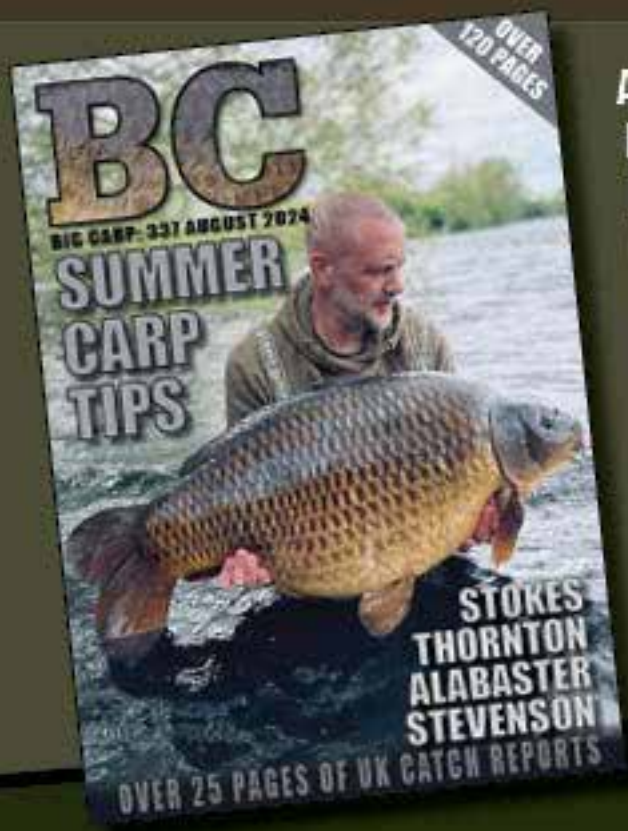


AUGUST ISSUES OF **BIG CARP AND
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Ashley Allen - Gets Tangoed
Billy Wells - Elphicks
Birchy - UK 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60!!
Callum Reid - Swan Valley
John Morgan - Spring on Farriers
Johnny Old - Short Session Success
Luke Stevenson - August is the Best Month
Tom Stokes - Top Summer Tips....and lots more

Chris Claxton - Wraysbury
Jamie Salmons - The Pig
Mark Baxter - The Castle Lake
Mitch Hammonds - The Croc
Peter Hall - Elstow
Ralph Walton - The Quarry
Terrance Fitzgerald - 4 Forties in 4 Trips
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Top 10 French Holiday Destinations

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

Top 10 Bait Companies

1	DYNAMITE
2	STICKY
3	NUTRABAITS
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5	CC MOORE
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2	THE TACKLE BOX
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4	ANGLING DIRECT NORWICH
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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!

BC

BIG CARP: 337 AUGUST 2024

SUMMER CARP TIPS

**OVER
120 PAGES**



**STOKES
THORNTON
ALABASTER
STEVENSON**

OVER 25 PAGES OF UK CATCH REPORTS

CONTENTS

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

BIG CARP 337:
August 2024

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Publications 2024



Front Cover:
John Morgan with a
Farriers lump.



This month's double bumper issues sees a whole host of big captures and tips for your summer angling. Check out the likes of Tom Stokes, Oscar Thorton and Luke Stevenson to help bank carp during the hot months.

Ashley Allen is having an amazing year. Check his latest capture. Billy Wells and Birchy have had great results lately with UK carp to over 60lb banked.

John Morgan has had a great start to the year targetting Farriers in the Cotswolds. Byron Brown turns a family holiday in to the session of a lifetime, Lee Baker has been hammering his syndicate venue. Perry Alabaster banks a new PB among a string of big Cambridgeshire carp.

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Tom runs you through his top tips for catching carp in the summer months.

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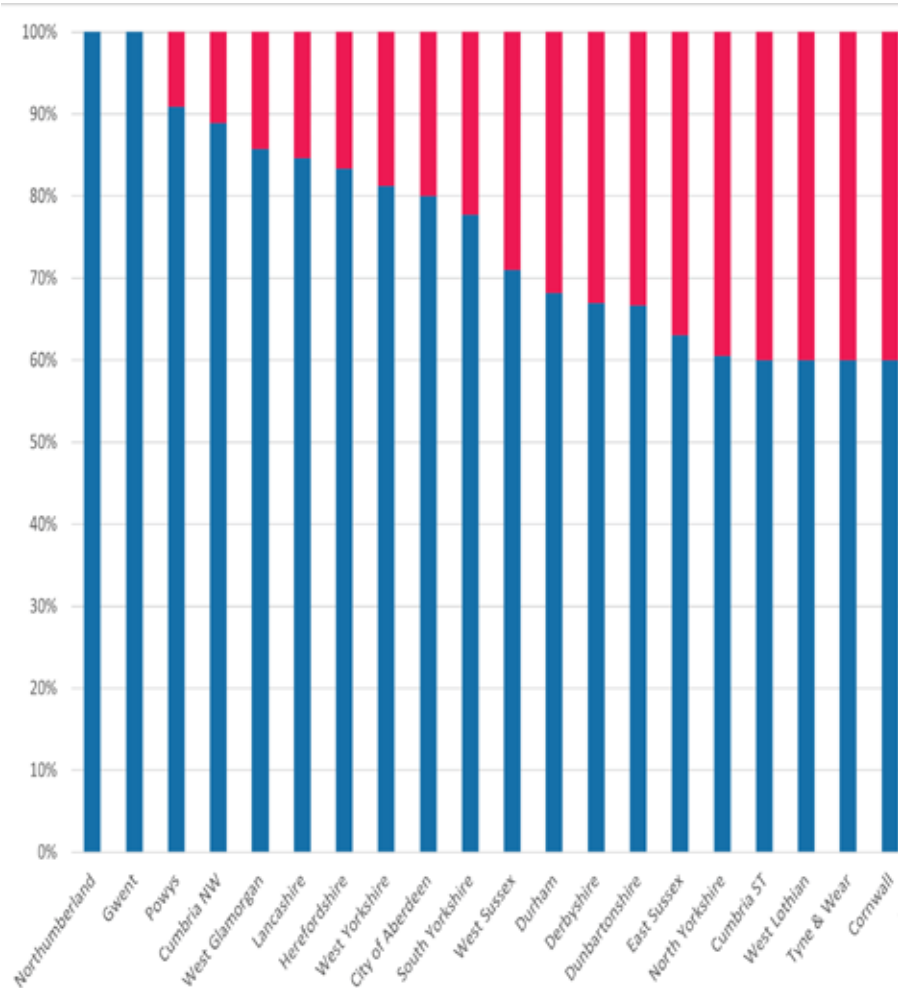
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SHOCKLEADER

UK'S LARGEST CITIZEN SCIENCE WATER TESTING CAMPAIGN FINDS 75% OF RIVERS IN POOR ECOLOGICAL HEALTH

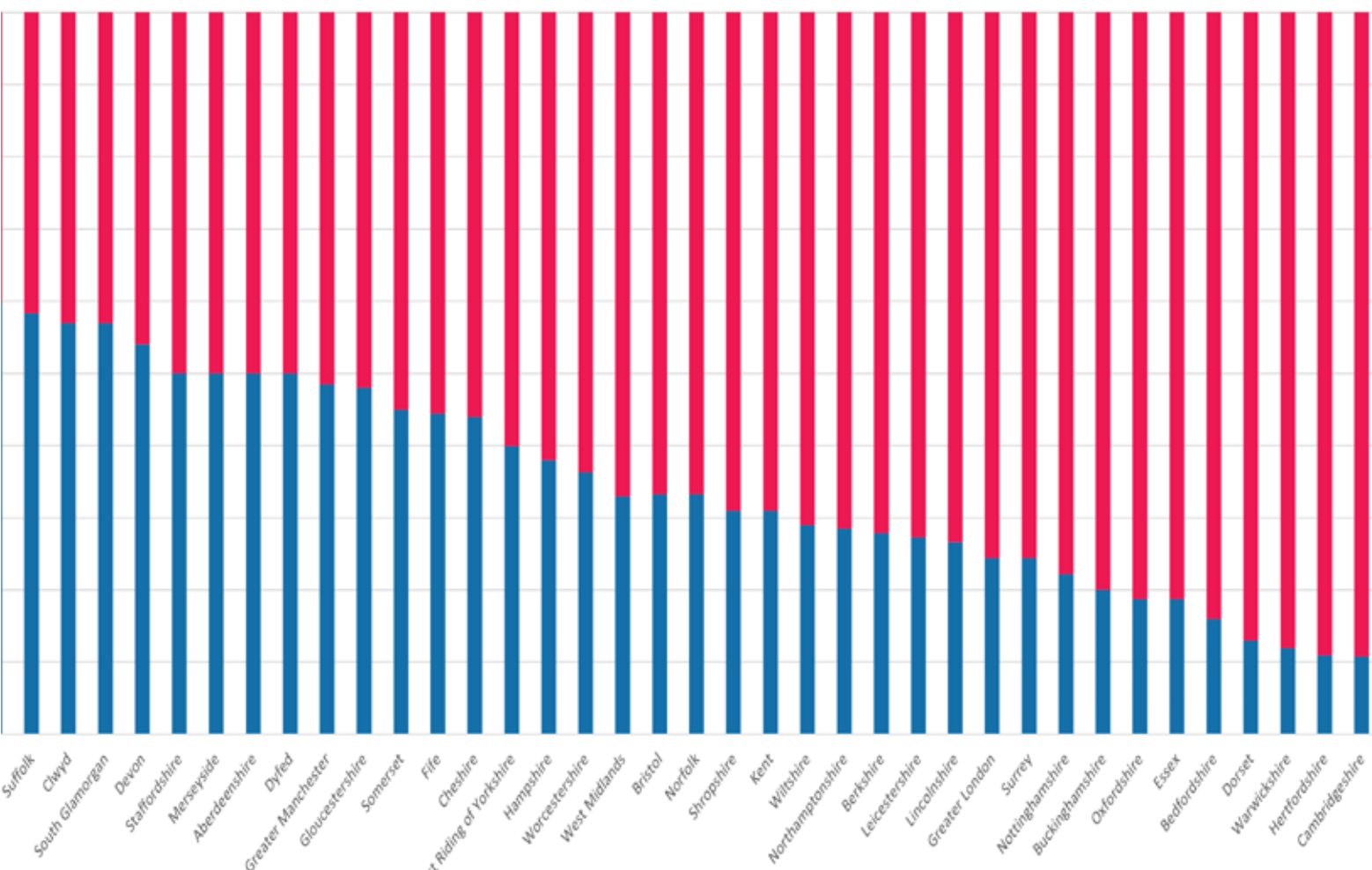


A new report by environmental charity Earthwatch Europe has found that up to 89% of water samples taken from UK rivers show poor ecological health. During the weekend of 7-10 June, thousands of people across the UK measured their local water quality as part of the Great UK WaterBlitz, collecting over 1,300 datasets. The results paint a bleak picture: across the UK, 75% of tests showed the rivers were in poor ecological health. In the

Thames and Anglia regions, this rises to 89%.

This report highlights significant regional variation in water quality. Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire had the worst water quality with 89% of data points showing unacceptable levels of nutrient pollution. Gwent and Northumberland had the least nutrient pollution, with both counties having 0% unacceptable data sets.

Participants in the Great



UK WaterBlitz, organised by environmental charity Earthwatch Europe, measured the levels of two polluting nutrients: nitrate and phosphate. Nitrates and phosphates are commonly present in domestic and industrial waste and sewage, as well as in the fertilisers that wash off farmland. High levels of nutrients cause excessive plant and algal growth, high levels of bacteria, and decreased oxygen levels in the water, killing plants and animals. The worse the nutrient pollution gets, the less able the river is to support aquatic life such as fish, insects and mammals like water voles.

Dr Sasha Woods, Director of Science and Policy at Earthwatch Europe said: "These results are truly disturbing – there are no parts of the UK unaffected by nutrient pollution. The picture around London and the Thames' river basin is particularly dire. Our rivers have been historically stressed by farming, and we're seeing this being made worse by inappropriate or limited sewage treatment. There is a pressing need for both improvements to wastewater treatment processes and reductions in agricultural pollution to reduce threats to vulnerable freshwater systems. The Government has committed to protect 30% of land for nature by 2030 – that will be meaningless if the rivers and streams running through the land, the arteries of life, are diseased."

Freshwater is essential for ecosystems and key to survival on our planet, but the new report clearly shows that the UK's rivers are in poor health. The overall results from the Great UK WaterBlitz, the largest-ever water quality testing campaign in the UK, mirrors some of the outcomes from a recent report by the Office of Environmental Protection (OEP), which found that 'most of England's water bodies are in an unsatisfactory state'. The report showed that the Government is not on track to

meet environmental objectives set under the Water Framework Directive, and highlights “Gaps in monitoring” as a key barrier to progress in meeting objectives.

Sasha continued, “This report would not have been possible without the support of people across the UK. The response to the Great UK WaterBlitz has been fantastic. As a nation, we clearly care deeply about the health of our rivers. This event has enabled people to better understand the health of their local rivers and catalysed grassroots action. We want to see more citizen-science testing and better use of this data by bodies such as the Environment Agency to help build a more positive future for our rivers. The next Government must commit to a national strategy for freshwater that includes all forms of pollution and is backed by a properly-resourced organisation that makes use of rich citizen science data.”

The Great UK WaterBlitz is

part of Earthwatch’s FreshWater Watch programme. FreshWater Watch trains communities and individuals year-round to test rivers and freshwater habitats for nutrient pollution.

Angling Trust and SportsHotels.com announce new partnership

The Angling Trust is pleased to announce a major new partnership with SportsHotels.com, an online accommodation booking platform with access to over one million hotels and other forms of accommodation in almost 200 countries.

As part of the agreement, SportsHotels.com will become the Official Accommodation Partner of the Angling Trust and will support the organisation with accommodation requirements.

Angling Trust members and supporters will also be offered

SPORTSHOTELS.COM



exclusive hotel deals and discounts as part of the partnership, whether that be for an upcoming Angling Trust event, a fishing trip, or personal sports holiday or trip.

SportsHotels.com provides a complete accommodation service for sports people. They work with professional and amateur sports teams, National Governing Bodies and Sports Associations across all sports and all levels to help streamline sports accommodation needs.

Their core service is to arrange

suitable hotel bookings, and their extensive hospitality experience of working with sports groups at hotels helps to ensure a stay that is both comfortable and hassle-free.

John Cheyne, Angling Trust's Head of Marketing, Membership and Communications said, "We are delighted to welcome SportsHotels.com as our Official Accommodation Partner and look forward to working with them to provide a service for anglers and the Trust for years to come.

"Whether you are looking to

book accommodation as a match team, a fishing group holiday, a family get away or just for single night booking for one, SportsHotels.com can offer you a great deal. We will be actively promoting SportsHotels.com to our members and supporters, so please take a look at their website, check out the accommodation on offer, and contact them to discuss your specific needs."

Stephen Carlin, SportsHotels.com CEO, said, 'We're thrilled to embark on this journey with the Angling Trust. As a specialist sports accommodation provider, we're aware that the travel requirements for anglers and angling teams can differ greatly from other sports organisations. This is where our best-in-class SportsDesks steps in, underpinned by the latest technology and backed by 24/7 support, we offer a bespoke, tailored experience from start to finish.

"There are many opportunities from this partnership, and we are glad to be supporting the Angling Trust with its efforts to protect fishing and water environments and develop the sport for future generations."

SNAP Charity Carp Match September 2024

The Support continues to flood in for the SNAP Charity Match in September. It's not only the tackle companies but also the anglers which are taking part, the volunteers, the people behind the scenes helping me organise the event, Suffolk water park and SNAP themselves. Events like this do not happen without the support of everyone. To see an idea starting to take shape and gather momentum is truly amazing. Only a few weeks to go

Thank you:

Suffolk Water Park

Alex Luscombe

Nash Tackle

Gardner Tackle

ESP Carpgear

Korda Developments

Rod Hutchinson

Halobaits

Carp Addiction

Baitmonkey

Elmstead Fishing Tackle Ltd

Essex County Angling

Phil Milsom

Speero Tackle

Atomic Tackle

Leadhead_official

Dean Cooper

SNAP Charity



Little Havens and Great Ormond Street Fish-in at Sandhurst Lake

Well what a great couple of days that was. Sandhurst Lake you didn't disappoint, such a beautiful lake. 15 of us attended for a 48 hr competition for the last few months we have been raising money for Little Havens and Great Ormond street. Yesterday we hit the grand total of £6500 !! What an achievement by everyone. Massive shout out to TCM Tackle and Craig Deeley for organising the event the raffle prizes and the BBQ On the fishing front Bazza was second out of the draw and managed his second choice of swim. Fishing the left hand island swim I found popular spot and fished two rods on it, as the fish hadn't long

spawned I guessed they would be hungry so 10k of Eclipse Baits Cherry Virus and 5 kilo of Chilli Maize went straight out, these had been soaked in Eclipse Hot Oil and a new liquid I hope Dave brings out. First 36 hrs bought plenty of shows and fizzing which would have been fish mopping up bait from previous anglers, roving a bag rod around to shows didn't work, I held firm on the baited spot and topped it up with 30 more spombs, and off to bed. This morning i was awoken by a ferocious take off the spot and after stripping some line and a plod about a a crack red bellied old mirror was in the net setting the scales around to 25lb 10oz. This was enough to land me the second-place trophy 15 anglers and five fish was hard going. Would like to thank everyone who's kindly donated, Tony and Craig for a great event and Dave Poxon and Kyle Poxon for keeping my freezer topped up with good quality bait.



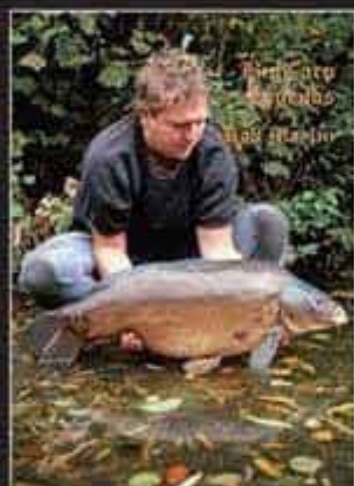
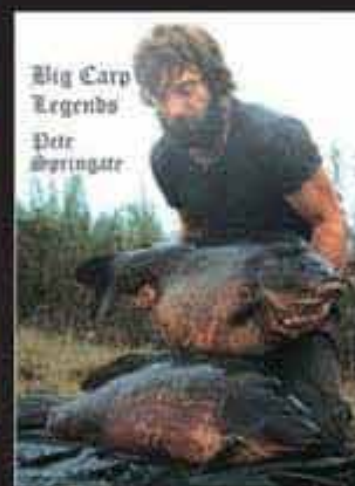
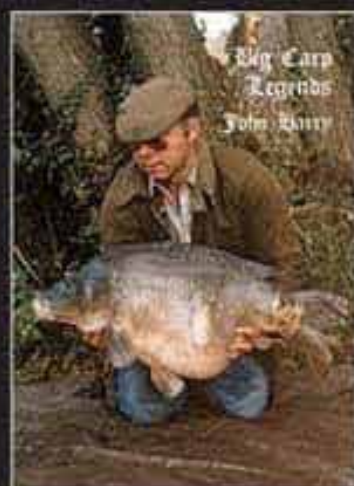
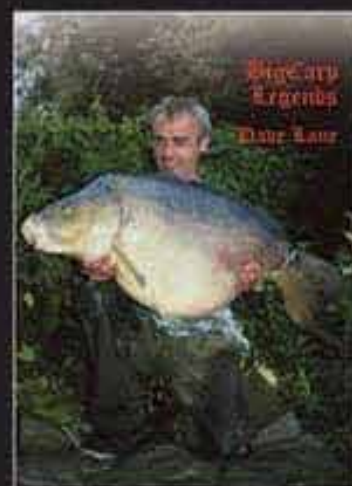
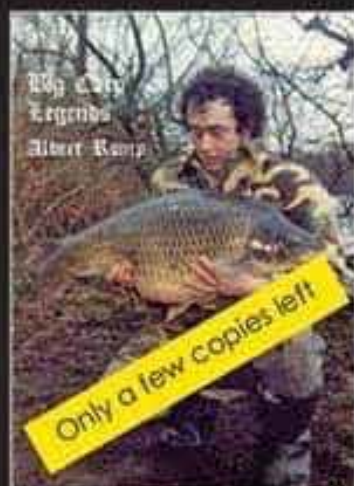
Carping-4Heroes 2025



Unlike people's livers who attend August 15-17 2025.
C4H, "We're back"!! Did anyone Full details will be announced in
mention August 2025? the fullness of time but until then,
That's right, for one final enjoy our varied announcement
hurrah the festivities of the most posts with pictures of events past
outrageous carping event is back, to get you in the mood.

BIG CARP LEGENDS SERIES

The anglers that shaped today's carp scene

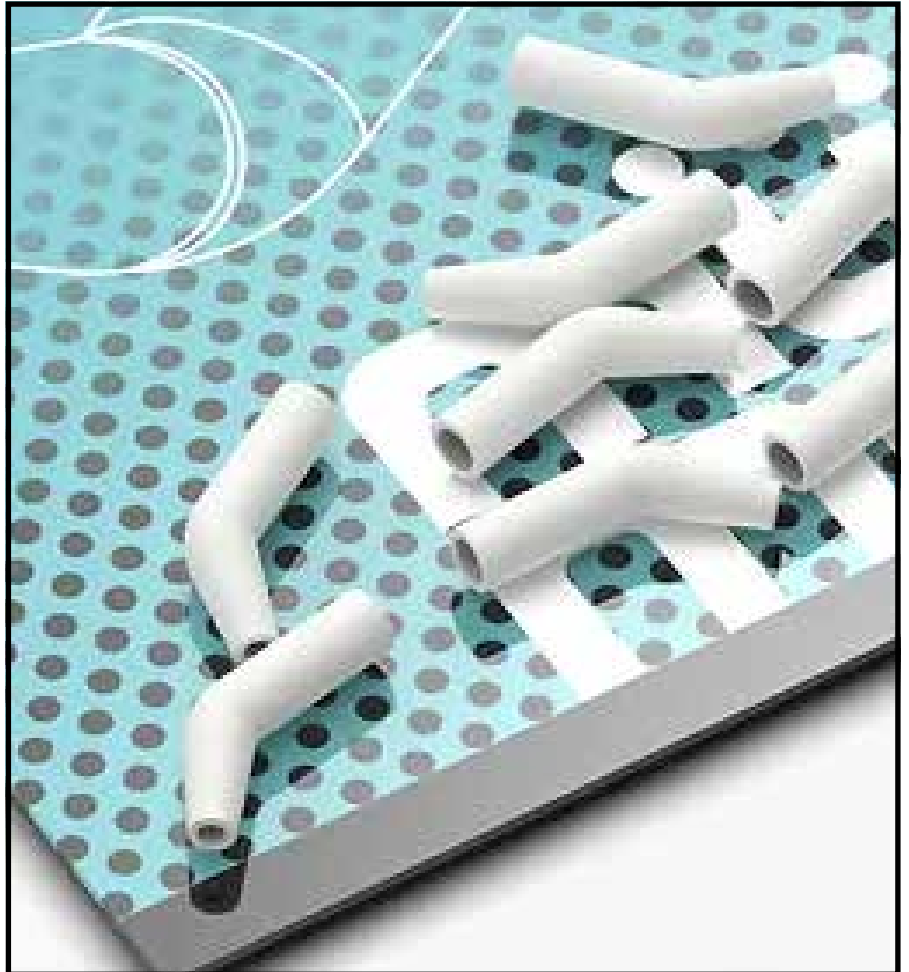


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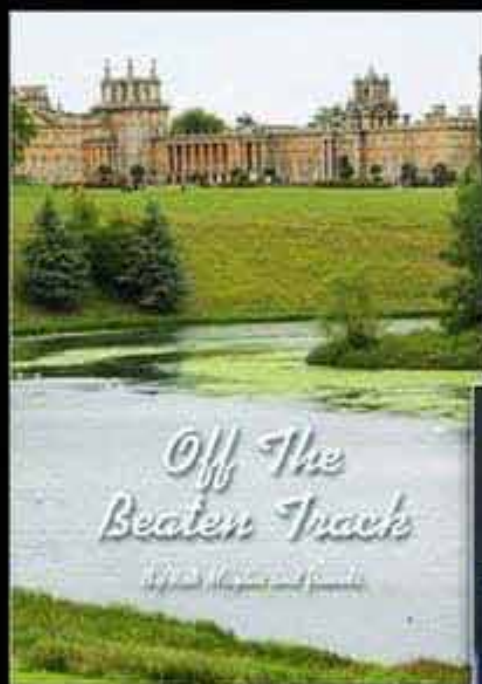


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OFF THE BEATEN TRACK SERIES

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ARISE SIR TONY



Tony Wickins smashed his PB within a couple of hours of casting out yesterday evening with one of the best carp in the UK! The Lord from manor carp fishery at an unbelievable 61lbs 2oz!



NEW PB FOR MARK

Mark Filby had a 3-day trip to Bluebell that saw him land 3 beauties with a new PB of 48lb. The first one was a lovely 31lb 2oz mirror. The second was the 48 and on the final day a nice little 23lb mirror to finish off the trip.

A new PB for John Flewin at 43lb 6oz whilst out filming for Trakker Products. A big ol' bunch of worms on top of a wafter over loads of chopped worm, 8mm, calamino pellets and crushed tigers..

Not sure I'll catch many better looking carp and especially not for cameras...

My season has been made.



WHACKER WANTED WORMS



DREAMS DO COME TRUE

Phillip Randall always thought a new UK PB mirror was a distant dream after having the Posh Sutton at 45lb almost 4yrs ago but that dream is now a reality with a fish called Hercules at 49lb 10oz.

I'm super happy and would like to say a massive thank you to Phil Kingsbury for the assistance with weighing and taking the lovely pics for me. Was a stunning fish in fabulous colours and the pics certainly do it justice.

