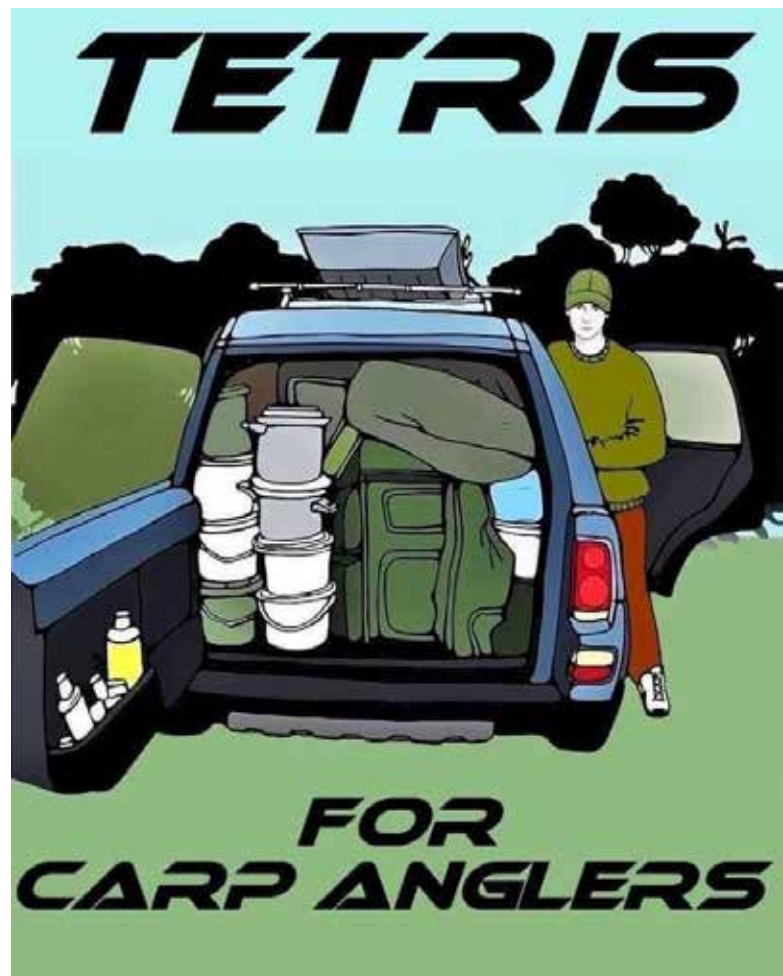
one other, which was now attached to end of my rig on my left hand rod, peeling line from my reel as I was saying farewell to the carp I had just landed.

As I picked my second rod up, I must admit I thought it was a catfish by the way it was stripping the line off my reel but shortly realised it was another nice mirror carp and one that was on my list of targets. This had now become a red-letter day. I have never felt so confident in playing fish at the net than I am nowadays, and this is down to the way this new KX-i rod by Kodex relieves so much stress and tension off the line by the action of the blank if the carp decides to have that last bid for freedom.

I finally had a fish I had been after for two years named Armadillo. She is not the biggest in the lake at 32lb on the nose, but wow, what a stunning carp, and I am sure you will agree. With no further action and my time on the lake coming to an end, for me personally, this has become one of, if not the, most memorable short session on the bank. ■



*'I'm just going for the day, I don't need the tent.'*



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