ADAM'S FULL HOUSE



What a mega UK session Adam Lowbridge won't forget in a while. He managed to catch a teen, 20's, 30's, 40's a 58lb 10oz and a 62lb 8oz landing 15 in total.

All caught over PCF Ocean Amino.

BARRY BANKS BEAUTY



'Arriving at the lake after work on the Friday, the sun was shining but the north easterly wind was still cold. The session didn't start well at all, losing a couple on the Saturday morning then catching a couple of the more recent small stockys later that afternoon, I was feeling a bit sorry for myself.

The rain started that evening and didn't stop all night - When I woke at first light the rain was still coming down so I decided to roll over and treat myself to a lay in. At around 7am during the heaviest of the rain, the right-hand rod pulled up tight and pinged out of the clip. As I slowly led the fish back towards me, I was praying it was one of the old ones to make up for the bad luck the day before. Fortunately, it was a very old common known as 'Cut Tail'

looking immaculate at just under 30lb. Eventually, around mid-morning the rain stopped and things began to dry out. The Compac luggage was out the bivvy waiting to be put in the van when unexpectedly, the right-hand rod was away again. After a full minute of what was clearly a big fish trying to make the snag, I eventually turned it and led it back across the lake towards me. Around 50 yards out, I saw the distinctive dorsal pop out of the water and I had a pretty good idea I was attached to the lakes big common. As it came towards the net in the crystal-clear water, I could clearly see the bulk of the fish and without too much drama, she was laying in the folds of the net. I weighed her before help arrived and at 43lb 8oz, I drove home one very happy angler!'

CATCH REPORTS

RUNHAM'S SECOND CHANCE



41lb!! Check out this unit and a funny story behind this one. 3/4 weeks ago I was cut off by a clearly powerful big fish. To cut a long story short here it is. I got my rig back those wide gape long shanks dont half stay in.

THAMES COMMON COMPLETES SET

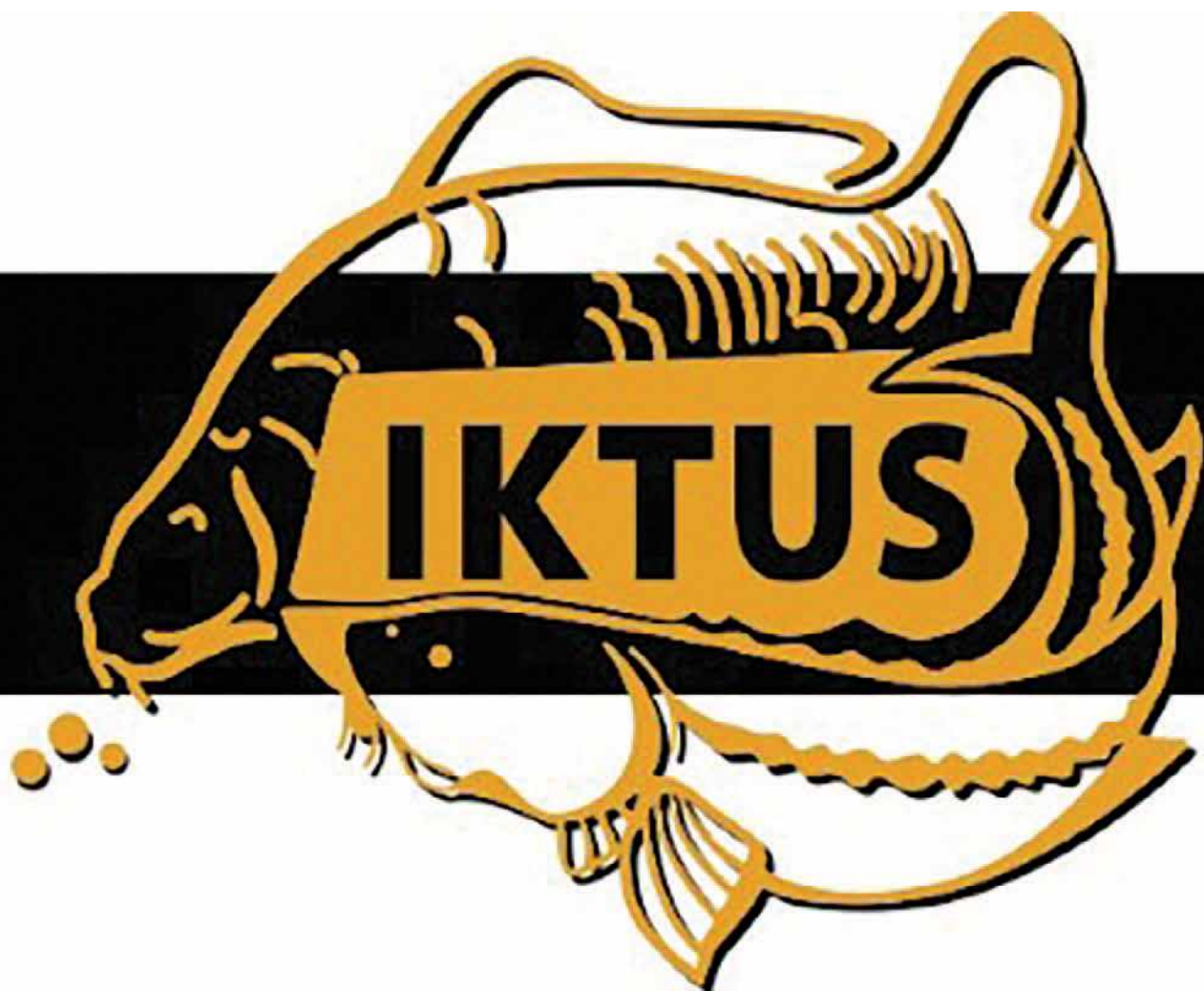


Graham Stevens needed a 30lb common to complete his River Thames set. The new season was kind to him and gave up this 31lb common.

MAKER'S MANOR RESULT



Tom Maker fished Manor Farm on the Linear complex and banked 14 fish from 14 bites including 5 thirties and 42lb.



FISHING RESORT



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CATCH REPORTS



**WORTH
THE
WAIT!!**

Ricky Knight had this to say about his recent capture. "Never in my life have i had to work this hard for a fish, EVER!

My god was it worth it !!"

A recent trip across the channel saw Darrell head to one of his favourite places - Lac d'Orient; with the huge expanse of water holding some breathtaking fish, it's easy to see why he keeps returning. This mammoth common of over 60lbs, is just one of a handful of fish that have been added to the album this time!!



**PECK'S
ORIENT
60**

**MANILLA
MUNCHING
MOONSCALE**



Big buzz on for Chris Wiley after he captured his main target on only his first night back on the venue this year! Huge beds of Manilla saw him have his trophy shot with the mighty 'Moon Scale' at ounces under 49lb.

ROBIN HOODWINKS A BEAUTY



An apple-sliced beauty for Rob
Inglf. Far from his initial targets, Robin was on his way back from France when the allure of the river was too much to pass up! With limited time at his disposal Robin opted for minimum bait, using only a handful of Monster Shrimp boilies, a Yellow Pop-Up fished over the top and the decision to stop on the river turned into a dream, with Robin cradling an incredible river linear. Sometimes it's just meant to be.

ATOMIC MIRROR

Atomic Tackle Field Tester Liam Ellis checks in with this incredible 41lb mirror that he had been targeting for over a year after his brother managed to catch her from a local club lake and he had to do the honours behind the glass.



IT'S A NUT-CRACKER

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!!



PERSISTANCE PAYS OFF



Big congratulations to Adam Paull on the capture of this 50lb 3oz common from Willen Lake, Milton Keynes. He told us: "It was a hot spring day and knowing the fish had just spawned I knew they would be hungry. I had fished this lake all year round knowing one bite could be anyone of 4 I was targeting. As I arrived, I found the spot I had been fishing most of the campaign. After attaching a Cell wafter to both Ronnie rigs and casting out and sat back for a couple of minutes to admire the venue. I introduced 10 Spombs and repeated this every 2 hours. Just after my wife and youngest went home I sat back to have a nap shortly after I had a few bleeps closely followed by a few more along with the bobbin dancing up and down shortly followed by a one toner. After 20 minutes of the fish just sitting on the bottom, she finally broke the surface and as soon as saw her shoulders my legs started shaking once she was in the net, I could see the wafter sitting there inside her mouth and just slumped back and phoned the wife to come back as I knew I had the fish of a life time."



URBAN MONSTER

Tony Hudson has checked in with this urban monster caught from central London's Burgess Park. This Burgess banger fell to a trap of red spicy fish boillie with matching sick mix.



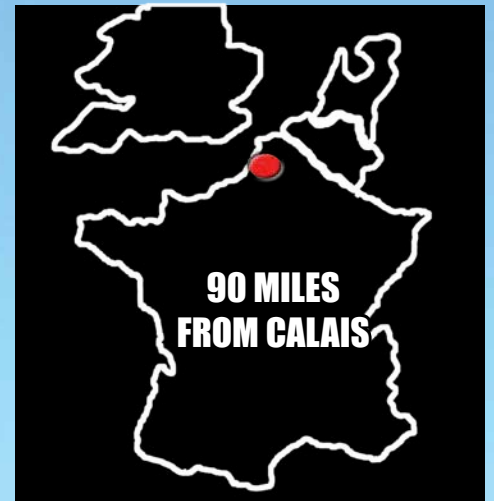
DAN'S ON A ROLL

Dan Taylor's been at it again banking a string of nice carp including these 2 forties.



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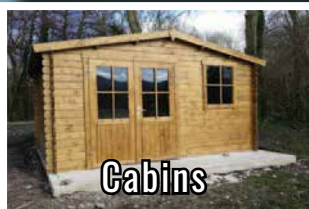
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'SHAW' IS WORKING FOR ALAN



Alan Shaw has had a great run of fish of late, culminating in the capture of a brand-new personal best.

Weighing in at 41lb, the PB-busting ghosty common succumbed to a combination of Bug and Secret 7 and was backed up by other nice fish to low thirties.



CONCRETE CLONKER



Commons of 51lb and ounces don't grow on trees but it seems this home-grown giant is one that's thriving in its concrete reservoir home in the heart of the city. @thatangleuk was the lucky captor and from what we can gather it was a moment shared with a group of like-minded anglers to make it a day to remember. @thatangleuk used our CreAmino with @secretsquirrelhookbaits to tempt this urban giant.

THE KING OF KINGFISHER



Congratulations to Kel Bowers who banked 'Nemo' the King of Bluebell's Kingfisher Lake at a staggering 51lb 1oz and the largest resident to date. "An absolute brute of a common that battered me from hooking him to landing him" Kel said "I had him at the net twice before being flat rodded on both occasions in the deep margins the 3rd time he hit the cord with a cry of joy and relief. I started off the session with 60 large spombs of ISO Fish boilies, hemp and maize all covered with ISO Fish Smart Liquid. Hookbait wise I used an 18 mm ISO Fish Cork Dust Waffer trimmed into the shape of a cube and tipped with a pink Quad Pop-Up critically balancing the rig.

IT'S A 'WALKLIN' THE PARK



To cut a long story short, the week was rather special for Darren Walklin as he ended up having 14 fish out – several 20s, two 30s, and topped off with one of Ashmead's royalty at 40lb 5oz."

Well after a 9 week break from fishing it's good to be back. 41lb 9oz of Northamptonshire's finest.



LIKE RIDING A BIKE

40 TOPS 4 FISH CATCH



Craig Hamp managed 4 carp on a recent trip to his syndicate with the biggest going over 40lb.

What a stunning 41lb carp from Coking Farm. I can't believe how beautiful this fish was. A Steamies tnt wafter fished over 1 kilo of tnt boilies and the new rapid response pellet was its downfall. This was my 5th 40lb carp this year from Coking Farm what a place. Just to let you know this booking was from a cancellation, can't thank the person who cancelled enough.

CANCELLATION SUCCESS



BOND - LICENCE TO CATCH



Dominic Bond looking absolutely chuffed to bits, with his recent capture of the biggest common currently residing in the UK!!

A session over the full moon phase, produced this monumental fish which weighed a colossal 64lb 14oz.

WASH OUT IT'S BLACKSPOT



After a midweek session was a wash out, Liam Gingerll returned the following weekend and banked a carp known as Blackspot at 44lb. That more than made up for it.



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GOULD'S GOLD



Bob Gould's been on fire lately banking a string of quality carp including one of 53lb 3oz - a new PB for Bob after 50 years of carp angling.

All carp were caught on Bob's a custom ABS mix.



TOMMY DE CLEENS UP



Big up to Tommy de Cleen who caught 4 during his latest 3-night session. His first was a carp called "Belly Patch" at 47lb 8oz, followed by "Pebo" at 35lb 2oz and another low thirty. On Sunday morning he continued with another 33lb common. All fish fell to white Cell Pop-Ups over a spread of Cell Shelf-Life in 18 and 14mm. Brilliant, Tommy.



BANGER FOR BIRCH

Lee Birch chalked up another one for the album with this chunky 46lb unit.



TEL'S URBAN SUCCESS

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, I lowered a hook bait amongst them and bingo!!



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

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



CONTACT DETAILS: 07882 083160

Creedencefishery@gmail.com

creedencefishery.com

We look forward to welcoming you to Creedence Fishery!

CATCH REPORTS

Andy Haseldine was over the moon with this 40lb 12oz mirror.

"It was a hairy fight on braid - it's taking a bit of getting used to as you feel every lunge and turn," said Andy

Specialized Hook Baits over Active Bait Solutions K2 and Fishon Tackle Shop stinking particle proving irresistible.

HAIRY 40



Congratulations to Elvis Craig Lowe on the capture of this magnificent 51lb mirror, a new personal best for angler and venue. Elvis used a Diamond White hookbait fished over crushed Essential IB Boilies which he placed just under some branches close in down the edge.

DIAMOND WHITE DELIGHT



FRIENDS REUNITED



Tony Gibson had an encounter with an old friend recently in the shape of this amazing 43lb 11oz mirror. Last year he managed to bank the same fish at a slightly higher weight of 45lb 2oz but a stunning example of the species none the less!!

LATE NIGHT REWARD



Corrrr 40lb plus of mega Roach Pit carp for Jason McEvoy Blake."I found them at 3am in the morning. Went to work, got back in the afternoon and gently placed the rigs and this was my reward!!

CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY



Davy Claus reported in after catching something very special. "I like to have an image in my head of a particular carp that sparks the fire of the proverbial flame. That image acts as a silent motivator and fills me with enthusiasm whilst I'm sitting on the couch at home tying up new rigs. Or when I'm driving to the other side of the country, with only a marker rod and a bucket of bait in the car.

However, as I've learned through experience, it's best to stay aware, and try to not let the goal of catching that one desired carp become all-important. When falling into that trap, being satisfied becomes impossible unless the goal is achieved. And as a consequence, you feel dissatisfied until that moment arrives.

It's a fine line between finding enjoyment and feeling mentally tormented in one way or another'.

**NEW SWIM
RESULT**

After turning up at his syndicate water, Wellington Country Park after work Matt Jones noticed there were other anglers already set up in an area he had in mind, but after a conversation with one of the lads he quickly had a change of mind and ended up in a swim he'd never fished before. After feeding the area with Cell and Hybrid boilies the action started that evening with his first carp, a mirror



weighing 35lb 8oz. The swim fell quiet for the rest of the evening and the following morning but then the action started. Throughout Saturday Matt ended up catching another 6 carp included 3 x 20's and 3 x 30's to 38lb 8oz a fish known as 'Lumpys Mate'. All went quiet again until Sunday morning when the biggest of the session made its appearance, a carp known as 'Shannon's' at a spawned-out weight of 46lb 6oz.



PECK BANKS CAREER BEST



An ancient and completely nude leather of 63lbs, with all the hallmark features, spiky dorsal, withered fins and character by the bucket load. I caught her in the middle of the afternoon amidst a ripping southwest wind and having lost my two previous takes the anxiety throughout the battle was intense. Waves continuously crashed into my small inflatable, and the spray coming over the top had me soaked to skin in seconds. I was alone and came pretty close to losing her at the death. She was beat, mouth out the water as I thrust out the net. However I was down wind, (a huge school boy error) and just as I tried to lift the mesh around her the wind had the inflatable moving away faster than the waves were bringing her to me. Half in, half out, the cord got stuck under her tiny pelvic fin, and I was literally dragging her along for a ride. If only I had a spare hand, I'd have reached for the engine. Honestly I don't know how but somehow she ended up inside, and it was only once I hauled her onboard that the enormity of the moment hit me. IMHO the best carp I have caught in over 30 years of trying.

THAT'S NO WHITING



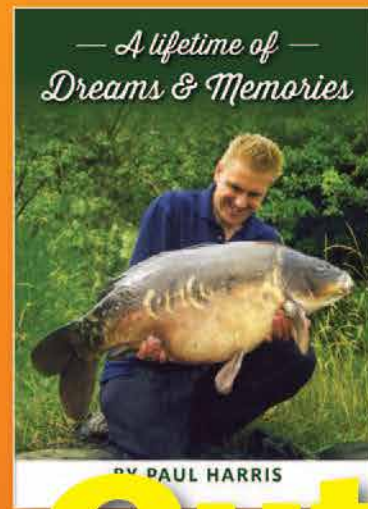
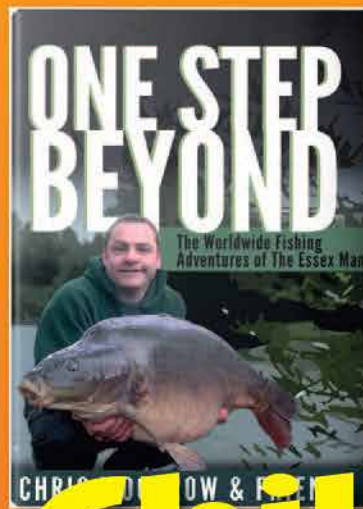
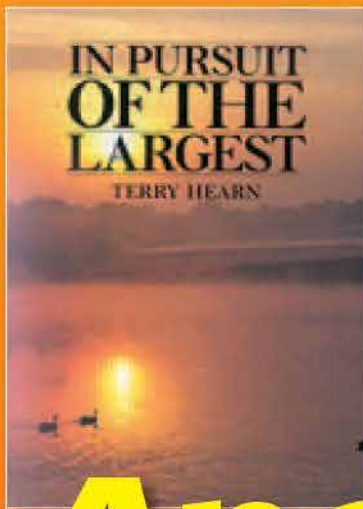
Shaney Whiting banked this unit of a common weighing 45lbs+ from Sandhurst Lake a couple of weeks back during the Medway Carp Cup, which he braced with another common.

BELTON'S BELTER

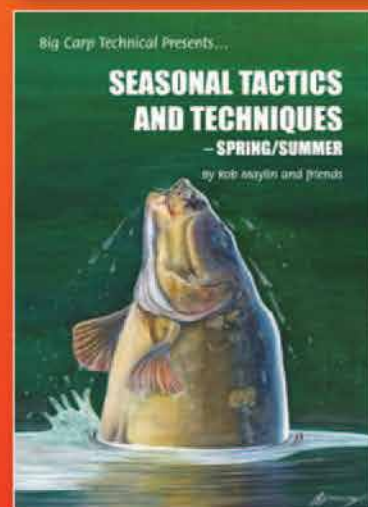
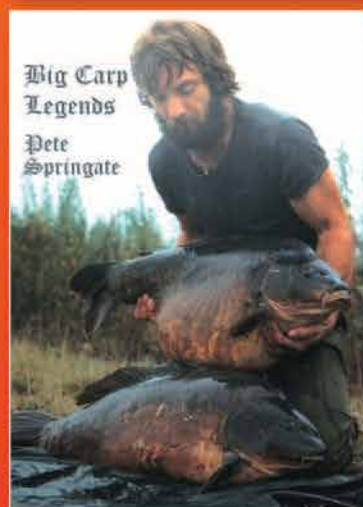
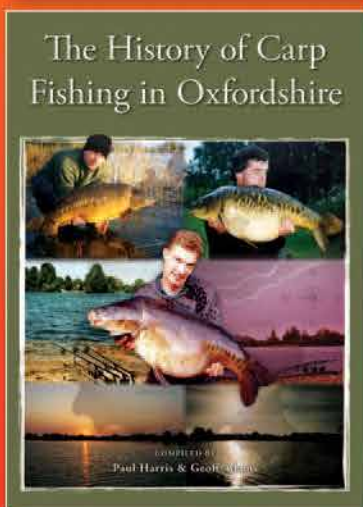
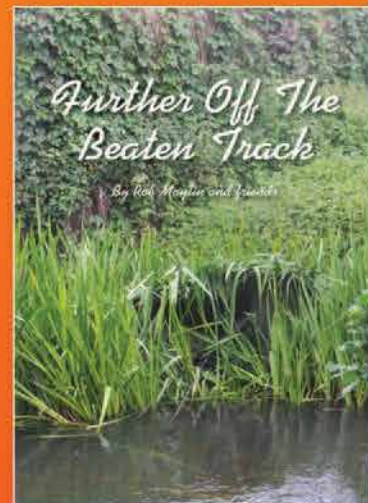
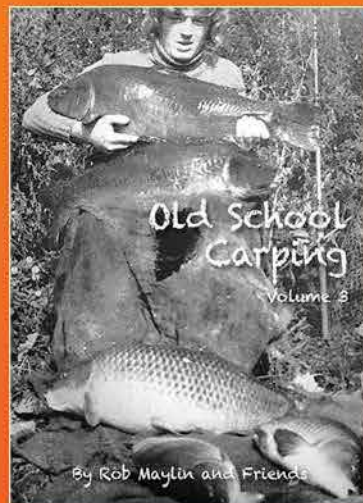
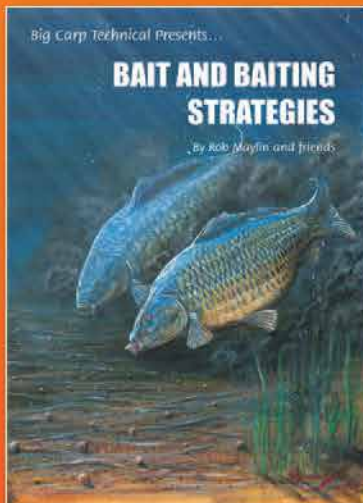


This amazing woodcarving of a mirror weighing in at 49lb 8oz was the latest capture for big carp hunter Darren Belton, but it wasn't without a bit of drama. After hooking the carp at range using an Essential Cell hookbait fished over around 5kg of 10mm ISO Fish boillies, Darren had to go swimming after the amazing mirror weeded him up. It was worth it in the end as you would agree.

Bag Yourself a Score

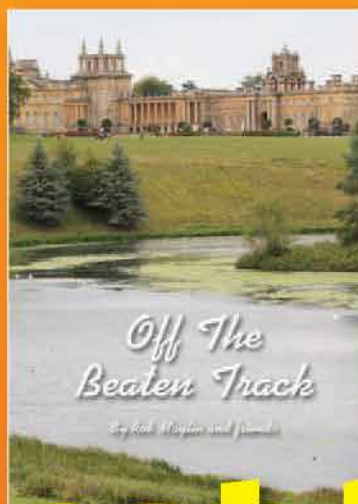
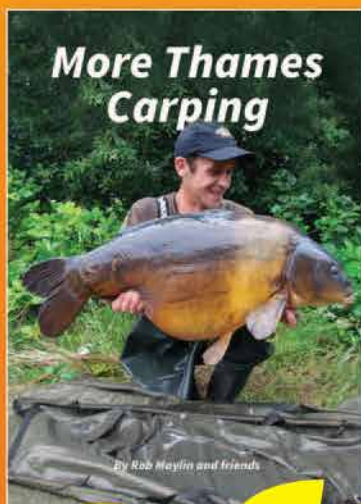


And Chill Out with

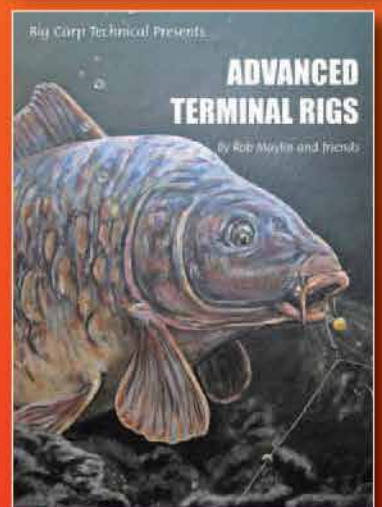
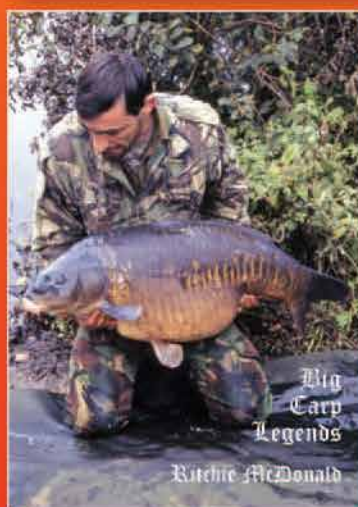
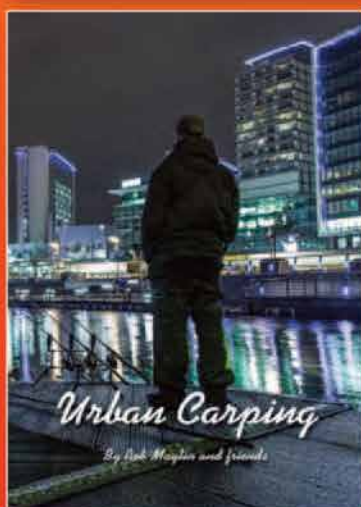
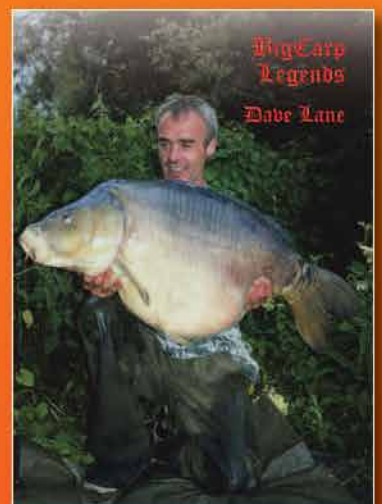
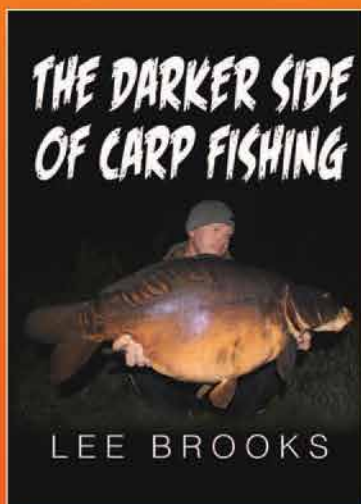


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ASHLEY GETS TANGOED

ASHLEY ALLEN



Arrived at the lake Tuesday night knowing it was going to get busy on bank holiday so I wanted to get myself into a good position. The first couple of nights I had to do in the swim that wasn't favoured, although I did manage to nick a bite. Within the first half hour of the rods being out. It was a case of getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning going to work throughout the day and arriving back at the lake at night. Managed to get myself into

my first choice swim Friday afternoon when I'd come back from work. 5 o'clock in the morning one of the rods peeled off with a 35lb common. Rod reset pictures done of the fish 10 o'clock in the morning and the same rod was away again this time what felt a much better fish from the minute I was in contact with it. After the battle the Fish Rolled over there net cord. my thoughts of it being a bigger one were confirmed. Archie's mate (first picture)



41lb on the nose. With the capture of a couple smaller fish I had a feeling that they had moved off me a little bit. I packed my kit down had a walk around the complex to see if I could find any fish. I couldn't find anything that I was happy setting up on so I went to an area of the lake where I thought that they would be seeing as I've been fishing for awhile now, I'd like to think I've got a pretty good understanding of it.

I was right. 3 o'clock in the morning that night I was away again into what felt like another decent fish unfortunately

it came off. Set my alarm for 5:30am in the morning when I knew that it would be late so I could get the rod banging position where I'm happy with it. And it paid off again! At 12 o'clock that day I had a slow indication on the alarm. After a short battle mid 30 common rolled over my net. I didn't think too much of it at the start as there's so many of them to go up. It wasn't until I had a good look in the landing there I realised just what I had caught. Tango. To say I was over the moon isn't understatement! Sessions like this make all the hard work effort worth it!





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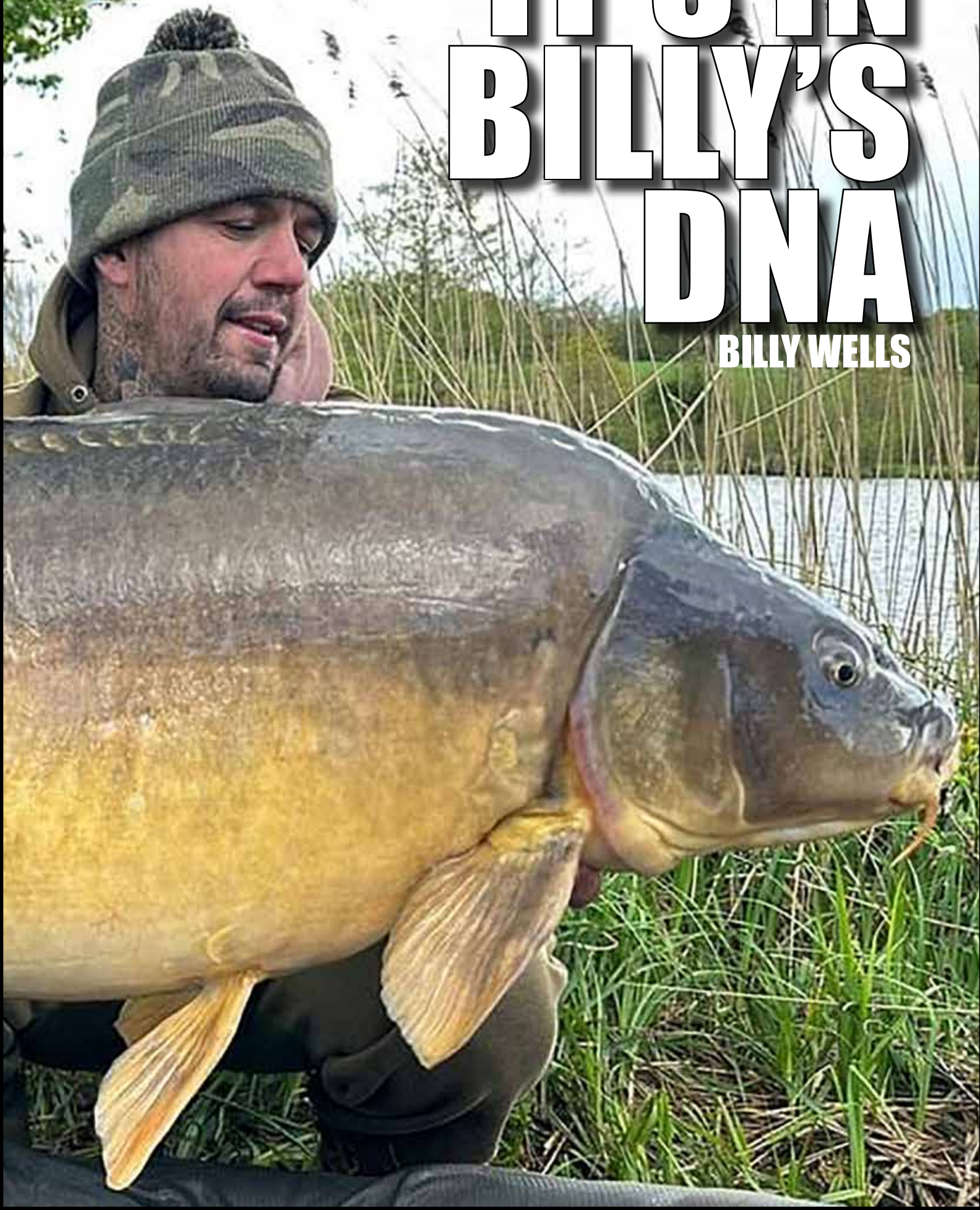
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IT'S IN BILLY'S DNA

BILLY WELLS



The Elphicks complex very rarely fails to deliver for DNA customers and Billy Wells' latest visit proved to be no exception. During a social weekend on Pullens Lake, Billy managed to get through to two of the lake's forties, tipping the scales at 46lb 14oz and 44lb 15oz, which were preceded by a couple of thirties to 35lb 2oz.

"I came out third of five in the draw which, to be honest, I was happy with, as I still had good swim choices available to me," said Billy. "Once I'd made my decision, I knew I'd be facing the wind all weekend, but I decided that could work in my favour. For the first 24 hours, I opted to fish the first 24 hours on PVA bags of Crayfish Mini



Mix pellets injected with Secret 7 Amino Smoke, with Wraysberry wafers as hookbaits. I wasn't sure how much bait had gone in before I arrived, so wanted to start off lightly. I placed two bags at the bottom of a marginal shelf just off the gravel, whilst the third rod was positioned further up the margin, as I knew we had two days of warmer weather turning up.

The first 24 hours were very quiet, but I wasn't concerned. My brother Jamie had landed three fish very tight to the island, which got me thinking. I had access to the very corner of the

island, so brought in one of the rods from the bottom of the shelf, tied up a fresh bag and cast tight to the corner. I was very happy with that and feeling confident. Two hours later, the rod was away and after a 15-minute battle the fish managed to slip the hook – gutted! Still not beaten and feeling confident, the rod was cast back on the spot tight to the island. Forty-five minutes later, the bite alarm was singing to me again and I was in contact with another Pullens carp. This turned out to be the smallest fish of the trip at 31lb 14oz, but a great way to get off the mark!





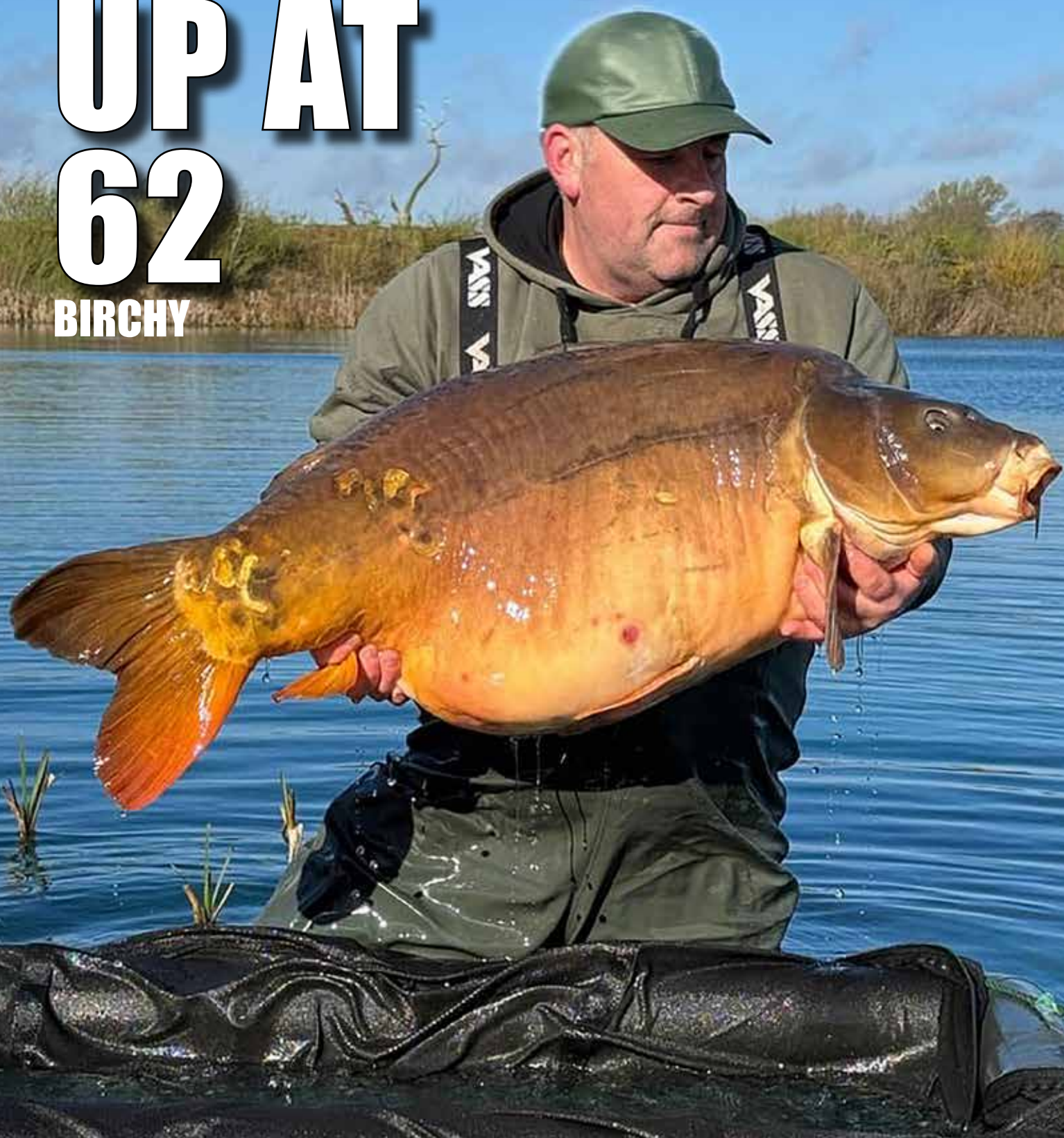
With a new bag tied and the rod back on the spot, just 20 minutes later it was away again with a 35lb 2oz mirror. On the final morning, I was up at first light to see if I could spot where the carp were hiding and, to my surprise, I could see a few bubbles within a few feet of my right-hand margin. I couldn't resist hand-placing a rig with a PB pop-up and a handful of Crayfish Maxi Mix pellets and Secret 7 crumb very quietly over the spot in an attempt to get another bite. I didn't even get time to set my

bobbins before the rod was away! After a 20-minute battle and wiping out my middle rod, I was rewarded with a 46lb 14oz mirror.

Still absolutely over the moon, I hand-placed the rig again and started to pack down in the 50mph winds – which wasn't fun! To my surprise, the same rod with a fresh PB pop-up on was screaming off again and I was rewarded with a chunky 44lb 15oz mirror. To say I was over the moon would be an understatement. What a weekend!"

PITCHERS PITCHES UP AT 62

BIRCHY



A huge well done to our man Birchy on the capture of Old Mill Lakes' "Pitchers", it's first capture in almost two years and what a colossal creature it is!

"I arrived at Old Mill and jumped straight into a swim I had managed a 39lb 8oz and 41lb fish from the previous week. I never really saw any fish for the first 24 hours, so the next night I stayed up most of the night watching. I heard and saw a few fish show in an unfancied peg, ironically named No

Carp Corner. Rather than move straight away, I fished a rod over that way in the evening and received a savage liner. I decided to up sticks and move to that area the next morning at first light.

As light broke, it was quite obvious the fish were really close; they looked to be eating naturals and were fizzing up all over. I was a bit shocked as, after a long hard winter, this was the first time I'd seen any feeding activity of this kind at all. I tried to get my rods as close to them as possible, but even



with one cast for each rod, they soon realised they were being fished for and pushed off into a peg opposite. I had concentrated my rods on a margin to my left, which is a no fishing bank which I could easily walk around and bait up by hand with little disturbance. I put around half a kilo of the new Monster Shrimp in 12mm around each rod on fluorocarbon D rigs.

I was stood scanning the water for signs of fish when I had one bleep on the R4; the line started to tighten, and on picking up the rod, I knew instantly

I was into a better fish. After a slow, dogged fight, I saw the fish boil close in on the margin and saw its distinctive black scale on its side and said to my mate, 'It's Pitchers,' a fish I dearly wanted to catch and one of the reasons I joined Old Mill Lake in the first place. I honestly didn't think I would catch it as it hadn't been on the bank in 2 years. On the scales, it went 62lb 8oz. To say I was overjoyed is an understatement. I moved later that day and managed another 10 fish in 24hrs, again on the new Monster Shrimp bait."





**RAISING MONEY
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**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

A man with a beard and short dark hair is smiling and looking to his left. He is holding a large, reddish-brown carp. A small frog is perched on the carp's back, near its dorsal fin. The background is a dense thicket of green foliage and trees.

BUG BIG'UN

BYRON BROWN

As far as family holidays go, Byron Brown couldn't have hoped for a much better one when he took the gang to Furzebray Carp Lakes in Devon, where he hauled big carp by night and enjoyed quality family time by day!

Fishing on the venue's Island Lake, Byron bagged a string of fish, despite not fishing during the day, including what he believes is the largest common in the lake at 38lb 8oz and the highlight of the trip, a massive new personal best of 46lb 12oz. Byron said: "I booked me, the misses and two young ones on to Furzebray's Island Lake in Devon for a holiday. Whilst the missus and kids slept in the lake-view cottage, I bivvied up and fished the evenings, nights and mornings, then reeled in for the day to go out on family days out to the beach and other places.

"With south-westerly winds blowing down my end of the lake, I was hopeful a few fish would be following it – and I wasn't wrong. There were points each evening when they would turn up in my swim and I would fish for a bite each time, using small Bug Corker dumbbell wafers tipped with trimmed-down yellow Bug Half Tones wafers in conjunction with small mesh bags of 12mm Bug boilies soaked in Calanus Hydro and dusted in Insect Meal.

"The first night and morning yielded two fish, mirrors of 20lb and 32lb, but then the weather eased and the fish moved off for a day or so. "Two nights later, the weather switched back on and the fish responded! Mirrors of 25lb and 34lb come along on the fourth night, before a 38lb mirror and then a 38lb 8oz common, which I believe is the biggest

common in the lake, on night five.

“Come the sixth night, the fish didn’t seem to be in front of me in the way they were on the previous nights and the temperature had dropped a little too, so I looked for another spot in slightly deeper water. I found a lovely silty strip at nine wraps and popped a mesh bag of six 12mm Bug freebies again coated in Calanus Hydro and Insect Meal on the new spot. An hour and a half later, the middle rod pulled up tight followed by a 20-minute battle. She popped up three or four

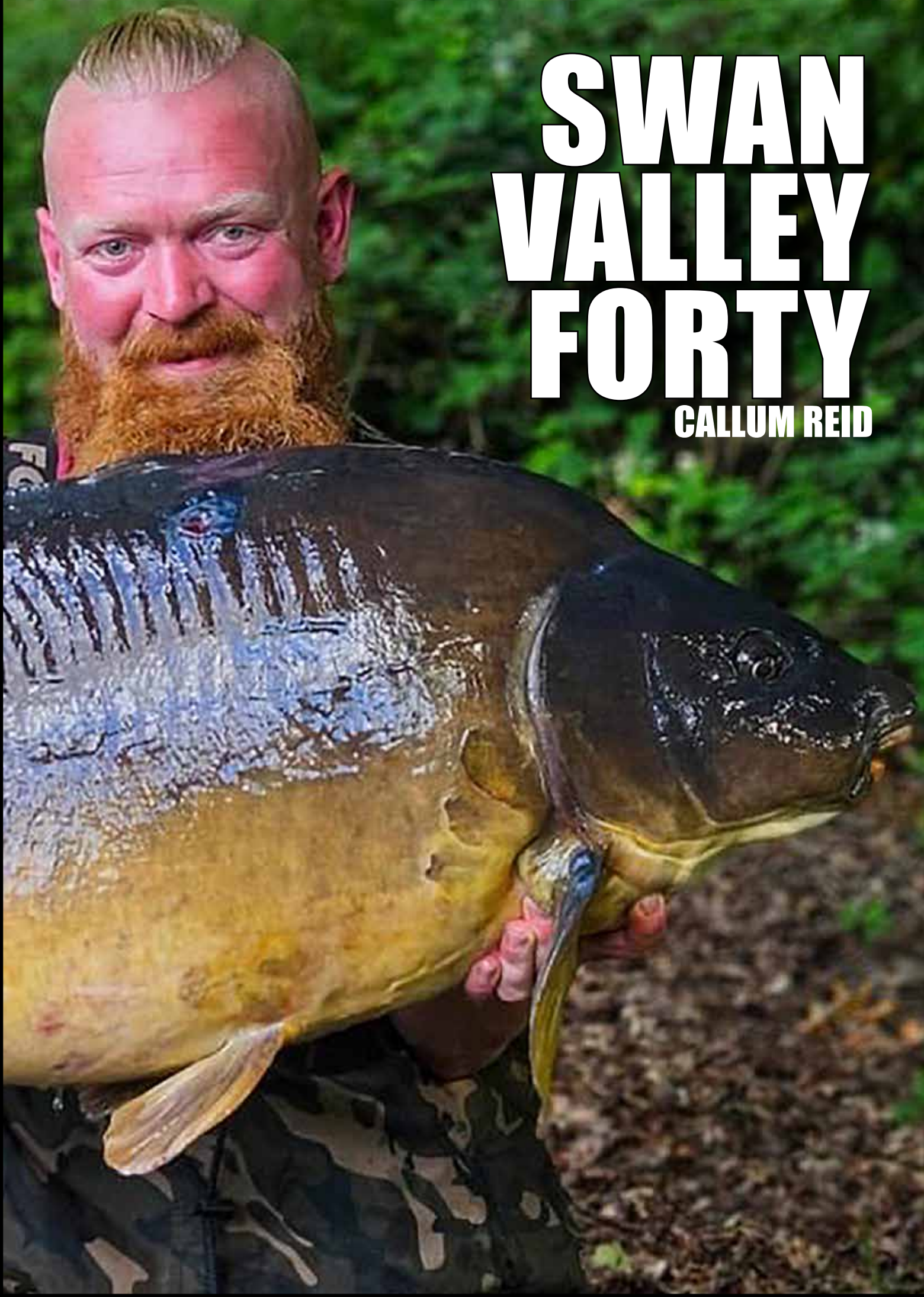
times and then flat-rodded me each time, before finally sliding over the net cord. Unfortunately, at this point, my youngest had been put to bed, but I still got to share the moment with the misses, who took majority of the pics, and the eldest lad. The needle stopped on 46lb 12oz, which was a new PB for me. It’s not very often you have 46-pounder, then get up the following day and go to the beach! “This is my third season using The Bug and it just keeps on producing for me wherever I take it.”





SWAN VALLEY FORTY

CALLUM REID



I arrived at 7 o'clock on Sunday morning after the long 250-mile trip. I stopped at the Old Mill cafe for a full English to refuel, then got to work!

After walking the venue for four hours, I settled on a swim called Big Fish. The night passed uneventfully, so I loaded the gear on to the barrow at 7am the next morning. After a lap or two, I found a large group of fish on the surface in

peg 30. I wasted no time getting some BetaStim Floaters out and after a while the fish grew in confidence, so I flicked the rod out. Shortly after, one slurped in the hookbait, but sadly I lost it in the weed, and not five minutes later I was in again, unfortunately ending in the same result!

The fish moved off after this, so it was time to have a walk again. After three

or four laps of only seeing the odd fish and not really having a plan, I stumbled upon a group of fish in peg 15 and there were a few good ones amongst them. I wasted no time running round, grabbing the barrow and getting in the swim, but the fish soon did the off!

Time was ticking by, so I needed to start thinking about setting up for the night. I opted for peg 17, as there were fish cruising around in the main body of

the lake and in the corners to my left and right, so I thought this gave me the best intersection point. I started to lead about when I noticed a group of fish move in. I put some floaters out on them and the odd fish started to take. After about an hour, a really big fish appeared in the zone and beelined for my Amino Smoke-infused Bug Corker pop-up and slurped it straight down! I was in again! This time, after a long battle amongst multiple



weedbeds, a massive mirror appeared on the surface. My knees were trembling as the fish went on one last run before, I finally slipped the net under a huge mirror. I burst in to tears and then called Kayla and the gang back home to share my news in the hope they could calm me down. I then rang Scott to get a bailiff to come and assist. It was confirmed as proper old Swan Valley carp named Tyson at 44lb 8oz.

Carp fishing is not a pastime to me; it is my life and I love it. This was my first-ever forty and the buzz and emotion I felt was out of this world.

Big shout out to my fiancée Michaela for putting up with me when I'm on a mission and always supporting me. Sally, you're a legend; thank you for pushing me to reach my goals. Lastly, big ups to DNA Baits for the support and the top-class bait.



The background image is a photograph of a calm lake. In the upper half, a dense line of green trees borders the water. The water's surface is still, reflecting the sky and the surrounding foliage. In the lower foreground, a large cluster of lily pads with bright yellow-green leaves floats on the water. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

LOVELL'S LITTLE LAKE

PETER HUDSON

Lovell's carp lakes near Tallington in South Lincolnshire is set of gravel pits, the old lake was dug way back in the 40's to support the gravel extraction mining industry that north Cambridgeshire and south Lincolnshire areas of the country is famous for which is good news for us carp anglers as there is so much water to go at, Lovell's has two lakes one called the old lake and one called the new lake. I will go through a little campaign I did on the new lake back in 2020-2021.

The new lake was dug out back in the 90's, it's much deeper than the old lake with depths down to 27 feet in certain places so perfect for the winter, with the margins going down to eleven feet in the margins it was the perfect place to do some margin fishing a tactic I love to use and has caught me many a carp over the years. Although the lake record was at the time 28lb it didn't put me off, purely down to the fact it's a tricky venue so that means one thing in my book, more experience and will



add more than just a couple of fish to the numbers, fishing in deep water is not for everyone but it certainly is worth a go and I would recommend everyone does it at some point in their career so why not give it a go you might have a surprise or two....

Although I knew of a couple of fish in there I didn't have much to go on which again was a big draw to me, another draw was just how beautiful the lake looks at the right time of year, like any campaign it has to make a good memory, so I started in July of 2020 the height of summer and the unsettled days of covid, I headed down to pegs 16-17 an area a fair deep water, the wind was blowing in there and the carp were showing so the obvious place to start. After a quick lead around I found a nice soft patch of silt around ten yards out with gravel being everywhere else I decided to place two rods on this area just trying to be different from the normal day ticket carping scene. Placing two blowback rigs out, one rig was made out of 10 inches of Korda n-trap soft in 20lb, Nash Twister size 6, small piece of Nash Diffusion Camo shrink tube to make the hook flip, all placed on a lead clip set up on a Nash leader, again being different I made sure that the lead clip was running, with a Nash bait Scopex Squid cultured hook bait placed on the hair, the other rig was the same although was made out 25lb Armour Link from Nash, again being different from just another coated hook link being cast out. Over the spot I put a kilo of 15mm Scopex Squid boilies with around a kilo of hempseed and a tin of corn which at the time was my go to baiting tactic. After a few short hours the left hand rod was soon away only to find a bream was attached to the other end, although it meant the bait was work and the n-trap soft rig was working perfectly, sadly though that was the only bite I had, a few weeks later I returned in the

first week of august the same conditions were happening so again I headed to pegs 16-17, the same rigs and tactic were soon being used and the kettle was going just how I like it with the odd carp showing surely it wouldn't be long before a bite..... how wrong was I, all bloody day it took, come half six I decided on a re cast for at least one rod, I choose to recast the left hand rod but this time silently to the left a little more, as I was feeling the lead down it went down with a firmer thud, perfect I thought. As I started to slacken the line off It kept getting tight after 30 seconds of this I decided to strike and I was in to hard fight machine.

Taking 20 yards of line I knew it was no bream it was action stations for my first carp, after a hard fight to which the carp decided to get me stuck in the reeds several times how fun I thought, it was soon in the net, a lovely common carp was looking back at me and the rig was slap bang in the bottom lip happy days, she was soon being held up and going 23lb 3oz it was well worth it, to make even more special a father and son were walking by and the kid was shocked by how big the fish was, took me back to when I was a kid for a little while, after slipping back that common it went completely dead, nothing showed but I couldn't care, the following day I had another bite resulting in another carp going 8lb. They were the first and last carp I had that year I kept blanking and try as you might I couldn't by another bite.

So with 2021 well underway and me being busy with both work and family life I would return to the new lake around June time, with the spawning well and truly out of the way I made use of the 48 hours I had spare. I headed around the lake a few times before spotting a small group of carp close in the margins near some reeds happy days I thought. I headed into peg



14 which gave me just enough distance not to scare them by giving me cover, a very quick lead around told me it was around 8 feet deep another kilo of Scopex Squid, hemp and corn was placed down the margin, as the hours rolled by and my arms getting slowly burnt from the sun I was frankly bored out of my mind, around 1pm I had a run from the margin spot producing a lovely 12lb mirror, a fresh blowback rig, hook bait and a handful of freebies was soon in place... a few more peaceful hours rolled around by with the odd angler coming over for a chat I was to see my Nash siren go from zero to one hundred in the space of a second, with the line screaming off the reel and me hitting only what can be described as a freight train I wondered what I had actually hooked into, never have had a carp be so powerful



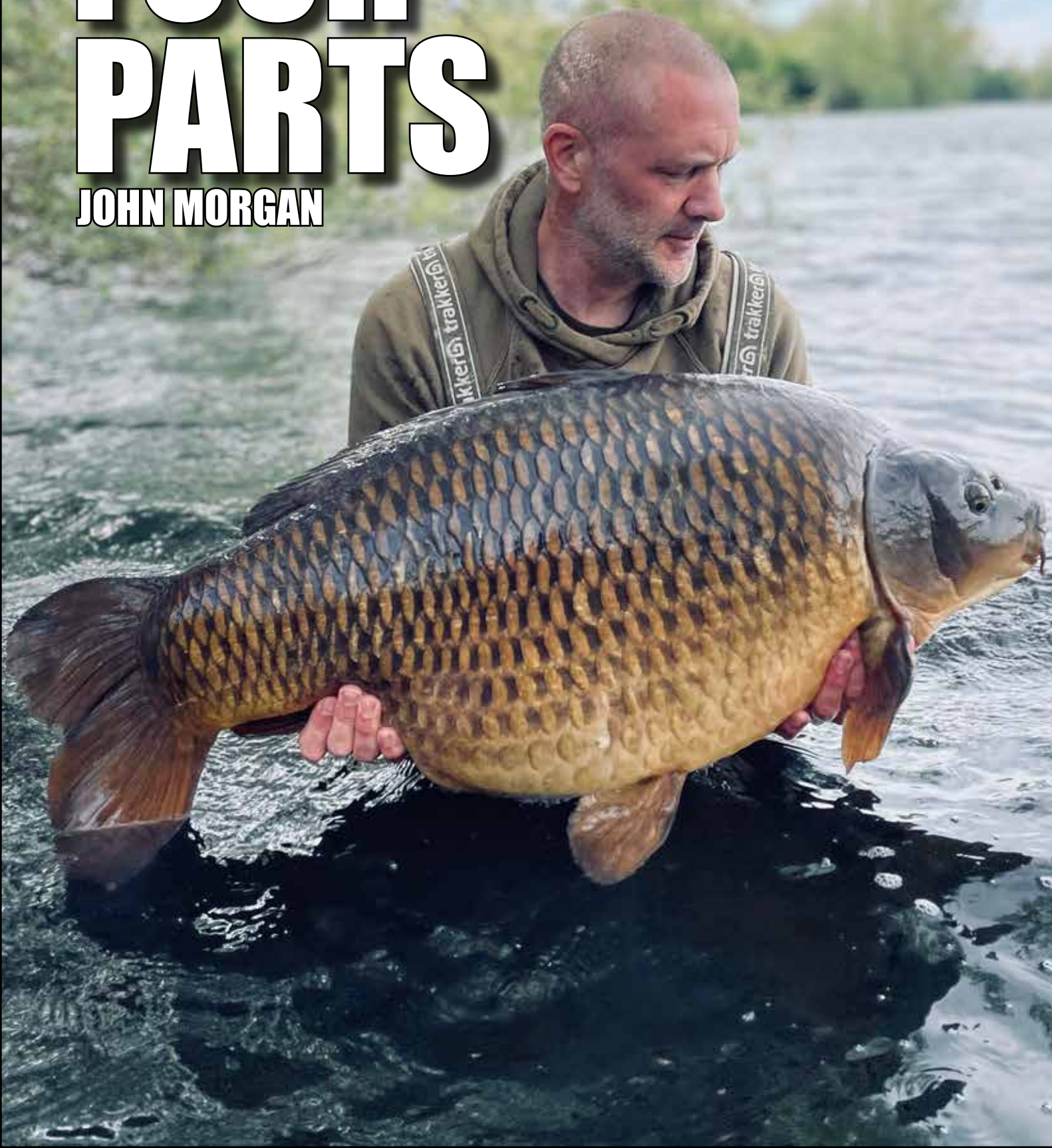
but this fish just didn't want to give up, banging its head every chance it had, darting into the reeds either side of the swim, then speeding off to the deep water of the middle it would be a hard 30 minute fight, every time I got it up the marginal shelf it would power back off, I managed to finally get it in the net to be greeted with a power house common carp, I first thought it was recaptured but later found out it hadn't been caught for over ten years.

Going 24lb 3oz it was the biggest fish I had from the venue and was ever going to have, in the coming weeks I did a few more sessions and caught some lovely commons anywhere from 12lb to 15lb, all caught no less than ten feet off the bank, I've lost count of the amount of carp I've caught in the margins and yet hardly everyone does it and features heavily in my angling, come the end of august 2021 my time was up I felt I needed to go elsewhere but what an experience it was I had caught two 20lb commons from a water that doesn't get fished as much as it should, I had learnt an awful lot about fishing in deep water, main thing was adding the depth of water to your cast that way as you feel the lead down you will be in the correct area. So go out there find a venue that you don't know very well especially if it is a deep venue you will learn a awful lot that can be put into other areas of your angling.

GOT A STORY TO TELL? A SUCCESSFUL SESSION, A TARGET ACHIEVED OR A SEASON COMING TOGETHER. SEND IT TO ROB@BIGCARPMAGAZINE.CO.UK INCLUDE AS MANY PHOTOS AS POSSIBLE INCLUDING CAPTURES, THE VENUE, BAIT AND RIG USED.

SPRING IN FOUR PARTS

JOHN MORGAN



Spring of 2024, or should I say an extension of Winter 2023. Possibly the longest and wettest Winter in living memory. Torrents of water liberally soaking the Country for month after month. People were dismantling there COVID build beer shacks in their gardens and re using the wood to knock up hastily built Arks to survive the deluges. The sky's finally started to dry up a touch at the beginning of April 2024 and daytime temperatures started to feel like Spring was springing with anglers seen out in t-shirts for the first time in months.

My thoughts at this time of year move from my normal late Winter / early Spring sessions at The Carp Society's famous Horseshoe Lake to my main Syndicate water 'Farriers' another of The Carp Society's amazing waters. Home of some of the biggest and best

looking commons in the land.

Being a self-employed Pond Builder, Work at this time of year for me is really starting to pick up. So often when I really want to get out on the bank more, I am in fact getting inundated with work and will be more often found in the bottom of a dirty pond rather than sitting next to one with my rods out. With this in mind, my only option for angling was one night per week, mostly arriving at the lake after a midweek work day and working Saturdays and Sundays to make up for any lost time. My first trip to Farriers was Monday 15th April. I was hurtling down the motorway after several morning jobs and aiming to arrive at the Lake early afternoon. I already had several areas in mind that I fancied setting up in.

Now this may seem strange as the old adage is location, location, location



and normally a good stroll around a lake before setting up is a must. But having fished a few Springs on Farriers I had noticed a pattern emerge as to where to target the fish at this time of year. They will often show themselves all over the lake, but by paying attention to recent catch reports I can select areas that the Carp are getting caught from and areas they actually seem happy to pick a bait. I have a theory that some areas, even though they appear heavily populated with fish, are actually very hard to get bites from due to the abundance of the natural food larders that the fish can feed on. This makes it much harder to get a pick up from a 'man-made bait' as it were. But other areas of the lake will produce bites much more readily due to the lack of naturals and the fish

seem much happier to eat our free offerings as a result.

I pulled into the carpark and immediately saw a few pegs free in one of the areas I fancied targeting on the Car Park Bank. Within no time at all I had seen fish in an area I know the fish to patrol which is not too far from one of the pegs I had my eye on. It was enough to go on and I felt no further exploration was required. With only one other angler on that bank I set up a few pegs away to give us both some room. There was no point in going straight in next door and ruining it for both of us. A few quick casts with a bare lead at a comfortable range revealed there to be virtually no weed present at this end of the lake. This may explain the lack of naturals compared to the weedier areas

and the fish's seeming willingness to pick up hook baits more readily in this area. I decided to split my rods to the left and right of my swim and fish slack lines to be as discrete as possible. The less idea the fish had I was angling for them, the better ! Six spombs of Handcraft Baits finest Tricknut boilie with a healthy addition of corn over each spot followed by a very simple Hinge Rig with a bright Yellow Sting Pop Up and I was angling.

Before long the rain was back and hammering down on my bivvy roof as I looked out to see if I could spot any further fish activity. I was also getting the odd bleep from my Delkim's from the wind and hail that was now accompanying the rain. Ah Spring



2024 ! I noticed my left hand alarm bleeping away and thought to myself "bloody rain" then looked at my right hand alarm which was strangely silent. As the penny slowly began to drop I popped my wellies on (most the pegs at Farriers were flooded at the time and required wellies just to cast from) and rushed to my rods. The tip of the left hand rod was starting to bend round and as I lifted the rod it was clear after only several hours of my Spring campaign, I was in. A short and pretty uneventful fight from the Carp and it was safely in the waiting landing net. I could see it was a decent fish, I removed the hook and left it secured while I very quickly sorted out the camera and weigh scales. She swung the needle on the Reubens round to a healthy 41lb dead - what a start. After a few on the bank and returner photos and I was soon flicking the rod back out over the spot and topping the area back up with more of Handcrafts finest.

Going into the night I had seen several very slight indications that there were still a few fish in the area. So it was no surprise that a much more positive indication on the same rod had me

scrabbling to get into my wellies again and fumbling for my head torch in the wee small hours. A solid run letting me know another Farriers Fish had slipped up. Again, a short fight with the fish just plodding around had me thinking it may well be another decent carp. Slipping it into the net and shinning the head torch onto her I could see this was at least the same size as my first fish. Weighing in at 44lb 4oz it gave me a brace of English Forty pound commons in my first two bites.

I sorted myself out, re baited, re-cast and put the kettle on to take it all in and wait for the adrenaline to subside so sleep could become a realistic option. Nothing else occurred in the night and to be honest I felt the chance of another bite, especially on my left hand rod was very slim. Several other anglers had now moved into the area around me as mine were the only bites on the lake within the last 24 hours.

I was due off at midday and with an hour and a half to spare my right hand





rod gave a few bleeps. I immediately slipped the wellies on once again and walked down to stand by my rods just as the bobbin on that rod picked up and the tip started to bend round. Unbelievably I was in again. The fish kitted left and right through my swim hugging the bottom throughout most of the fight. When I finally managed to get her head up I immediately saw I'd hooked a Mirror, and she looked a

good one at that ! Farriers is known as the Home of the Commons, so any mirror is to be truly cherished from this Lake. I was unsure at first which fish it was but after sending a few photos around it turned out I'd caught non other than the Lakes second biggest mirror known as "Apple Slice" at what I believe is her best ever weight of 37lb 8oz. What a session, first of The Spring resulting in three bites, two forties and

the lake's second biggest mirror and all in less than 24hrs. Several hours later and I was back at work, but already planning my next session.

Exactly one week later and after a few quick jobs in the morning I once again arrived at the Lake around midday. Obviously I still fancied the same area of the lake even though it had fished relatively quiet since my visit. I stood and watched the water for what was no more than five minutes before I saw my first signs of carp still in the general area. They were a touch more to my

left than before on a patrol route I know they love at this time of year, so I opted for a Peg to the left of last weeks. Once again six spombs were sent out over each rod after a quick lead about to make sure there was no weed present.

A quiet afternoon turned into a quiet evening and into a silent night. It seemed the fish had moved out of the area not long after I had set up. But I was still confident they would arrive around mid-morning as they so often do at this time of year. I sat and watched the water from first light, drinking tea



and exchanging messages with friends when two fish showed at the very right hand line of the patrol route. Fingers crossed they were heading my way.

Within the hour I saw a fish stick his head out right over one of my rods and quickly sent the text message out... "seen one !!" Not more than 20 minutes later and the same rod was away. A decent scrap unbelievably had me sliding the net under another Farriers mirror, two on the bounce is quite a rare occurrence. She weighed in at little over 32lb to make me a very

happy angler. After the weighing, photos and returning her safely into her home I got the rod straight back out to see if I could get a quick reaction off any fish that maybe left feeding. Time was already slipping away and I had to start packing up to be off the lake by midday at the latest. With most of my gear ready to go the recast rod burst into life again. The wellies were already on so I was on the rods in a flash. Unfortunately this time it wasn't to be and I suffered a hook pull with the fish halfway in. These things happen in



carp fishing and another two bites in a limited amount of time was a great result in my book.

The following week was a little different. I managed to clear my diary for the entire Monday by working the entire Saturday. This meant I could arrive at the lake at first light and have a go at hooking an early morning Carp in what was becoming an obvious feeding pattern. The fish seemed most happy to feed around mid-morning, more precisely between 10 & 11am.

I had a good look round and found a large proportion of the stock at the far end of the Lake, away from the carpark bank. The only problem was there were already a few anglers set up in the best looking areas. I didn't fancy squeezing somewhere in and potentially ruining it for them and myself. Too many lines and too much disturbance wasn't a good recipe for a quick bite. I opted for an area which gave me some free water in front and to my left with just the effervescent Ethan Thomas to my right who very kindly popped the kettle on and broke out the biscuits in no time at all.

Although several fish showed in the

area, nothing came of my early morning attempt. Around midday I was starting to think about where I would set up camp for the night to await tomorrow mornings feeding spell. I was looking for signs when I saw a very carpy head pop out above the waves right in the centre of the lake. This was shortly followed by several more and before long my kit was loaded onto my barrow and I was off back towards my old stomping ground of the carpark bank, as from what I could see, the fish seemed to be heading in that direction.

I stood and watched from several areas and chatted to a few friends on the way and the general consensus was some of the fish had definitely moved around lunchtime from the far end but were mostly to the right hand side off the carpark bank. With this in mind I opted for a Peg known known as 'Righthand Willow' which was in the area I hoped the fish would end up. The usual procedure followed, a few flicks around with a bare lead followed by a few spoms over each chosen area and I was settled in. After Another quiet night I was starting to question my decision.

I learnt that two carp had been caught down the far end the previous evening, had I moved too quickly ? Had the fish returned to where they had started already? I was seeing nothing and as time ticked on the blank seemed ever more likely. The only thing on my side was the bite time window between 10 & 11am was still to come. It was all or nothing.

At 10.20 it was everything, totally out of the blue my right hand bobbin pulled up tight and the clutch started a slow but steady tick like the timings on a watch. I lifted into what felt like a fish which had somehow found a weed bed. I slowly walked backwards to try to get

things moving and the fish responded in kind by kiting to my left. I steadily made progress playing the fish until its head popped up above the waves no more than 20 yards out, followed by a huge set of shoulders and a rather large body. I knew straight away it was a decent one and felt every knock and shake of its head until I safely engulfed it into the waiting landing net.

I summoned help from the next peg in the shape of the ever helpful, all round nice guy and DJ extraordinaire Gavin Carter. Who started to say very strange things to me whilst weighting the fish. "Just under 48lb mate"

"What is?"



"The fish mate, it's just under 48lb" he repeated....

"Your joking?"

"Here, you have a look"

"Well that will be a PB common for me then," I said.

We settled on a weight of 47lb 12oz as the needle was bouncing a touch. I'm not so bothered about the odd ounce here and there, it's the catching of the fish I love. You just get lucky sometimes and hook a fish of your dreams. It turned out to be a carp known as John Doe, one of Farriers real Original A Team. I was chuffed to bits. With no time left it was a quick pack up once again and a smile all the way home.

My fourth trip involved mileage, a lot of mileage. By now work was manic and even fitting in a single night was next to impossible. Juggling four kids, a wife, two dogs and being self-employed is work enough. Trying to add carp fishing into the mix is problematic. Although I have to say my wife has ever been understanding of my passion and a great support. A drive to Heathrow from the Midlands where I live, to collect some fish started my day off. A journey back to the midlands which

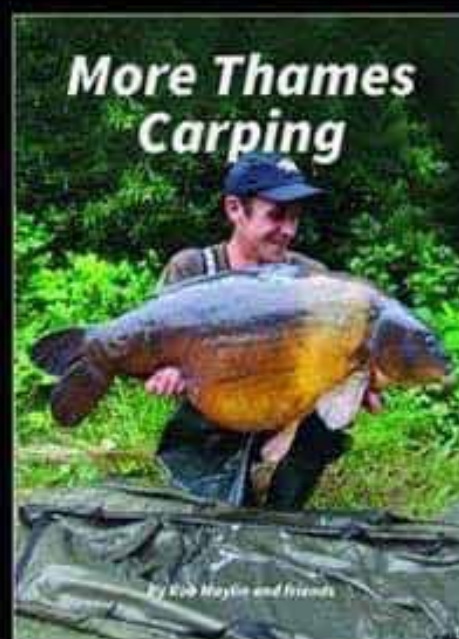
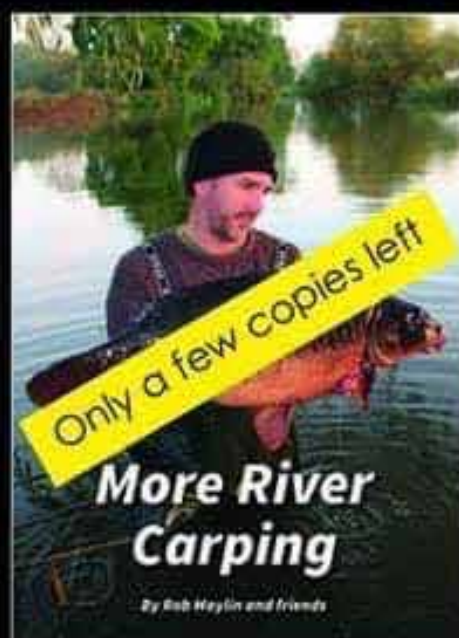
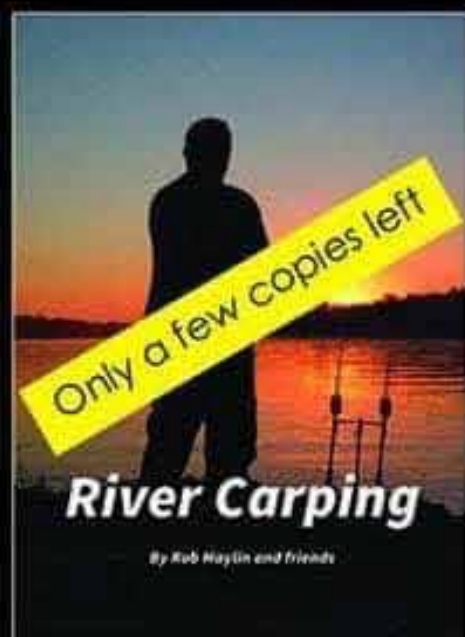
then involved drops off in The Black Country and surrounding areas. Add in a few smaller work jobs before popping home to unload all my work related stuff and then re load the van with all my fishing gear. And finally the drive to The Cotswolds to the lake.

I arrived gone six thirty in the evening, after a long day, tired and to be honest, just wanting to get my rods out and switch off for a bit. I put the effort in and did a lap of the lake looking for signs. I chatted to a few friends on my way round and although I had seen a few in the middle portion of the lake I plonked myself back on the car park bank. The light was quickly starting to fade and I was quite frankly, too knackered to barrow all my gear anywhere. Plus what the hell, I'd caught on my last three trips from this bank, so I was in with a chance. A nice blank and a good night's sleep was my reward for my lack of effort I suppose. But looking back, trying to fish effectively after a very long and tiring day at work is not really 'the one'. I have great respect for the guys and girls out there whose only chance to get out and do what we love is this type of angling week in and week out. ■



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



Another Oak Lake cracker - 26lb



23lb Ghostie



28lb 8oz



23lb 10oz very nice carp



Nice mid-double



32lb 8oz



18lb 10oz

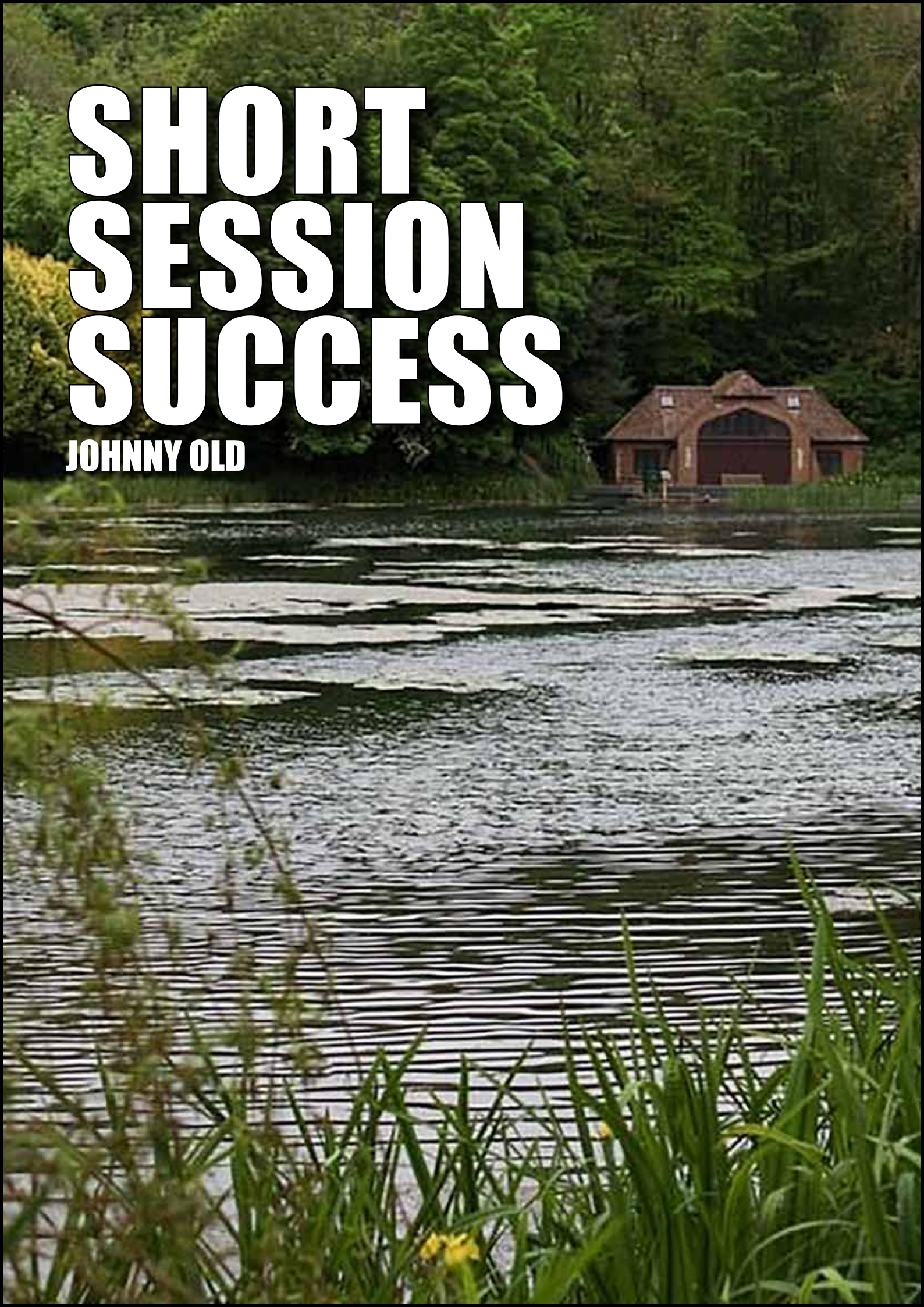
Nice leathery one



Out again- early 30s

SHORT SESSION SUCCESS

JOHNNY OLD



Arriving after work, I found loads of fish in the pads sunning themselves. I decided to fish an area of deeper water for the night, knowing that they would be moving out the pads into this area and not wanting to spook them. Unfortunately, I lost a small one early evening, but had another chance in the early hours of the morning. After a very tricky battle which involved me putting the rod down several times to free weed all jammed in the tip ring, I landed one of the lakes best carp - A fish called 'Stew Pot' at 40lb 4oz.

I had also baited the dam end of the lake that evening hoping fish would end up there the next morning. After seeing out bite time in the swim I was in, I moved to the other baited spot which had fish all over it. I flicked out a few baits then cast my rig into the cloud of silt. It didn't take long before I had one in the net. This time a lovely common going 29lb 14oz.

My ever-faithful spinner rig on a naked Heli Lead arrangement did the job. This combined with a Cell white wafter and a few kg of cell boilies did the bites'.





HYDRO HAULING

LEE 'SMILEY' BAKER





If Lee 'Smiley' Baker's previous sessions on his syndicate water have been about quality, his most recent was most certainly about quantity! Lee found the fish in feeding mood, getting through at least two 10-litre buckets of bait on his way to a 20-fish haul, which included a trio of 30-pounders.

Speaking about his latest session, Lee said: "After a slow walk round, I decided on setting up in the swim I had fished the previous week. Two 10-litre buckets of my usual mix of Secret 7 and SLK boilies in S7 Liquid Food coated in

Krill and Insect Meal, plus a mixture of pellets coated in a blend of Hydro Spod Syrups, were deposited on a silty spot at 88 yards.

"The night was quiet, but at 6.30am I had my first take, yielding a nice 24lb mirror, followed by two more twenties to 23lb. I didn't bother to recast as I had a few things to do around the lake, so it was late afternoon before I could top up with another bucket and get the rods back out. No sooner had I put the bobbin on than the middle rod was away with a nice scraper thirty to 30lb 4oz.

“That was it until the following morning when all hell broke loose at 7.30am! After six fish in 90 minutes, my swim had been turned upside-down. With all the fish weighed and photographed, it was time for coffee. I’d been joined by the bailiff and when the kettle was boiling a rod burst into life. After having my fill that morning, I asked him he wanted it and he duly obliged, landing a nice 26lb 8oz linear, which really made his day.

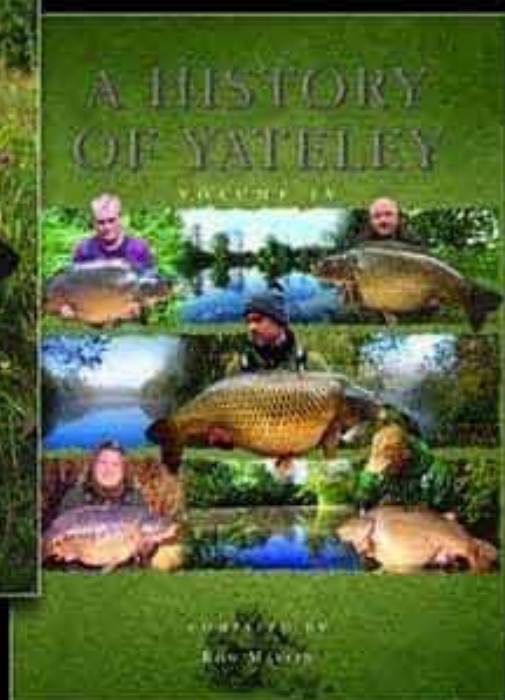
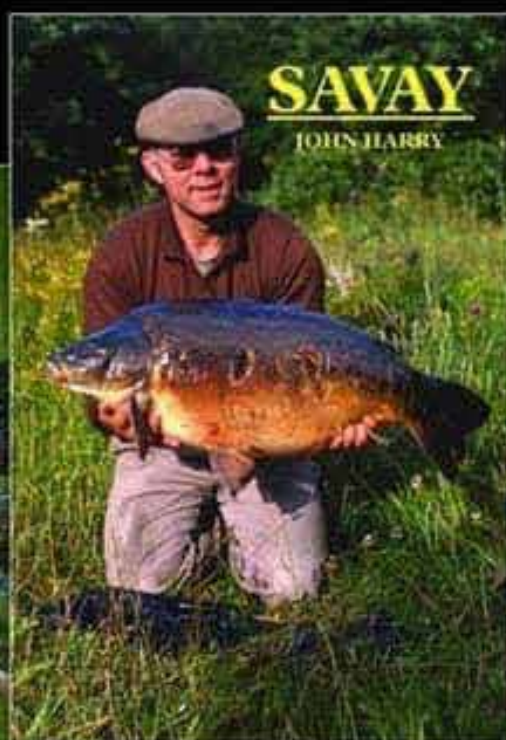
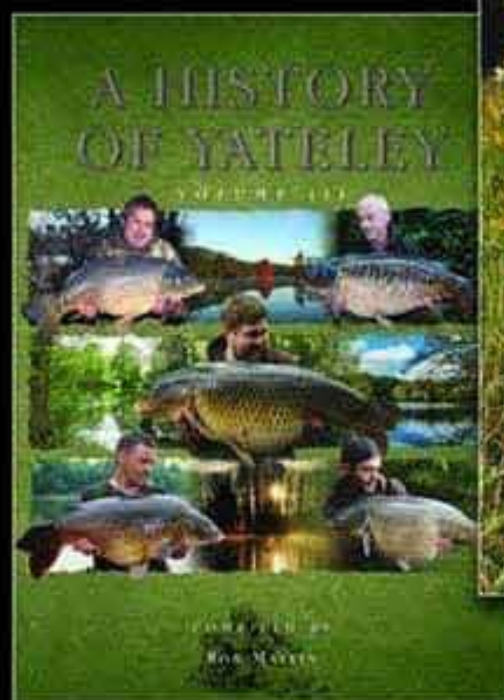
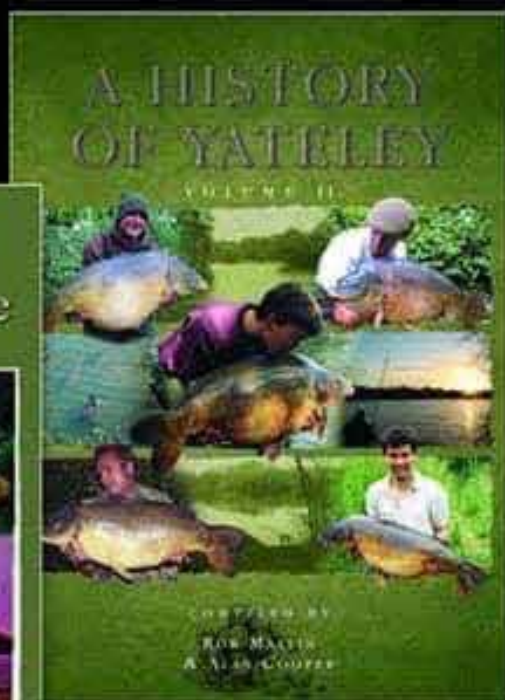
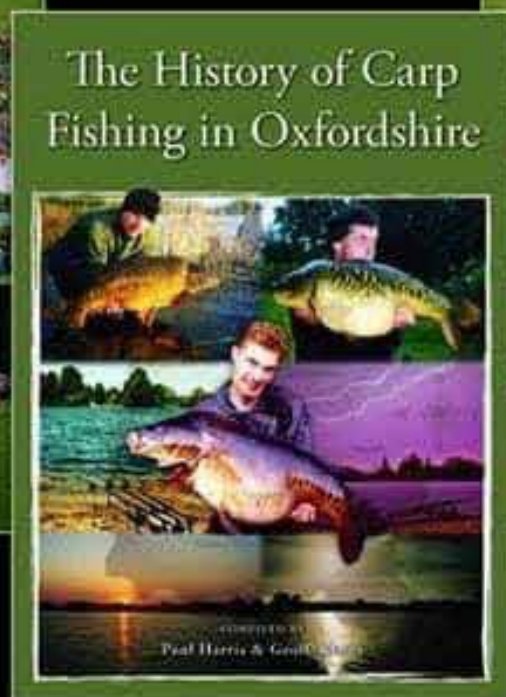
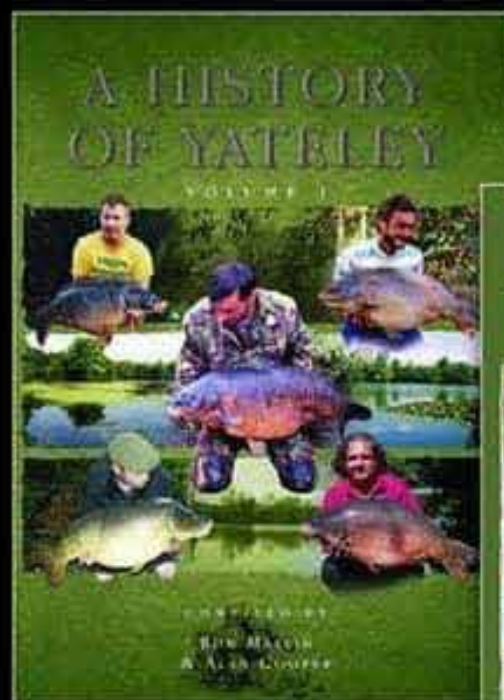
“The same as the day before, a few odd jobs were taken care of and then another bucket of mix deposited. I was up at first light expecting something, but the lake was eerily quiet. By 8.30am, I thought my chance had gone, but I was wrong, as 10 minutes later I was without a rod in the water! Over the next hour I landed another six fish, including another two thirties, completing an incredible 20-fish haul.”







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AUGUST ASSAULT

LUKE STEVENSON

August has always been my favourite month in the carp calendar. Through the years I've definitely noticed a transition in their behaviour and those big'uns seem well catchable towards the back end of summer. I think that 'big autumn feed up' is all a bit of a myth these days and personally, I've found that feed up to now happen in August. Whether that's been caused by climate change, angling pressure, closed seasons or a combination of a few factors, August is a month I like to give my all to, and I'm not shy to give them some bait at this time of year.

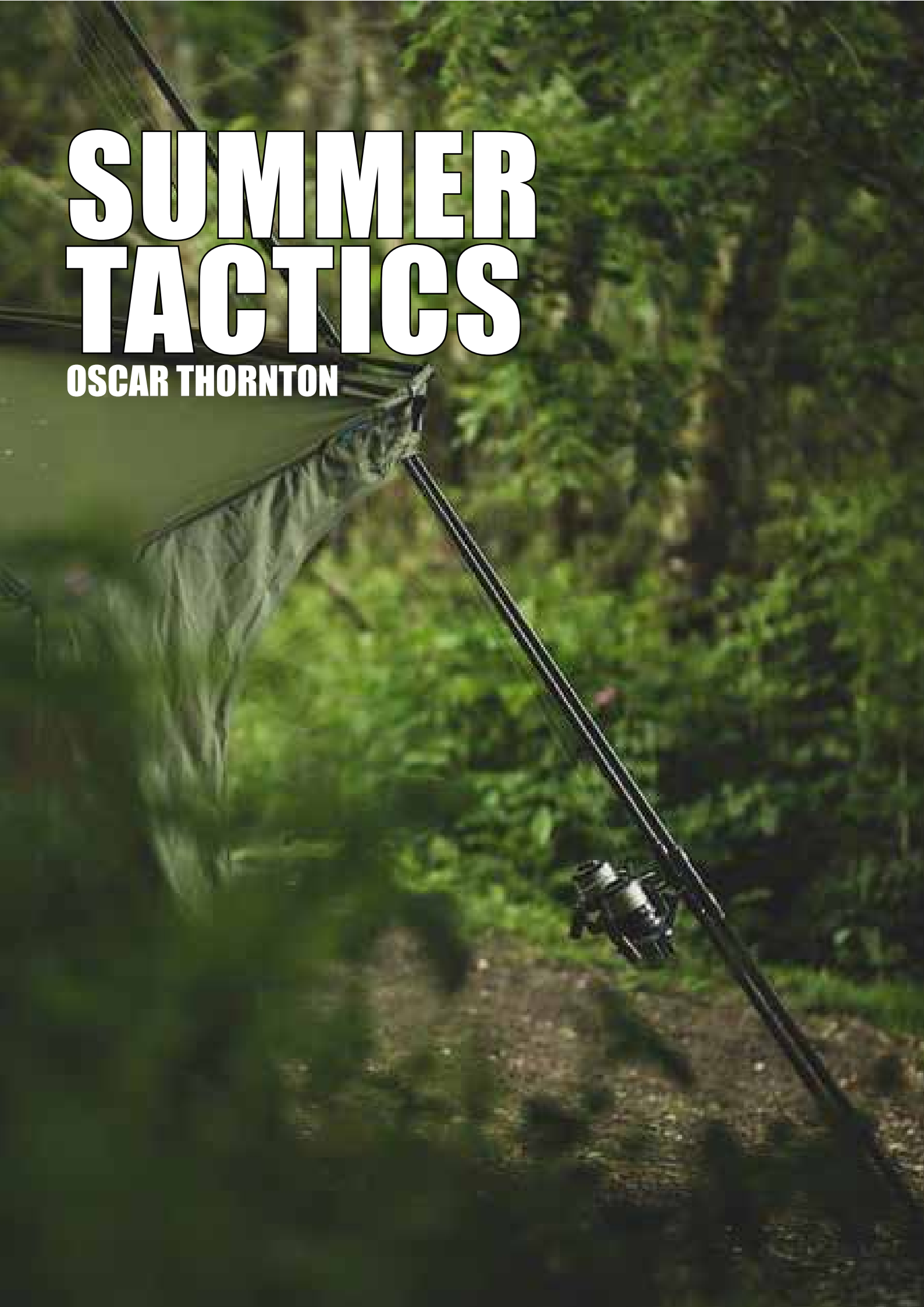
Some of my best captures have come in August, here's one from a few seasons ago, taken in broad daylight fished to a clear channel past a big bank of weed. Boilies peppered loosely along the clear channel and a couple of chods flicked into position doing the goods.





SUMMER TACTICS

OSCAR THORNTON



Post spawning, I love to give them some bait. They can be really active through the late summer months, and those cool morning periods can be productive feeding spells.

I think the 'big autumn feed up' is a thing of the past, and have personally found July and August times where they can really get their heads down as they look to replenish what they lost in spawning.

Cell boilie forms the base of the mix, with a concoction of bits and pieces to keep them grubbing. Hemp, nuts, chops and corn all go into the mix, where I like to fish a big blatant hook bait over the top.

I like my hook bait nice and obvious for them to home in on, and when fishing with bits and pieces, I try to fish the cleanest spot with a bottom bait. A 15mm bottom bait, topped by a 10mm yellow pop my go-to.



My D Rigs are made with size 4 Kamakura Wide Gape X hooks on 12-inch IQ2 booms where I whip the hook on with a 21-turn knotless knot to help extend the D giving the hookbait plenty of movement.

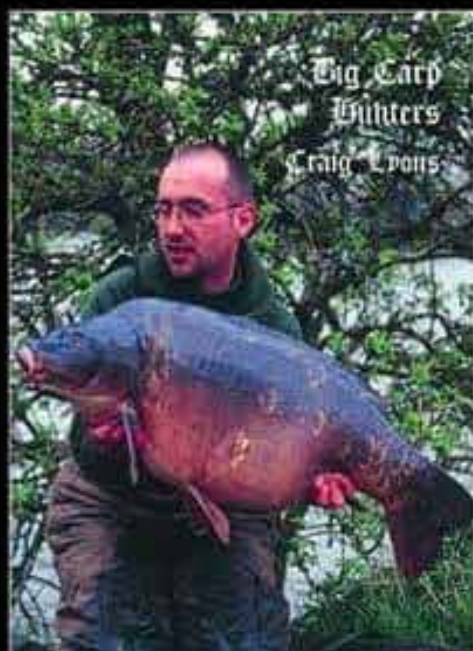
When I look to bait, it still has to be the right situation. I'm looking to bait areas I'm seeing them at dawn, areas they are showing or fizzing, often in the open water between the weed. They'll often feed here through the night and at dawn, then in the warm

days, they'll retreat into the safety of snags and shallow bays, which are areas you can stalk them,

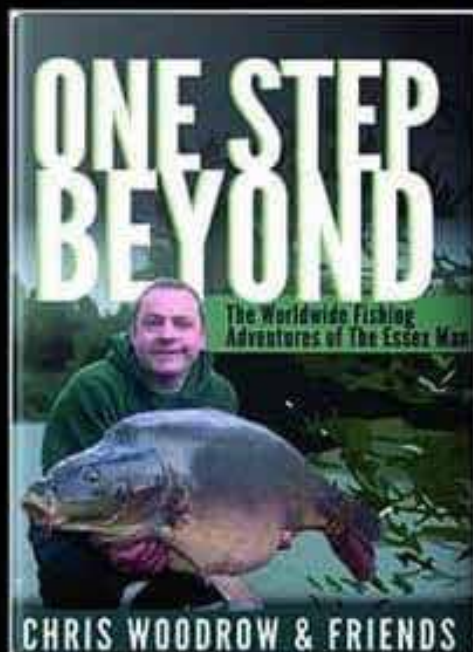
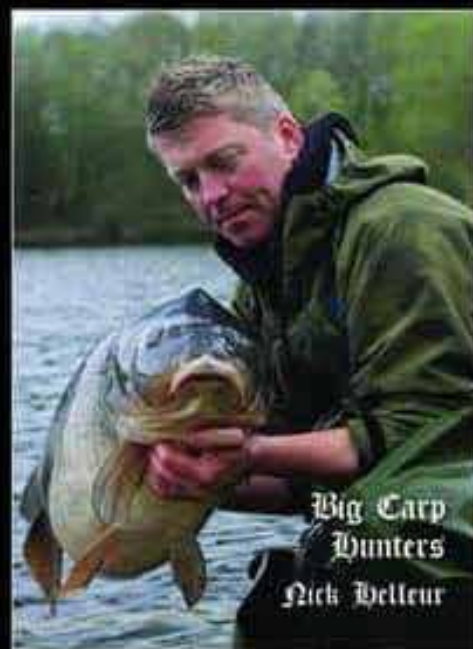
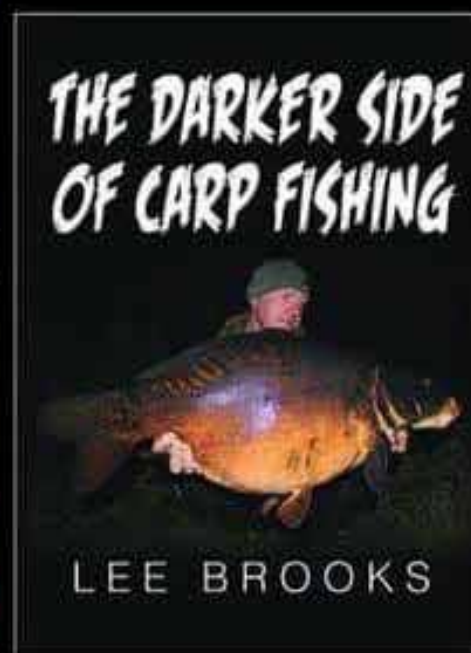
Taking the stalking or floater kit is imperative through the summer, as it can often lead to bonus daytime bites, where yours pots out in the open water could be completely devoid. Staying mobile, looking for opportunities and keeping a few areas baited is a great summer approach, and often you only need a few hours to get a few bites.



THE BIG CARP HUNTER SERIES



*The Unsung hero's prolific catches
with a unique tale to tell*



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A man wearing a black cap and a red shirt is holding a large, dark-colored carp. The fish has a prominent white stripe running along its side. The man is looking down at the fish with a focused expression. The background is a blurred forest scene with green foliage.

MONKS MAGIC

PERRY ALABASTER

When you've caught as many big carp as Perry Alabaster has, personal bests don't come around very often. In fact, it had been 17 years since Perry last tasted that special moment of personal triumph. However, just a few minutes into his latest session on the Monks Pit syndicate in Cambridgeshire, Perry's long wait was finally brought to an end, when he slipped his net under a magnificent 55lb 14oz mirror! After all this time, all it took was one of the new yellow S7 Half Tones wafers combined with the soon-to-be-released S7 Amino Smoke cast to the right spot, and the rest is history!

"As I set off from home to go fishing this week, I was stopped in my tracks by a delivery man walking up my path carrying a large cardboard box with 'DNA Baits' printed all over it,"

said Perry. "I was initially going to let the wife deal with it, as I was keen to get over the lake, but I suddenly remembered I'd ordered some of the new yellow and orange S7 Half Tones hookbaits. Getting a chance to try a new variation of my all-time favourite bait really appealed to me, so before the delivery guy had even jumped back in his van, I'd delved down into the box and grabbed a pot of the new pop-ups and a pot of the wafers.

"I got to Monks Pit a bit quicker than usual, but I figured I'd have a valid excuse if I were to get pulled over for speeding. 'I wanna try my new S7 hookbaits, Officer.' Surely they'd understand?

"With my first-choice swim already occupied, I spoke to a couple of the lads just leaving to help me make my

choice. As strange as it may sound, I generally tend to pick swims on Monks that have either done no bites for a while or, better still, haven't been fished for a few days at all, because on a venue like Monks, the decent swims rarely stay action-free for long.

"One of the deeper-end swims that hadn't seen much action since my mate Billy Wells caught a few from it over a week ago was vacant. Plotting up here would mean I'd be fishing on the back of a strong southerly wind – perfect! It looked like it was about to rain, so I quickly chucked a single orange S7 Half Tones pop-up on a hinged stiff rig out towards the middle of the pond, just so I'd be in with a chance of a quick bite as I set up my gear. Twenty minutes later, the dark clouds blew over and the sun came out, so I got the next rod in place. This time I went with a yellow S7 Half Tones wafter in a solid bag filled with Crayfish Mini Mix pellets and crumbed S7, and then injected it with plenty of S7 Amino Smoke liquid. As I stood in my swim deciding whether to get a third rod out next or bring the single pop-up rod in and reposition it, the solid-bag

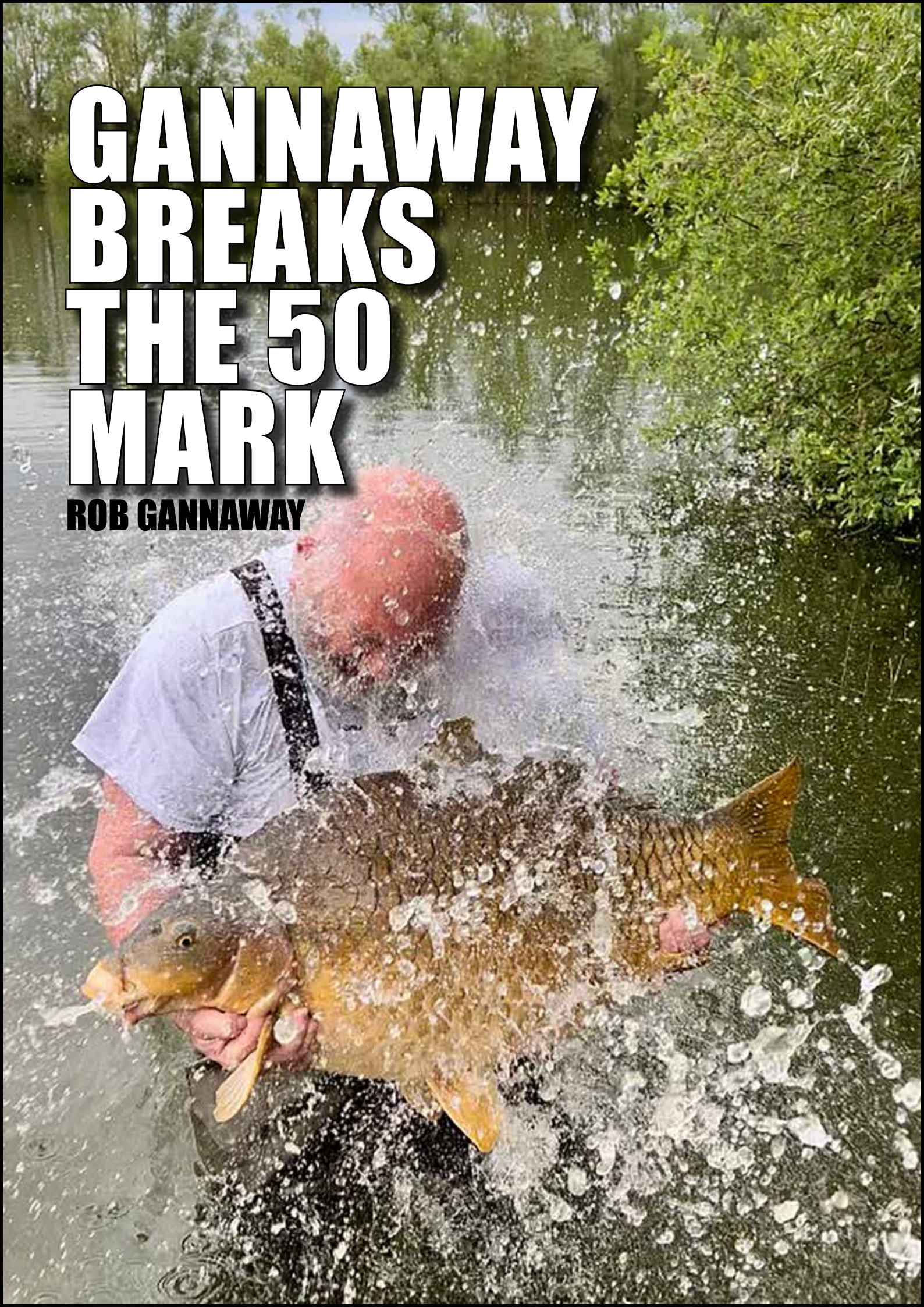
rod was in meltdown! The fish didn't feel too big at first, knocking its head around a few times as it swam towards the bank, suggesting to me I was into one of the lake's little stockies. Once it got within 20 yards of me, it decided to use its weight and I realised this was definitely no little stockie! Eventually, the wide back of something big broke the surface, causing a wave that really got my adrenaline pumping. As it wallowed into the net, I thought, 'Oh yes, that'll do!' It looked well over 40lb; possibly 50-plus.

"I can't repeat what I said as I lifted the retainer with my dismantled net and fish safely unhooked inside it from the water, but it suddenly dawned on me that this could finally beat my UK personal best, which had stood at 54lb 4oz for more than 17 years. Up on the tripod she went and as the scales settled, I said to myself, 'Yes! At least!' I'd finally got a new UK PB of 55lb 14oz. What a start on the new S7 Half Tones! I could've kissed the fish, but I resisted the temptation! I could kiss the delivery driver too, but I'll try and resist that temptation as well. He'd never understand!



GANNAWAY BREAKS THE 50 MARK

ROB GANNAWAY



So we travelled to Domaine de Goncourt as a group in a van hired from Hooked Carp fishing tours and were booked onto the camping lake as we were arriving the evening before we could get on the lake.

We settled in and whilst sleeping under the stars, I had a small stockie common of 17lb during the night on the Big Fish Baits Mozzi.

Saturday, we got on to the main event lake and after deciding on swims, I settled into the left hand double peg and went about getting spots sorted. To my right, a spit of land was an obvious choice and I found two other spots in open water.

The fish then began to spawn!!! I had to wait until Monday evening for my first taste of the action and after



going into the lake up to my chest, into a snaggy bush after the fish, a Catfish of estimated 20lb hit me in the chest and went into the net. Not what I had hoped for.

Tuesday the action started for me properly with three commons landed at 33lb 8oz, 32lb 5oz and 28lb 6oz but still not the really big girl I was craving.

Wednesday was another common and new Pb of 33lb14oz and a cat of 28lb 6oz my biggest cat of the week

Big fish Thursday was then renamed big blank Thursday and I had to wait until Friday for my next action.

Friday I was woken early twice, firstly by another 20lb cat and then a common of 21lb08oz and again I was thinking I was going home without the big common I craved.

The ongoing joke of the week was that I had said, "If I catch a 50, I will pay for the takeaway" and my money looked safe. That was until 5:15pm





and my rod tore off making a long run, leaving me thinking it was another biggish cat.

This was until I got it close, and as a common carp surfaced, my knees turned to jelly as it was clearly a big fish. Tim netted and as I said, it looks forty, he said “no way, that’s the fifty, you’re buying dinner”

He was spot on as my The Squirrels Nuts x Obiwan scales turned round to 50lb 08oz, confirmed by all who were there and a new Pb for me, not only

common carp, but also the biggest carp I have ever caught. Photos were taken, the mandatory PB soaking was taken care of and I then just waited for the takeaway delivery to pay for that, honestly still in a bit of a daze.

Overnight I had another small Cat of mid 20’s and it was time to return home.

For me, it was a tough week, I worked my spots and stuck to my plan. On this occasion it paid off handsomely!!

All the fish fell to the same baiting

strategy of Big Fish Baits Mozzi and Maple Roast boilies mixed with the site particle mix, Maize and 11mm pellets, glugged in Mozzi glug. I kept this going in all week, even the quiet times and feel this definitely got me the bites.

Hookbaits were Mozzi Pop ups, topped with plastic corn or with the

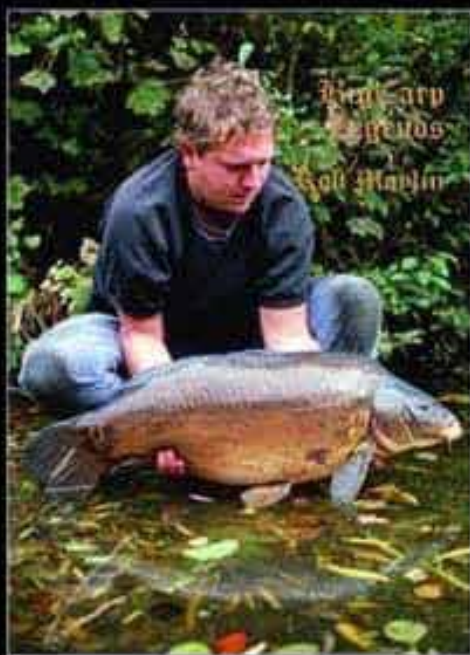
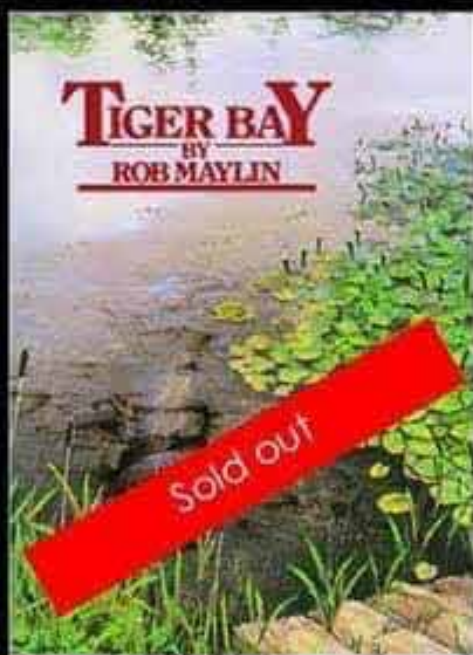
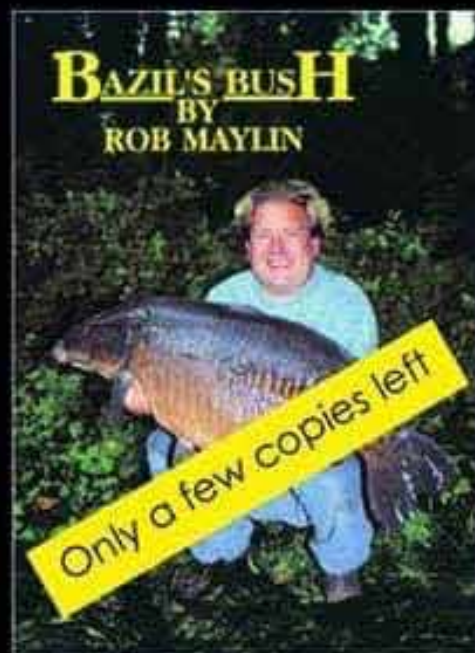
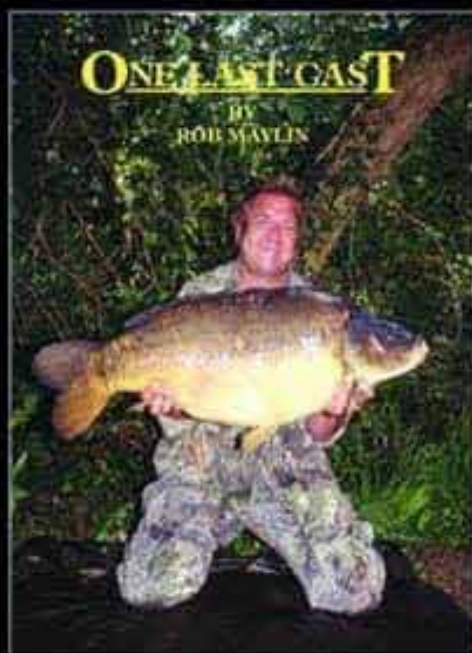
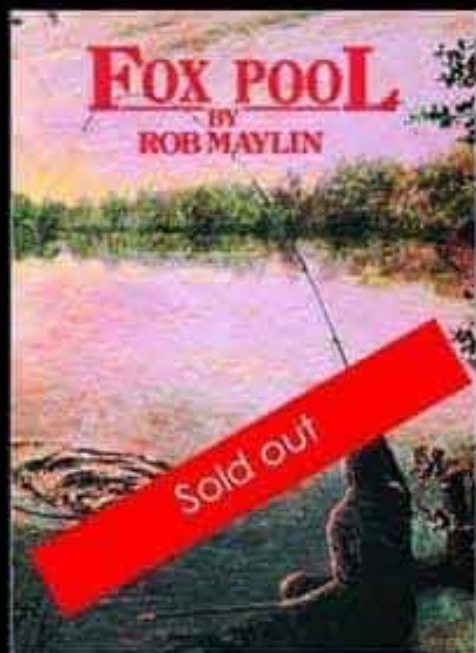
Big Fish Baits orange corn Topperz glugged in Mozzi Liquid

My rigs were exactly what I use here in the UK, Rig Marole UK freefall tubing, Korda Developments hybrid lead clips, boom hooklink to a spinner size 4. Leads as always were supplied by Paul at Donk Leads mainly flat pears in 3-4oz that worked well in the boat.



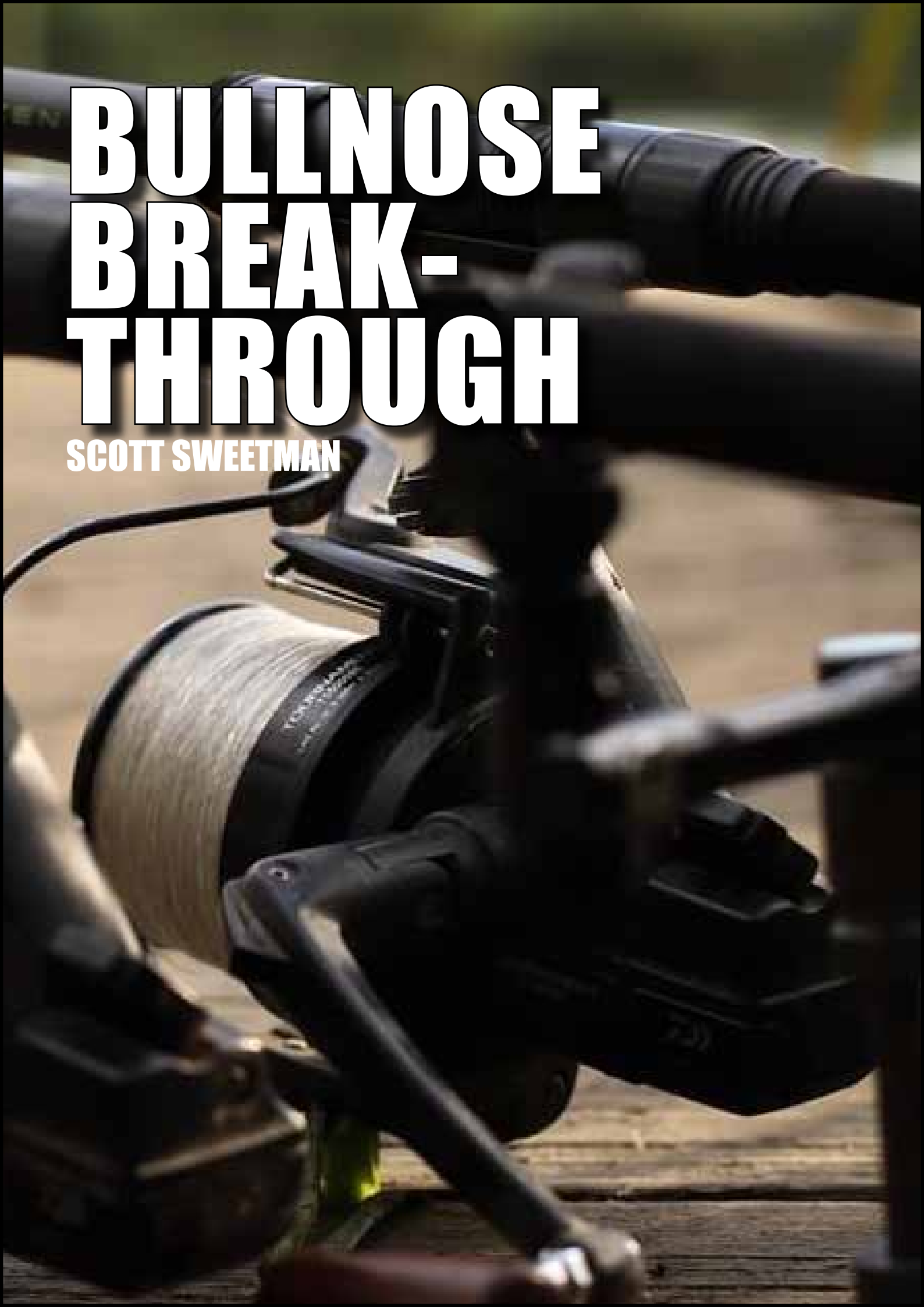
THE ROB MAYLIN SERIES

50 years on the bank with Rob and Friends



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BULLNOSE BREAK- THROUGH

SCOTT SWEETMAN

'Arriving to the lake after work, I found a good group of fish patrolling the margins in a particular area. I chose to fish short and have as little line in the water as possible, as not spook the carp in the area, in the hope they would come on to me through the night.

Early in the night, I had a tench which was far from ideal, causing unwanted disturbance when fishing at such close range. As dawn broke, I noticed a patch of fizz a bit further down the margin, further than where I was fishing. I gave it a little while to see if it continued and

fizzing intensified, so I quickly lifted one of the rods out and attached a 1.1oz lead with a hinge rig to ensure presentation. I cast well past the fizzing and skipped it back across the surface and lowered the rig right in amongst the bubbles. It didn't take long and the rod was away with a really cool 30+ common called 'Pea Head' for obvious reasons.

I quickly redid the rod and after doing the pictures the other rod positioned down the margin fishing over the bait ripped off. After a really dogged battle in the crystal-clear water, I managed to

net an incredible mirror known as 'Wood Grain' at 36lb 4oz. A massive result and one of the better mirrors from the lake. Just to top off the nights fishing the rod cast at the fizzing was away again before I left, producing a 16lb common. Little did I know what the next week would entail.

After applying a couple of hits of 12 & 16mm Krill and hemp to a zone I had been concentrating on, the anticipation for my night was through the roof – I was absolutely desperate to get back on to my baited spot in the edge. I managed to get to the lake after work and get in the

area I wanted to be. Everything felt right – I had a feeling she was coming out and that I could catch her. After lowering in a rig on my spot, the night passed quietly, but at first light I noticed a patch of fizzing over the area. I stuck the kettle on and before it had boiled I was away! Not long into the battle I could see what I was connected to, which sent my legs to jelly! Fortunately, I managed to get her in the net and got to witness a truly special carp laid on my mat. Packing up to go to work was a bit of a blur – it's certainly one morning I won't be forgetting for a long time. At 52lb the carp of dreams.





SUMMER TIPS

TOM STOKES





LOOK AFTER YOURSELF - Be conscious of how much time you spend stood out in the sun. Keep hydrated, eat well and smother yourself in sun cream. Korda have just released their own factor 50, with all proceeds going to charity, so you're protecting yourself for a great cause!



PARTICLES/SEEDS – Hemp, pigeon condition and tigers play a big part in my summer fishing. Don't make the mistake of baiting too heavy. The days are hot, so the feeding windows can be limited, bait for a bite at a time. You can always give them more.



GET UP EARLY AND WATCH FIRST LIGHT - This is the coolest part of the day and when they are most likely to show, giving away the areas they're using to feed.



STAY MOBILE AND TRAVEL LIGHT – Be prepared to go looking in the days. Reeling in once bite time has passed to go looking will often lead to opportunities. Wandering around with the polaroids, climbing trees (if allowed) you'll often find them



MARGINS – Keep an eye on them through your session, stalking opportunities are well on the cards in the summer and can get you a bite when nothing else will.



FLOATER KIT – I always bring the floater kit with me in the summer, you never know when it will come in handy and you can often nick a bonus bite on the top, and some of the 'rearer' one's will often slip up to a floater.



WEED – Look for subtle signs in the weed, such as backs breaking the surface or the surface weed knocking. Fishing those clear channels between the weed can be absolute winners, just ensure your tackle is strong and that you can safely land the fish.



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a history of excellence



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AUG 2024

FREELANCE

MITCH'S MONSTER

BAXTER
DEMPSEY
SALMONS



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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

Also available this
month Big Carp issue
337.



Front Cover:
Mitch banks the fish of
a lifetime.



SUPPORTING OUR YOUNG ANGLERS

If you are local to Oxford, please consider joining this initiative run by Dylan Harvey for local young anglers providing donated tackle for FREE. 'Fishing' is not about catching a fish..... this is the bonus. It is about experiencing, feeling and trying to understand the environment we live in - and share with an amazing diversity of species. An experience that CANNOT be gained on-line..... This initiative not only supports our young anglers, it supports family. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/839362931541427> Being encouraged to get out, join a club, fish a day ticket with a 'fun lake'... it is time together, it is learning together... it is making memories and true relationships together... So here is an opportunity to get involved.

6. CARP CHAT

16. CARP SCENE

**22. TERRANCE
FITZGERALD**

**32. MITCH
HAMMONDS**

**34. CHRIS
CLAXTON**

**42. JAMIE
SALMONS**

46. MARK BAXTER

50. PETER HALL

**52. RALPH
WALTON**

**58. TERRY
DEMPSEY**





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
- 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●



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

MANAGEMENT: “FISHING BEFORE WORK HAS CAUSED YOU TO BE LATE 3 TIMES THIS WEEK. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?”

ME: IT’S WEDNESDAY???





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.

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.

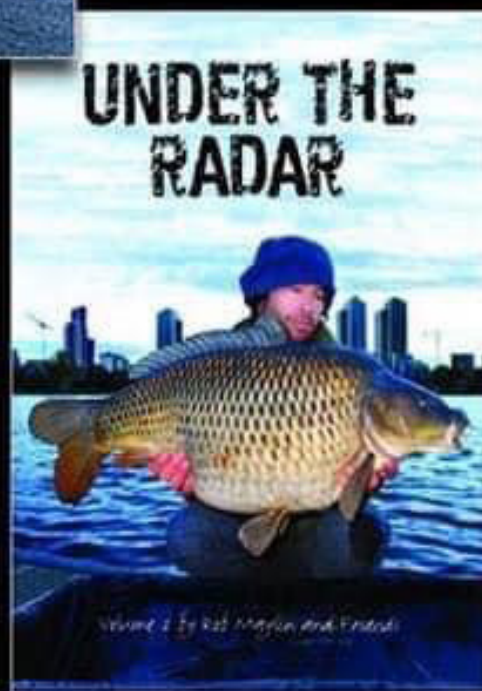
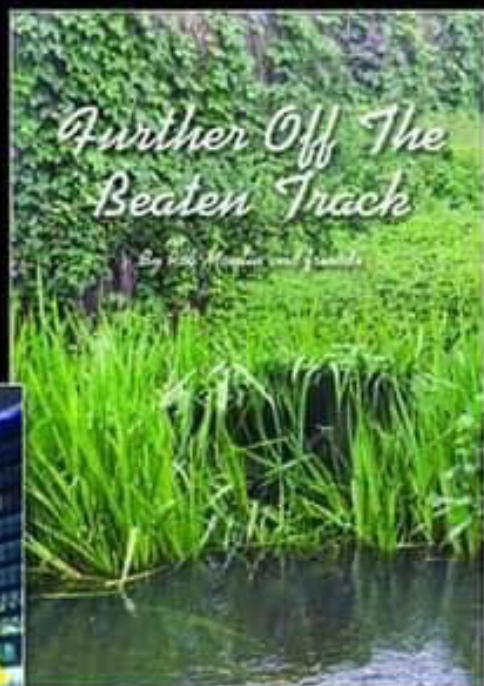
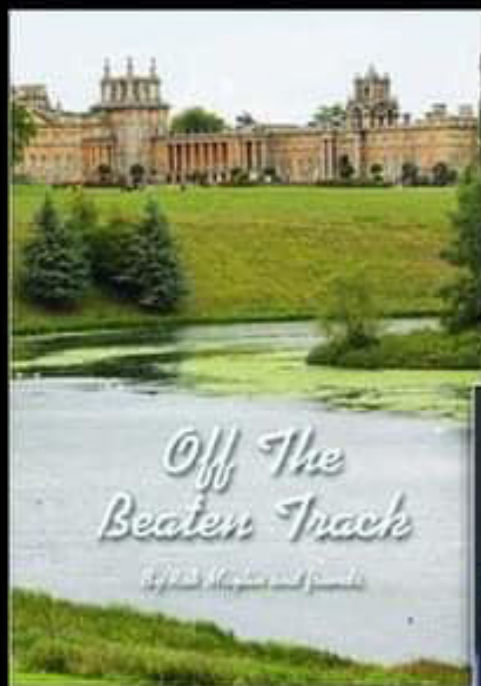
National Line Recycling Scheme: The Angling Trust continues to support the Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme, with many anglers and fisheries/clubs across the country sending their old line and spools to be recycled rather than going to landfill.

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. •

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK SERIES

For lovers of the unknown, unnamed and uncaught



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THEY'RE UNBELIEVABLY GOOD GEOFF!!



The legendary Geoff Anderson ZipZone pants are now available in a new and even lighterweight version .

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, Sierra, 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

Carp Scene

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



FREELINE 14

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 and selected specialist retailers.

For more information about CamelBak, please visit:

www.camelbak.co.uk



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since 1857**

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HOOKLINK TO BREAK PBS - NOT THE BANK



AQUASKIN



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

The Aquaskin comes in 3 varieties. The Matt Brown and Green Flek versions are slightly more supple than the Matt Green. All variants are 25lb breaking 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. Extremely robust. A must for any tackle box.

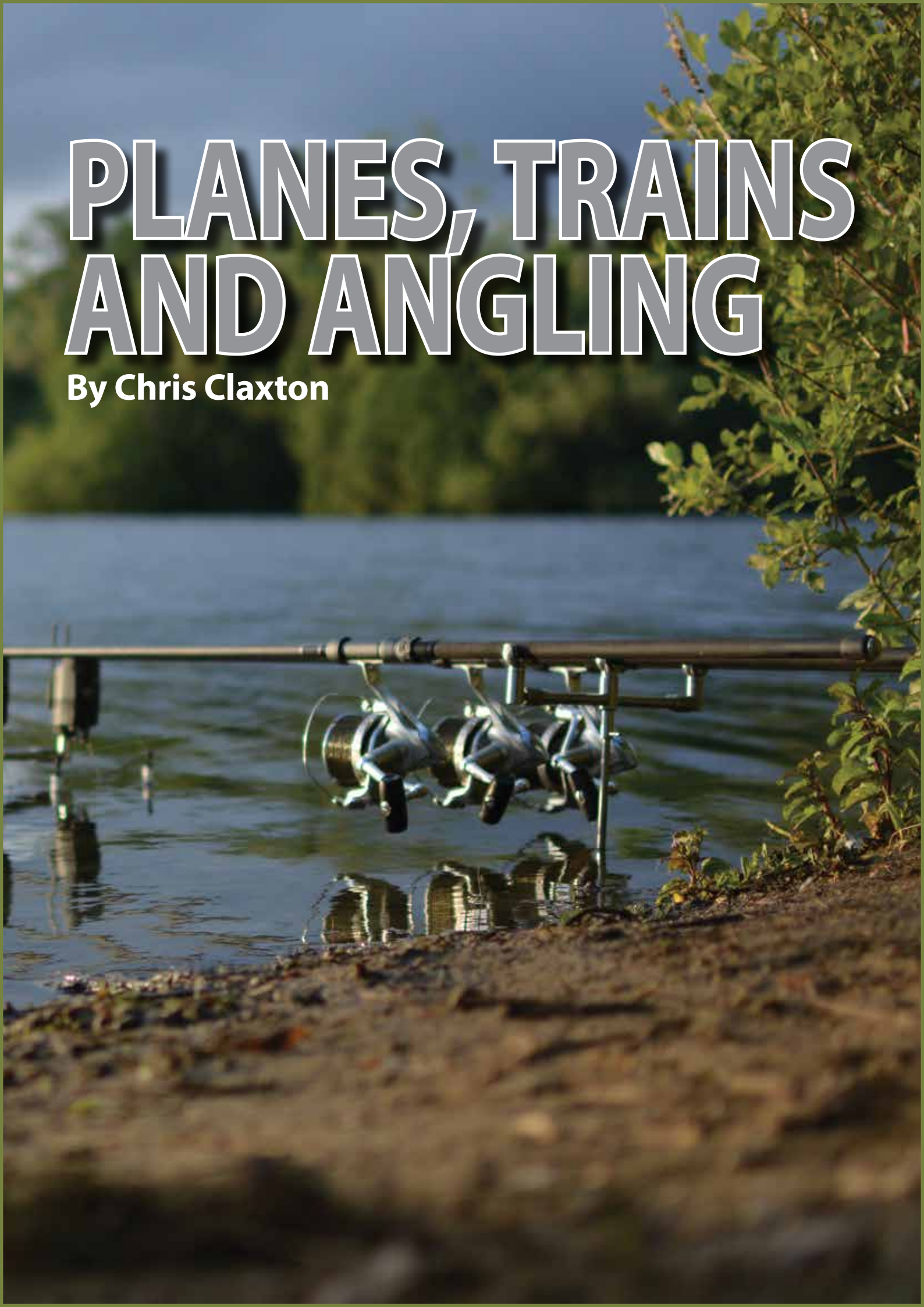
Available in clear and translucent green. It comes on 10m spool in 25lb breaking strain.

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.carppunk.co.uk

PLANES, TRAINS AND ANGLING

By Chris Claxton



After a couple of years on Swan Valley, I'd had some great success, however my buzz for the place had gone, so I needed a new challenge! I had heard Wraysbury was going back to a syndicate, and I just had get on there. Unfortunately though, I was a little late to the party, and I had to go on the waiting list for 2018. However at the end of last year, I got a call out of the blue to say a spot on the syndicate had become available. The instant excitement I felt was unbelievable; I felt like a kid on Christmas day who had just got the gift of a lifetime he never thought he'd get. This was an epic venue, and with the North Lake being 45 acres it was going to be a whole new ballgame compared to Swan Valley. I'd been reading the Wraysbury Chronicles to whet the appetite. This really was lighting the fire inside, and I couldn't wait to get going. Granted, it may not be the venue of years gone by, but there are still some cracking old monsters lurking in its depths and a raft of cracking stunners from more recent stockings coming through, so it really is still a very special venue.

Opening weekend consisted of gates open at 7am and a draw at 8am. All the boys walked round in a couple of groups chatting and laughing, but there was air of seriousness behind all this, as we were all quietly making our swim priority list on the quiet... well, I was at least. It was clear to see

the middle of the lake seemed to be the place to be, as it was alive with fish showing. The draw commenced, and as per usual with these things, I didn't come out early; I came out eighth. With all my top choices taken, I opted for a swim called Lawns, as I'd heard this swim had great form. It commanded a lot of water and was close to out of bounds, so this just had to be a haven for the fish. This swim straight away was a test. I was fishing 28 wraps to the out of bounds rope, ranges I hadn't fished for some time. Luckily the Century rods with a nice fat lump of lead on made light work of things. The weekend passed without much activity across the lake. I managed to sneak out a little 18lb mirror, which turned out to be the only fish out on opening weekend. Although not a monster, I was more than pleased to be off the mark from the start. I went home feeling like my head was going to pop due to the constant noise of being wedged between the flight path of Heathrow and a train track, but I already had the bug for this place regardless.





As the weeks went past, the plane and train noise slipped into the background and really went unnoticed, but unfortunately so did the fishing action. I lost one on my second session, and then I went on a run of nine nights for no bites. This really didn't phase me though. I can honestly say in all my years of fishing, Wraysbury is the only lake I have been on where being there really is just enough, just sitting there taking it all in and thinking of the history. It was also clear to see only a handful of swims were producing, and unless you were in one of the going swims, you might as well have been at home. I was happy though just bouncing round different swims learning the lake as I went – this was bound to set me in good stead as the season went on.

I finally ended my blank run with a cracking scaly low 20 from a swim called Sunnymeads. However when I returned for the next session, the action slowed up again. This time though, I was determined I wasn't going to let the fish get the better of me though. Over a three-day session, I fished three



different swims, and my trusty old step counter app reported I'd walked a shade over nine miles round the lake. This was far from the relaxing sport fishing is known to be. However it all paid off in the end, as on the last night I managed to bag a nice 27lb 10oz mirror carp back in Lawns where my success had started.

Over the coming weeks, I put a bit of time in Lawns, so much so that a few people joked they may have to rename the swim Clacko's, but I was really getting to terms with the swim. I was fishing up to the out of bound rope having primed the spot from the nearside margin first. This was almost guaranteeing a bite anytime from first light up to lunchtime, and at times as many as four takes in this time. However getting a pickup was only half the task... The weed was savage, and I was losing more than I was landing. I upped to size 4 hooks, beefed up the line strength and finally had a great

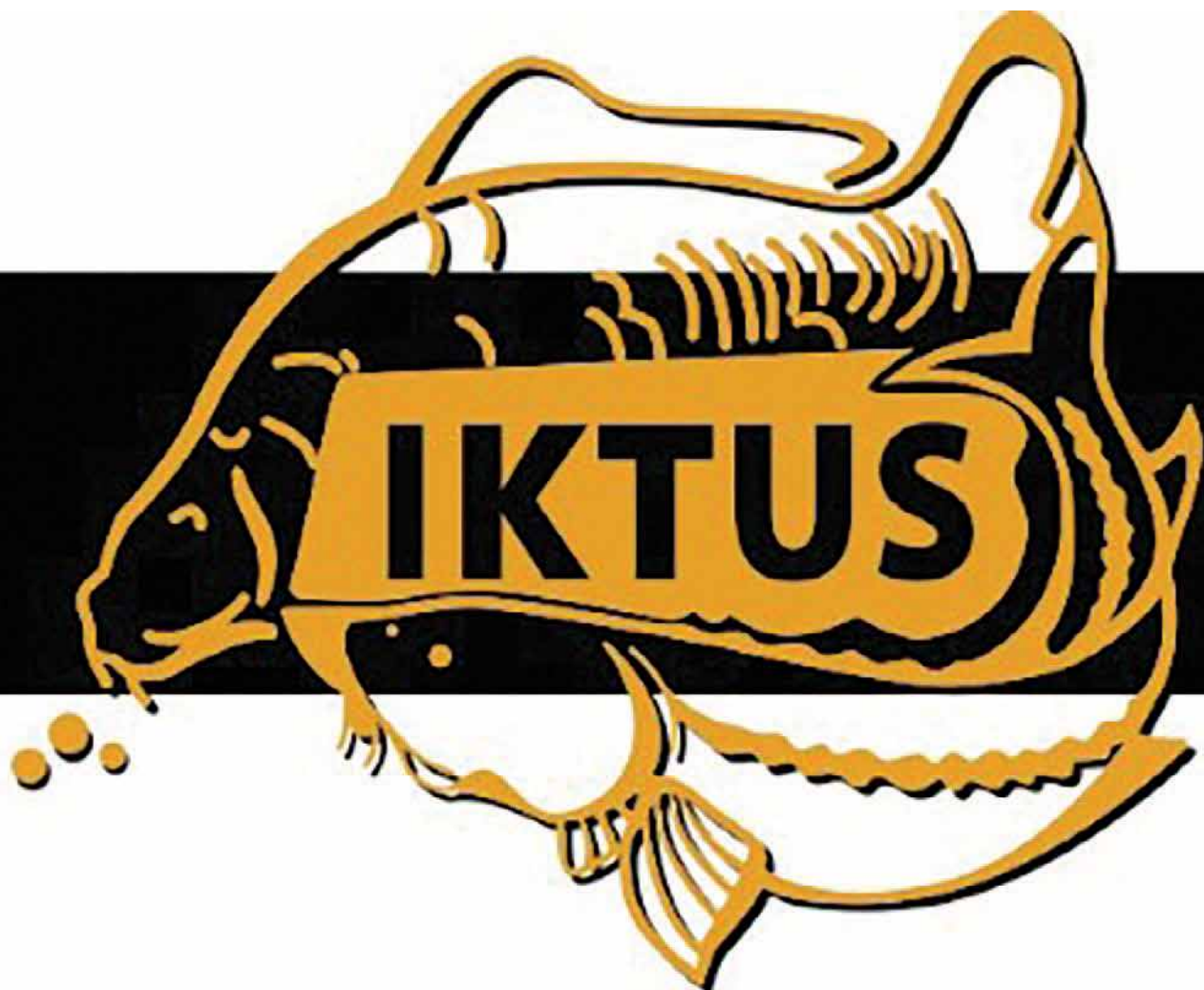


Chris Claxton

session in there landing four carp with one being my first Wraysbury 30 at 31lb 6oz. I was ecstatic with this capture; it meant a lot to me, as I'd really had to work hard for it.

Wraysbury just so happens to be a five-minute detour for me on the way home from work, so when I wasn't fishing, I was walking round the lake in the week to keep in touch with the place. I really felt like I was coming to terms with the place now, and spending time on there and seeing fish like Mike's Pet and Jacko's mooching in the snags kept me dreaming in between sessions. I had a bit of time away from the lake whilst they spawned, but as soon as the lake was fully open again, I was straight back on, with my first crack in the mighty swim that is Springates. This swim is awesome, just sitting there thinking what had gone on in years gone by, as you looked out to a great view of the lake; it really was special. I managed a couple of fish to 28lb, so another successful session was under my belt.





FISHING RESORT



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When I was next down, I fished Rocky Barge and the Bus Stop with 11 fish between the two. Things were really kicking into life for me now, and it was going well. I wasn't catching the bigger fish, but there were some little stunners coming out. I was already starting to wonder if I was ever going to get into some of the bigger, older characters that swam beneath. Then came a very, very special session. I arrived at the lake to find only two people on, and both were packing up to leave. I couldn't believe it! There I was standing on Wraysbury North, 45 acres of water with every swim to choose from... Where do you start? After cycling round the lake a few times, I finally narrowed it down either the swim called Turfs or Secret Reedy, as a lot of fish were present in both. I settled on Turfs in the end, as for some reason I was convinced it was going to produce a big fish. It also controlled a lot of water and offered both shallow and deep water. I felt this would be



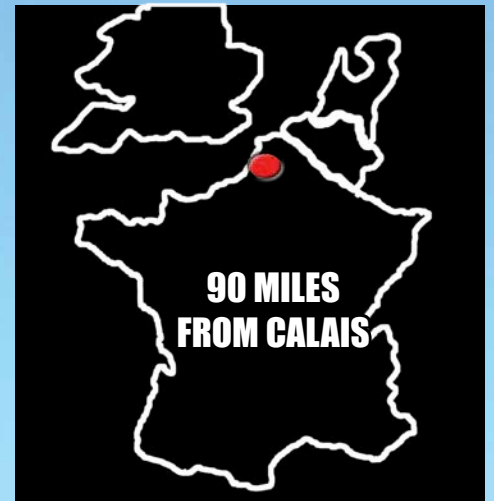
ideal with current hot weather changing to stormy weather over the days. I got all set up with one rod on a nice small gravel spot surrounded by savage weed and the other two rods in a big silty gully in deeper water.

At 5am on the first morning, the rod on the gravel spot burst into life, and the fish instantly weeded me up. I kept the pressure on, and it didn't take long for the fish to kick and the battle to commence again. A cracking mid 20 mirror was the prize. Then in set a storm as the broolly was pounded by the relentless rain. This gave way in the afternoon, and no sooner had it stopped raining than the rod on the gravel spot kicked into action again. I was well aware of the weed issue from the last battle, so the rod was up in the air as high as possible, tension on whilst walking back then reeling in whilst walking forward. I was really hauling this one in! It felt heavy, but I wasn't letting it plant in the weed. Now I'd half assumed it was a reasonable fish with some weed on, which gave it the weight, but when it got in close, I don't mind admitting I went a little weak at the knees. It was a real gnarly old looking mirror with a head the size of a whale and not a scrap of weed in sight. After the usual couple minutes of talking to myself: "Be lucky, be lucky, don't come off!" she was in the net. A cry of "Come on!" was released and a fist pump, as I was buzzing to see this one was a real brute. Out on the bank it became clear this was a well spawned-out Mike's Pet at 40lb 4oz. This felt like a great achievement. I have caught 40s before, but not under such challenging conditions on a new water – I was over the moon.

I was only meant to be on the lake for two nights, but since things were going so well and I'd finally had a Wraysbury 40 and five other fish to mid-20s, as you do, I buttered up my good lady wife and another couple nights were on the cards... and boy am I glad now they were. Around 9:15 the next morning, the rod in the shallows kicked into life, again this time with a fish right up for a scrap, powering off to the left then kiting to the right, the whole time luckily somehow avoiding all the weed beds. It was clear that

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this was no stockie; it was fully in control and no telltale tap, tap, tap on the rod tip – just raw power! When I got her in close, it was clear to see this was a rather long, large common. She seemed to be done, but due to the length of the fish, I struggled to guide her in the net at the first attempt. I nearly had a heart attack as she powered off again. Dropping the net and keeping the pressure on, I finally managed to get her in the net at the second time of asking – another special one in the net, and I couldn't believe my luck! This time it went 37lb 8oz on the scales, Red October being my reward, and I was blown away.

What a session this was! I ended up with nine carp, and best of all I'd had a couple of the older characters at last, a couple of real cracking looking fish. I was certainly in the right place at the right time with conditions on my side, and this was certainly a session to remember.●





THE PIG

The fish I desired the most was caught by my mate Kasie in the middle of August, and with that news, the decision was made to switch lakes. The big pit can be a grueling prospect in the autumn, especially with the large weed rafts. After many sleepless nights due to its ridiculously high tench population, I was more than ready for a change of scenery, and over the next week, everything was prepared for my first session on the little lake.

The first session went better than I could have ever imagined, resulting in a three-fish catch topped by a new surface PB, one of the lake's A-Team called Moonscale at 41lbs 12oz. Obviously after that result, I was chomping at the bit to get back down to the lake! The following week saw me book the Friday off work so I could get down to the lake earlier. Luckily I had to enroll for my last year of university that afternoon, so I managed to get to the lake a little earlier than usual. However, upon arrival, I could see the lake was busy and my heart sank.

Walking around, I could see all the main swims were taken other than one down the bottom end. I found fish along the adjacent marginal area sunning themselves, so I set three traps that they'd hopefully find on their way back up the lake during the evening. A few fish showed that night, but it seemed they'd gone past me and in front of my mate next door. The next morning I was up at first light, and there wasn't much



in the way of fish activity. I did see a couple show, both out in front of me, but the indicators stayed motionless, so I wound in at midday and went for a mooch.

I found a large group of fish up the other in a little lily-padded corner. As the bloke that was in the main swim just up from the corner was leaving that afternoon, I planned to drop in behind him. In the meantime I started feeding mixers and gained some interest pretty quickly as the odd fish started taking. I shot back round to grab my kit and returned with all the necessities. The fish were feeding pretty confidently by this point, so I made the tricky side cast out to them. The next few hours were just so frustrating, coming close on a number of occasions but never getting a fish to take the hookbait. It sometimes amazes me how we catch them off the deck!

The guy finally vacated his swim in the middle of the afternoon, so I

moved my kit along the bank and swiftly set about finding some spots for the night. I quickly managed to find what I was looking for, and before long I had three rods on small silty spots amongst the weed and accompanied each with a couple of kilos of bait.

At 11.30pm, I had a good liner on one of the rods. I could hear fish showing down to my right, and they seemed to be moving up towards me, so I went to sleep confident of a bite. In the early hours I awoke to what sounded like another liner, so I went to check my rods. The bobbin on the same rod I had the liner on earlier was dropping back to its position, but as I watched, the bobbin smashed into the blank!

I quickly picked up the rod and felt what felt like a small fish tapping away on the end. After a couple of small runs I had the fish on the surface ready for the net a couple of rod lengths out. It still didn't look



big until its head went over the net cord. At this point I realised the fish was bloody massive! I netted it and clicked on my headtorch for a better look. There beneath me lay another one of the lake's A-Team, and what's more, it was definitely one of the biggest two! Due to its shape it was almost definitely one of the two biggest, affectionately known as The Pig.

Securing the net in the edge, I went up to the bivvy to grab my phone, which had all the pictures of the lake's better fish on it. I scrolled through until I found one of The Pig and looked for something to identify it by. A single round scale just behind its gill plate was the one, and I went back to check the fish. As I rolled it over, the scale was there on show – The Pig it was!

I knew the fish had done 47lbs the previous winter and had been a similar weight in the spring, and I could clearly see that she was still big. I readied the mat, scales and sack before transferring the fish in to a sling and lifting her out. A smile spread across my face – she was heavy!

Upon opening the sling, I instantly noticed her width – Jesus, she was full! As I let the scales take her weight, I focussed my stare on the 46-47lb range, but the needle went flying past. It took a second to gather what had happened, and I followed the scales round, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52! I couldn't believe it! I reweighed her and took a weight of 52lbs 4oz. I quickly placed her in a sack and staked her out at the bottom of the deep shelf before trying to get my head around what had just happened!!

Sending out the texts to the people who'd want to know felt surreal, and I was sat on cloud nine as the first reply came from Dean at Trent Baits who I think was nearly as excited as me! I had a couple of hours to wait until dawn, and I needed a photographer. As is always the case,



I phoned my mate Ollie and woke him up. “What you had?” came the answer as he picked up. We then played a game of guess the weight... “It ain’t a fifty, is it?” came the final question, obviously just as shocked as I was! I didn’t need to ask, and he said he’d be with me at first light (I also promised to get him a McDonald’s breakfast, which was the deal breaker!). Awesome! Guaranteed quality photos sorted!!

Ollie kept his word and was with me at first light, by which time I’d added a lovely 27lbs 8oz mirror to the party! Along with Simon who had also came round, we got the fish out. She behaved impeccably on the bank and allowed us to get some quality photos and footage, and after some returners the kettle went on. Again, like the previous week, the Saturday was a very hazy affair. Dean and Kasie both came down to the lake to spend the day celebrating (an hour and a half drive for Dean, bless him!) and we did it in style. No alarm was set for the Sunday morning, and I awoke with a heavy head... I’ve no idea why!





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THE CASTLE LAKE

A person in a dark jacket and hat is standing in a shallow lake, fishing. They are holding a long fishing rod that is bent into a large arc. The water is calm, reflecting the sky and the surrounding trees. In the background, there are some buildings and more trees. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is peaceful and quiet.

By Mark Baxter

The Castle Lake is a lake not far away from my Lincolnshire home, which I've fished on and off over a few years now. It's a beautiful unique place of around eight or nine acres, overlooked by a small castle from which it gets its name. It's an extremely weedy lake, with weeds and aquatic life of all kinds and varieties that flourish in depths, ranging from 1ft to 20ft, that make up a maze of shelves, bars and plateaus, fished mainly from little pokey holes around the overgrown vegetation that borders its margins. There are original fish to over 50 years old, and all this is surrounded by huge great pines and towering poplar trees with of course the backdrop of the castle itself... Sounds amazing, doesn't it? The truth is, it was like that. Its tranquility is no more, and its beauty scarred by selfishness, or what some might call progress. And with this came the end of fishing this beautiful place as we once knew it.

This is a tale of the last couple of years on what was a very special lake to a lot of anglers around our way, as it changed before our eyes from a local lake we thought would be there forever to a place that eventually we would no longer be able to fish nor see its beauty as it once was.



I guess I should start my story before all this mess, when a small syndicate of merry men went about their way, fishing this stunning old Lincolnshire lake. I never actually had a ticket for Castle; all my early fishing on there was done by guest sessions, but knowing the whole syndicate, I got a few in, I must admit. They were good times; every one of them were good lads and anglers who really appreciated what they were fishing for and respected the surroundings they were fishing in. Most of my own fishing was done over the other side of the river at the time on another special little place. Although I enjoyed fishing Castle, the odd time on guests, in my early days it just never got hold of me, as I was too obsessed with the ultra-low stock one next door. But eventually after a lot of abuse from my mates, the go-ahead from the wife and the idea of flitting between the two when the fish next door weren't playing the game, I eventually gave in, and was set to acquire a ticket the following spring... or so I thought!



Winter dragged on, Christmas came and went, and now I was beginning to get excited about the prospects of the coming season. My first full season on the Castle with my old mates again, without them being able to chuck me off. Bait was ordered, boat and life jacket sorted, ticket money in the bank, brand new oar, and I was ready... for a change! All I needed now was the call...

The ticket was due to start on the 1st of April, but it was nearing the end of March, I still hadn't heard anything and neither had the rest of the lads, who reckoned the park normally had it sorted by mid-March. On March 31st, I finally got the call that I never expected, followed by a text message from my mate saying the syndicate had been terminated! For a split second I thought they were pulling my leg, but it turns out that it was no joke, and just like that the Castle was gone!

Probably nothing compared to the other lads, but I was gutted. Every one of them was totally gobsmailed by the whole thing. We eventually found out that the lease to the lake, which had only ever been available on a year-to-year basis, that we as a syndicate paid £3000 for between ten of us... or in my case would have... was taken over by the ski club from the other side of the park for £27,000 a year with the intention of building cabins and some sort of ski line with ramps, and fishing would cease! Whether the figures were right or not, the rest of it didn't sound too clever. Not only could we not fish, but they were going to destroy the lake to be able to do what they needed to do! It was like a bad dream... and not only that! The syndicate money that I managed to scramble together on the quiet was soon spent by the wife on rubbish not long after, so I couldn't even spend it on good stuff like fishing tackle... double gutted!

Lady Luck did eventually feel sorry for me. I had a very successful spring on another water out Cambridgeshire way catching some very handsome carp. It was during this spell that I got the call that couldn't be further away from my mind at the time... Castle was still on, but under quite different

circumstances, so if I wanted it., now was my opportunity to have a go. I was absolutely thrilled with the news and quite taken aback by the fact that the maintenance manager who, off his own back, bless him, had asked permission from the new leaseholders if two or three of us could still fish until the equipment was erected. And after a close friend turned the opportunity down and pointed them my direction, I got the call to ask if I wanted to be one of the lucky few. I went from not quite believing my luck to... er... well... not quite believing my luck! Anyway, thank you, gents, it really meant a lot! I carried on fishing the Cambridgeshire water through the most of that year. The other couple of lads (one being the maintenance manager) were fishing Castle, so I planned to fish the back end sometime in an effort to leave them to it.

The successful spring turned into a successful season on the Cambridge lake, to the point of even surprising myself, but even so, as summer turned to autumn, my thoughts began to sway increasingly towards Castle. Absolutely nothing to do with the bites eventually drying up and that particular water having no winter form whatsoever... honest!

After a few little baiting sessions with the kids, my first night, still not as a member, was around mid-October. It was still fairly mild for that time of year., not that the Cambridgeshire carp had noticed! Mild, overcast, low pressure and drizzle – pretty perfect really, and I hoped that my Lincolnshire carp were feeling the same. Buzzing for what lay ahead, I set about getting the rigs on the prebaited spots before chilling waterside, ripple gazing and thinking of the old lumps that reside in this watery, weed choked haven and that I was yet to meet. I was slowly sipping my brew, and still not quite believing that I was now here and fishing, sat perched on my bucket. Darkness fell on my first night, and after getting into the sack, I eventually drifted off to sleep, probably with a little smile tucked in the far right corner of my mouth.

That was until around 2am when a huge Greek security guard from the park woke me up via torch to the face, asking for a fishing permit, which





of course I didn't have! With blurry, dazed eyes and half asleep, I did my best to explain the situation trying to be extra polite. After my not very good explanation of what the deal was, which he somehow bought, he introduced himself, told me to keep an eye out for bad guys, bottomed his van as he got in, slammed his door shut, and then pulled the van round, illuminating the whole area in front of me via full beam before heading back down the track! "Welcome to the Castle," I chuckled. Being half asleep I never did catch his name, but from that moment he was known as 'Securitees God of Light'.

My autumn campaign became quite a fruitful one, catching some stunning old carp along the way, right from that first session carrying on right into winter. My run of fish was only halted by an iced-over lake come mid-January.

I enjoyed myself so much that the following season I planned to entwine fishing Castle alongside the Cambridgeshire pits a little more. Seeing as Castle was so close to home, and the other lakes over an

hour away, and more to the point, me never being able to get to the lake until last knockings, I thought it best to spend my time a little more tactfully. Why rush to Cambridge battling through the traffic just to get to a busy lake with only a few unfavourable swims free, when I could now just tootle to Castle when time was tight? So that was it – the plan was set!

- Go to Castle when the wife's work rota said, "Tight."
- Go to Cambridge when the rota said, "Ave it!"
- Sulk when the rota said, "No."
- Pretend not to sulk when the wife said, "No."

I couldn't have asked for any more really; at least I knew where I stood, and it should surely benefit my limited time? But before then, I had plenty of chores to do over the rest of the winter, otherwise it would be a "No" to all of the above!





It was a cold few months after the initial mild start. The lake didn't thaw out until the third week in February and was well off my mind whilst happily getting all the duties her majesty gave me done and dusted during my time away... cough! I was planning on getting fishing again, and the sooner the better. The rota said tight for the next three weekends, so Castle it was. Which to be honest suited me fine. The Cambridgeshire carp wouldn't be waking up any time soon, but Castle, even though a lot lower stocked and weed choked, could still chuck up the chance of a fish.

Well, her majesty was not amused with my work quota, and for another two weekends had me under her order of hard labour, finishing off... oh, ok then, doing the rest of... the stuff I (allegedly) promised (against my will). So I got to go for the final 'tight' weekend, which fell on the third week in March. It still had been cold until last week, but the weather was on the turn, and come my sesh, as luck would have it, it was a little more spring-

like I suppose. The sun had started to make a positive impact in the daylight hours, warming everything its precious light touched, but then followed by fresh warm winds and showers at any given moment without warning, ending in a freezing cold night...Yep! Spring was here alright.

My first night back on the Castle, I was rewarded with one of its beasts, a mirror by the name of Big Dave, a cracking brute of a carp nudging mid-30 in full winter bloom. It was an awesome creature and welcome back and was a right result after the recent harsh weather. The fish came to a single hookbait. I had no intention of baiting up so early, as I wanted to see the fish a little more active and looking for stuff before I started feeding. I've often found being just a little more patient sometimes leads you to exactly where they want it, before committing bait to any other areas, rather than leaving it to hope or chance.

Plenty of runs out with the kids over the next couple of weeks, carp spotting, or "to see the princess of the castle", as Ellie would say, gave me



Mark Baxter

good opportunities to make up an idea of where they wanted to be, for the time being at least. Then stealthy trips out in the boat on my own before work, after taking the kids to school, helped pinpoint the location of the best looking spots around that area, favouring the little firm spots that had begun to develop close to the most bashed up weed that had been dusted off and smashed over. I began to trickle a few baits and a dusting of pellet over this area, and watching it change every other day sure was exiting. I really didn't help my week at work go any faster though; in fact it dragged like King Kong's balls!•

**MARK CONTINUES HIS
CASTLE LAKE ADVENTURE
NEXT MONTH**



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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!



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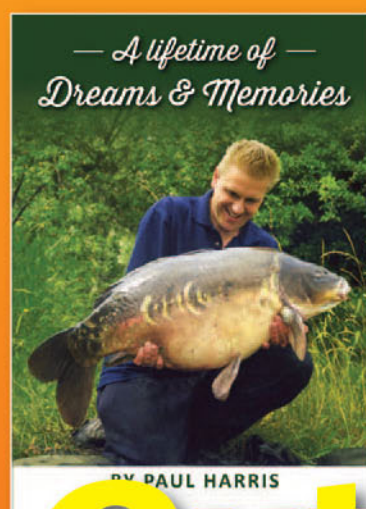
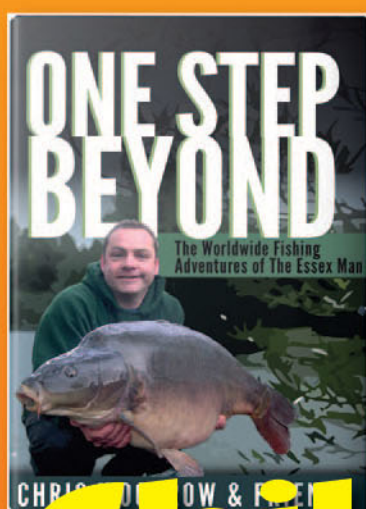
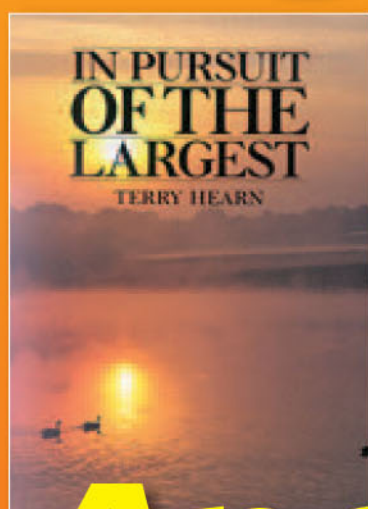
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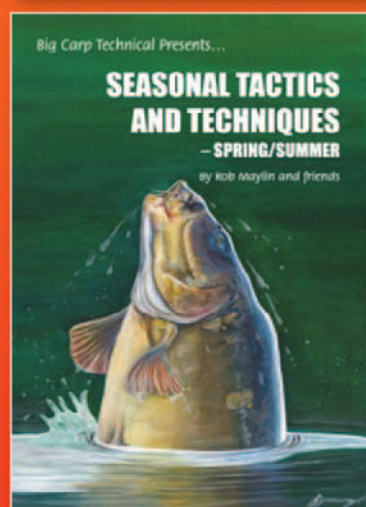
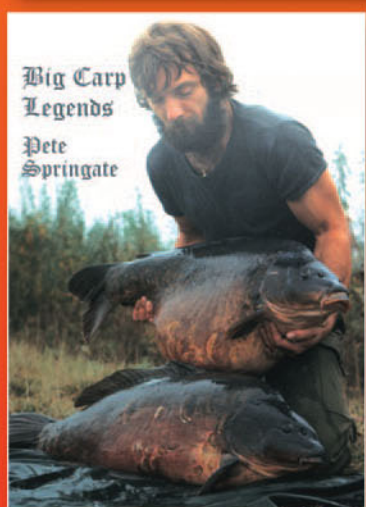
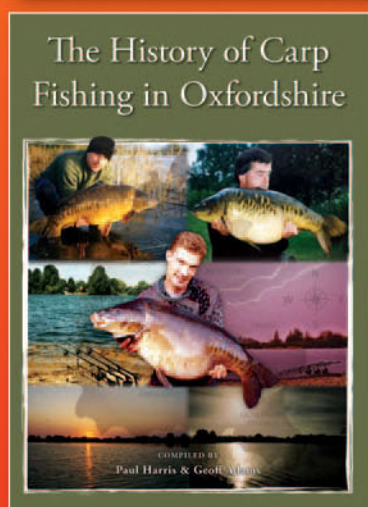
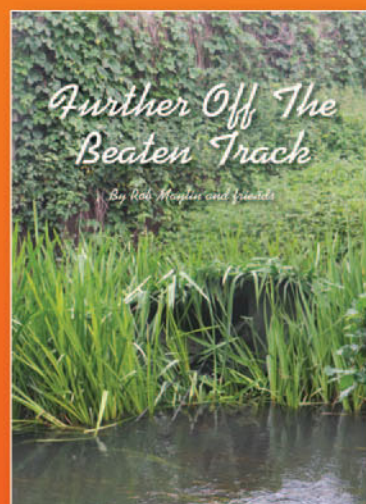
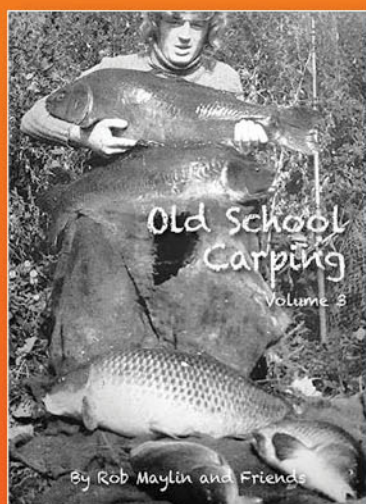
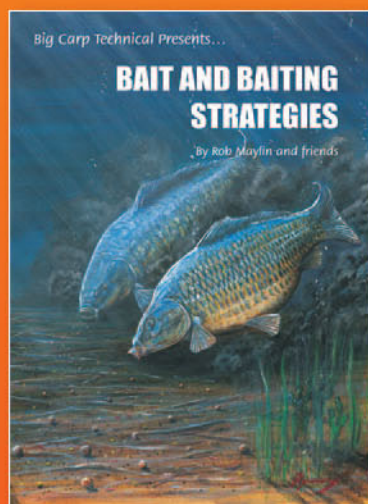


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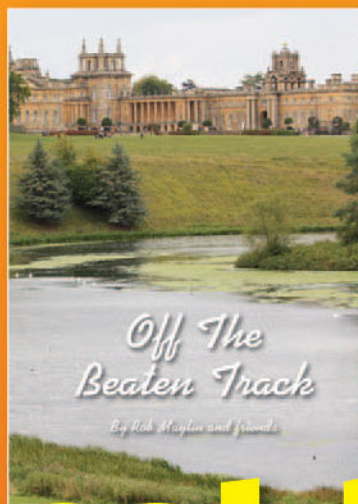
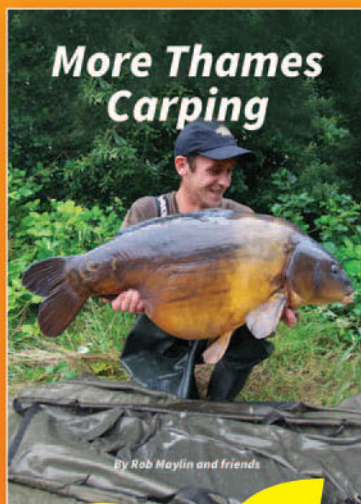


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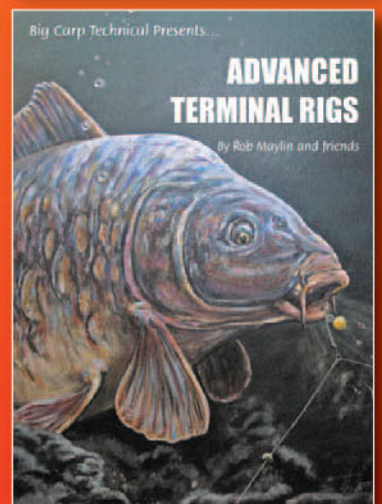
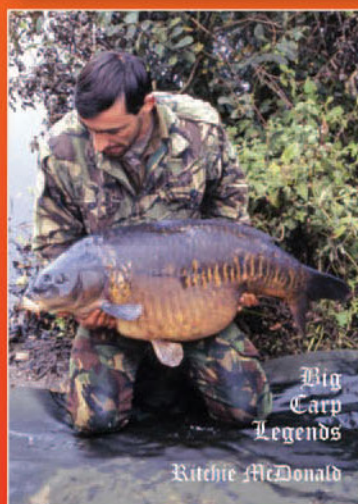
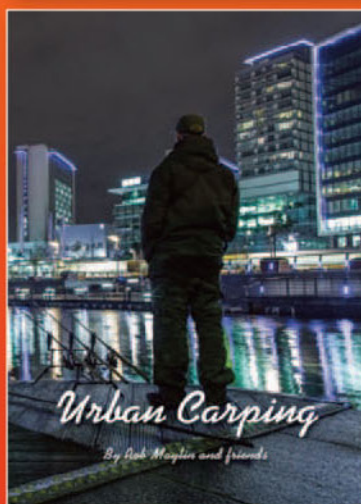
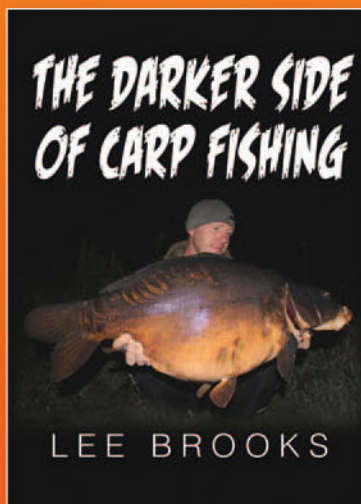


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THE COTSWOLD CROC

By Mitch Hammonds

Eleven years ago, I got my first glimpse of the Croc. A short day trip with Sparsholt College to the Cotswolds was all it took for the grip to take hold of me. An ancient looking, long, scaly beast with apple-slice size scales running along its dark flanks, it got me, and I couldn't wait to one day hold her in my arms. However, It wasn't until seven years later that I'd finally get the chance to wet a line for my prize. Through the years, I watched a few close friends come close and also bank her. I can remember one capture in particular, being awoken at silly o'clock by the almighty "Croc!" roar coming from an angler by the name of Dougie. The one thing I noticed from that capture was the size of this fish's head and mouth – it's huge, and it could literally swallow an apple. After moving away up north for a while with work, one day I was sat at close friend Tom's house, and enough was enough – it was time to start my quest.

I really clicked with the big country park lake; the atmosphere around that place is crazy. There are swimmers in all conditions – rain, sun, snow, sleet, huge winds... they don't care! The boats, windsurfers and general public are



just manic, but it really makes the place something special. Deep, weedy, clear water, rich with invertebrates, crayfish, tench and bream just make it perfect for big scaly carp.

Over the four years on the pit, I managed 58 takes and landed 52, the final two top of the list making it all that more special. There are a number of large mirrors and commons, and one fish certainly liked my tactics! I ended up banking a fish known as Lumpy seven times at various weights from 35lb to 38lb 10oz. Her fat common friend (Floppy Tail) was never far behind and also graced my net four times, usually the following night or on one occasion the same night, but it's sadly no longer in the pond.

A few captors of Croc were lucky to catch the larger mirror prior to the big girl herself, so I always knew I was close, but it just wasn't my time. Luckily just over a month ago, Lumpy was again in the net, and I had good feeling

the Croc would follow, but two, three, four fish later and still no big girl. One perfect morning after a string of fish, I lost two on the bounce in the same morning, both from hook pulls due to crayfish “flattening” the hook points down. I was down, really down, but on a quick walk round to the snags, I found the big girl sat in snags, eating and acting perfectly fine. She was so close, I could clearly see no hook marks in the fish’s mouth at all, so it was still game on.

The following morning produced a another recapture, the Baby Croc, or Patch as some call her, and that was it for a month – no more bites – no bream, tench, nothing again until last week when it all kicked off.

After eventually finding them showing one morning, I was on the move back to the previous month’s spot. It had hardened right up, and the gravel was clearly fed on. Two rigs were fired out, and the next morning two were



Mitch Hammonds

in the net: a mirror of 25lb and the Orange Fish at 35lb. The following day produced a lovely golden 32lb common. Rigs were fired back out, and more bait was applied tight to the plateau.

The following morning, I got the kettle on, and my eyes were focusing on the flat calm. I soon noticed the fizzing over the spot, and before I had chance, the left rod was away. Taking line rapidly off my old mate Neil Dunlop's reels that I'd borrowed. I clamped down hard to stop whatever was on the end before it weeded me up. I gained line until all went solid. At the time the swimmers were out and getting closer to the weeded fish. In the end it turned out to be perfectly timed. As the swimmer went over fish, he spooked it just enough for me to gain control again. After a short burst back to the weedbed, I was completely in control this time, and up to the surface rose a huge mouth followed by the big, long, slanting head of my target fish.

My knees were shaking and my eyes welling up as I reached for the net



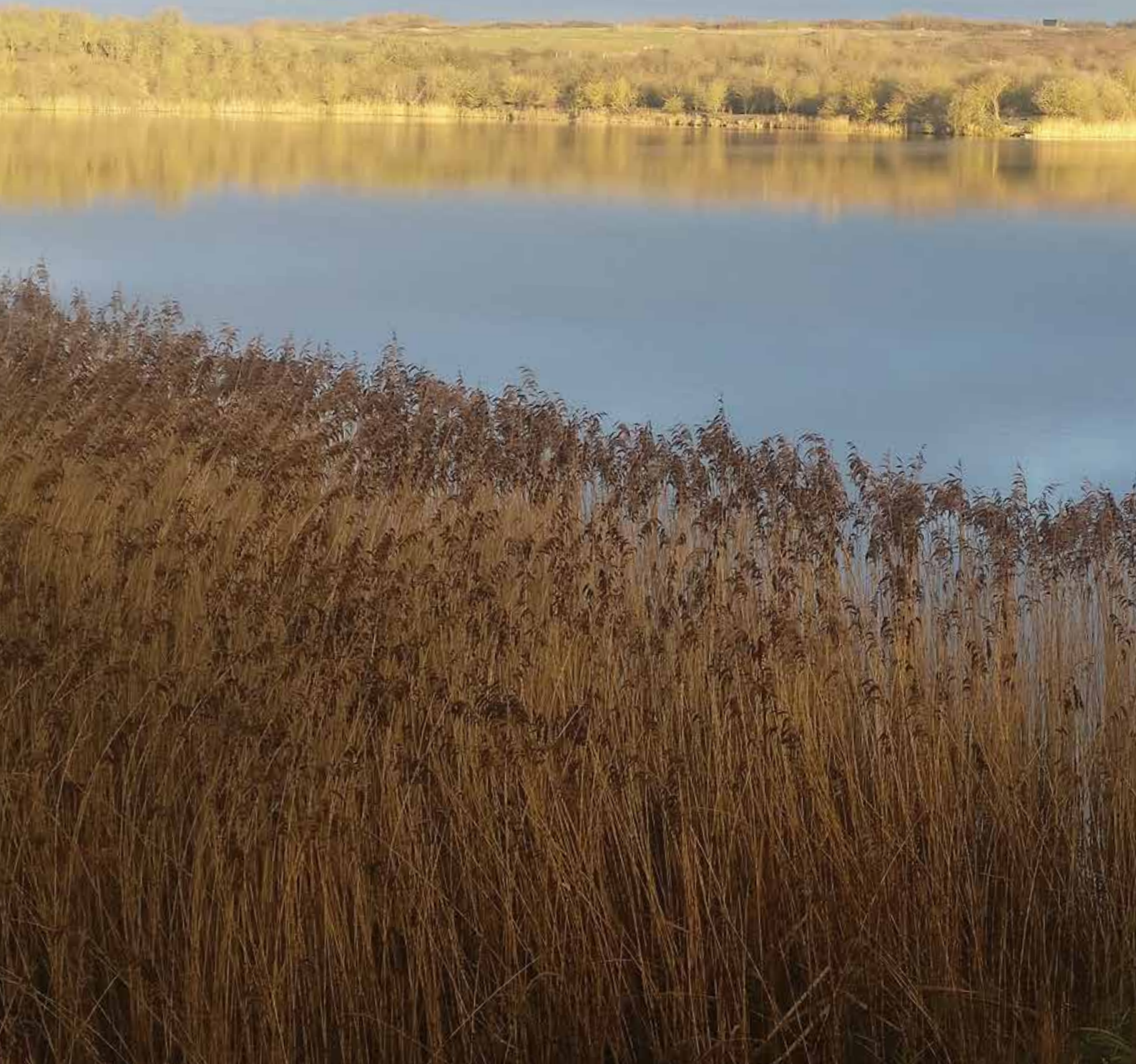
before it was my turn to finally give out the almighty, “CROOOOOOOOOOC!” roar. I was the only angler on at the time, but sure enough anglers from lakes close by heard – it would have been impossible not to. I was stood gazing into the net at such a huge fish when suddenly I was snapped out of my daze by the right hand rod ripping off. A quick battle and the Croc’s Brother was in the net – one of the A-team.

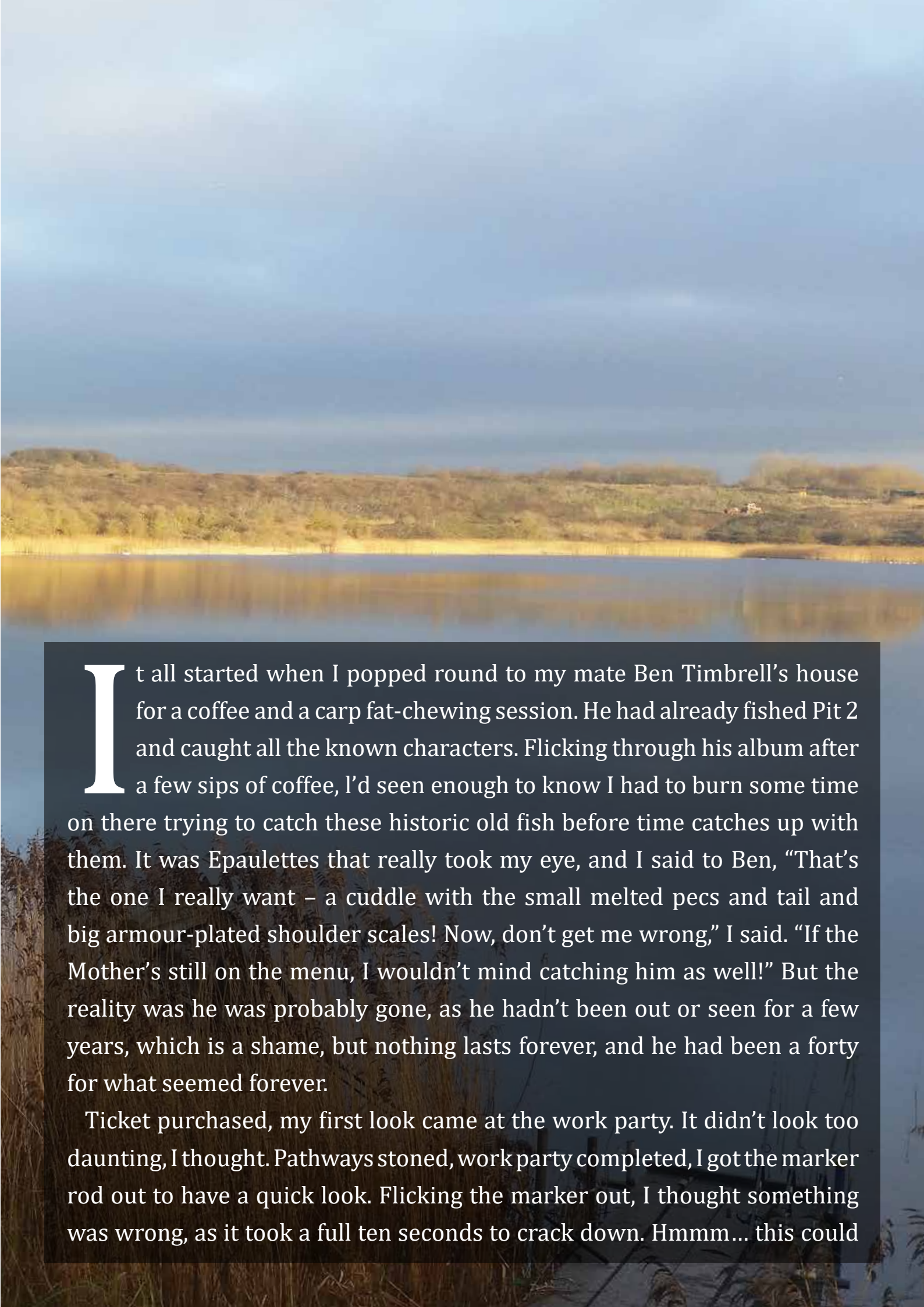
It was an amazing morning shared with amazing friends. I let the lads know and the missus, and we all gathered for photos – truly an event that I will never forget. There are so many people I need to thank – the missus for just about putting up with me, my mum and nan for all their support and all the lads who helped with everything – pics, tackle, bait, money – you name it, we’ve got through it – Jay, Neil, Dave, Tom, Dave G, Sam, Matty, Karl, Adi, Jake and Dan, Matt, John C, Myles, Luke, Dave Brown, Lil’ Karl – all of you, thank you so much. Until the next one, be lucky, stay safe and tight lines!



ELSTOW ADVENTURES

By Peter Hall





It all started when I popped round to my mate Ben Timbrell's house for a coffee and a carp fat-chewing session. He had already fished Pit 2 and caught all the known characters. Flicking through his album after a few sips of coffee, I'd seen enough to know I had to burn some time on there trying to catch these historic old fish before time catches up with them. It was Epaulettes that really took my eye, and I said to Ben, "That's the one I really want – a cuddle with the small melted pecs and tail and big armour-plated shoulder scales! Now, don't get me wrong," I said. "If the Mother's still on the menu, I wouldn't mind catching him as well!" But the reality was he was probably gone, as he hadn't been out or seen for a few years, which is a shame, but nothing lasts forever, and he had been a forty for what seemed forever.

Ticket purchased, my first look came at the work party. It didn't look too daunting, I thought. Pathways stoned, work party completed, I got the marker rod out to have a quick look. Flicking the marker out, I thought something was wrong, as it took a full ten seconds to crack down. Hmmm... this could

Next time I got down to Pit 2 was June due to not being able to fish, as I have a chronic fatigue illness. I watched from the works road, which runs alongside the pit and clocked a couple of shows in Back Bay over on the opposite side. That would do me for a start, and it was 10ft deep max, so much less intimidating than the 30ft areas. A quick lead around with the 6oz lead, and I'd found some onion weed 50 yards out in 8ft of water with a firm patch beneath – excellent for disguising the line lay. I blasted two 20mm multi-rig pop-ups on to the 10ft wide area and catapulted 300 20mm Hall'um Baits P1 fishmeals – job done, time for a coffee.

Rob the bailiff dropped round and cleaned the coffee pot out in true Elstow style. Anybody who has fished it will know that 20kg of bait and 20kg of water is the going rate – hungry fish and thirsty bailiffs. Anyway, he did say I was in a good swim, which gave the confidence a boost, knowing this pit comes with a tough reputation to crack.





The middle of the night had me up with a couple of scaly stockies, and then at first light the first proper one, the Fat Linear at 34lb! Excellent! I'd notched on my first trip. I put 5kg of 20mms on the area and smiled all the way up the motorway back home.

I got back the next week and headed straight for Back Bay, hoping the carp and not the birds had eaten the 5kg. Rods on the spot, fat chewed and coffee consumed, night time came and went, and at first light I was having a smile and a mat wrestle session with a mid-30 called Twisted Scale, one I really wanted to catch. The next night, I caught another batch of stockies and a pretty 33lb unnamed mirror, but then the bites dried up. The fish had got the hump, giving the bay a wide birth, so it was time to find another ambush spot.





I found Epaulettes and Scaly, two I really wanted to add to my list, in Tarmac Bay catching a few rays of sun. They seemed at ease in this bay, I thought, and surely did go far away to feed at night. I had a lead round in a swim called the Terminator, which gave access to a route they used to swim into the bay and found onion weed again on a ledge in around 15ft of water. This would be my ambush spot. I thought one rod in this swim was enough – two or three would just be working against me. If these fish clock lines, they leave the area and don't come back.

I put 5kg of the same boilies on the spot at 40 yards and got back 48 hours later to find Epaulettes and Scaly still contentedly sunning themselves. I couldn't wait to get the rod out, but the question was, had they been down there cleaning up? By 7pm, my question had been answered, and I was playing another mid-30, which turned out to be Scaly, a true old gnarly character. Awesome! Two off the list! I had a 28lb mirror called Little Chernobyl and a really nice fish called the Plum, another upper-20.



The next morning I baited up with another 5kg and was back 24 hours later with the rod in situ by 4pm. I sat quietly until dark, and the night passed uneventfully, but at 9am the ECU buzzer screamed at me to pick the rod up. I was attached to what felt like another good fish, which swam across a shallow hump in front of me. At that point I could see it was Epaulettes. I got the knee shakes on, but it wasn't long before I had an ear-to-ear grin and a long awaited cuddle with her for the album. Don't you just love carp fishing?

My next trip drew a blank, as the fish had done their usual four or five bites off a spot then got the hump and gone over the other side of the lake, so I upped sticks and followed, leading around rod and Polaroids in hand. Next stop the Decoy where I found a ledge at around 18ft. The usual 5kg treatment before casting a line in was working, so I applied that tactic again to the 18ft spot and another spot at 21ft over the back right, well away from the other



line and left them to get their heads down. The next session saw me having a second cuddle with Scaly in two weeks and Little Shoulders in the same afternoon. That was the four named – all sorted, and I was a happy man.

I carried on until Christmas time, as I wanted to catch some of the stunning looking stockies that will eventually take over from the old characters, so to do this I chose the base of a small hump at 37ft in 40ft at 130 yards' range. I wanted to see if I could get bites in this deep water; after all, the carp didn't know it was 40ft – to them it was just home.

I kicked it off with 10kg of Hall,um Baits P3 Winter Nut Mix. It didn't take long for the action to start with the biggest common in there at 35lb in the net, followed by the Fat Two-Tone at 33lb, a couple of repeat 30s and high 20s along with the Fat Twin at 37lb on December the 20th. The Fat Twin concluded my time on Pit 2. I had a cuddle and a smile with most of its characters old and

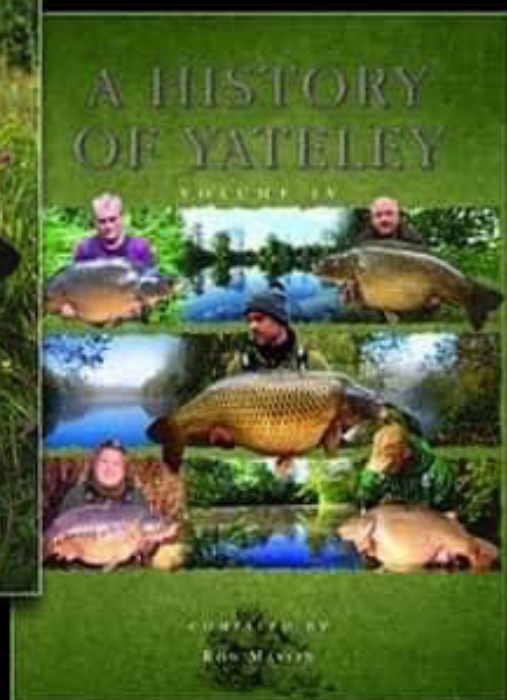
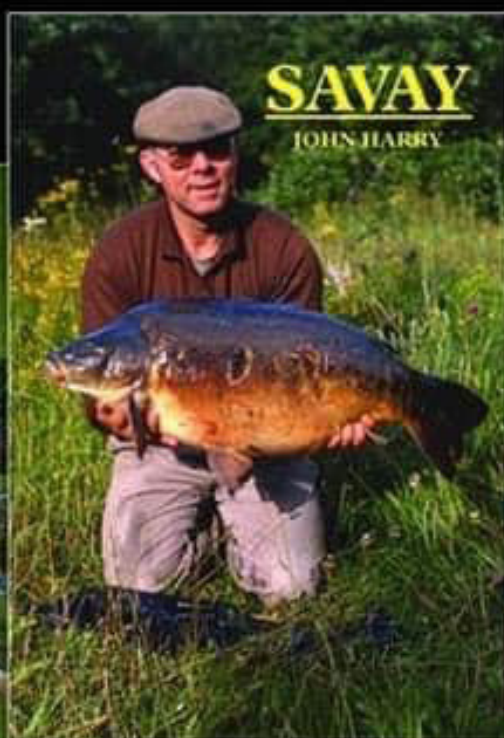
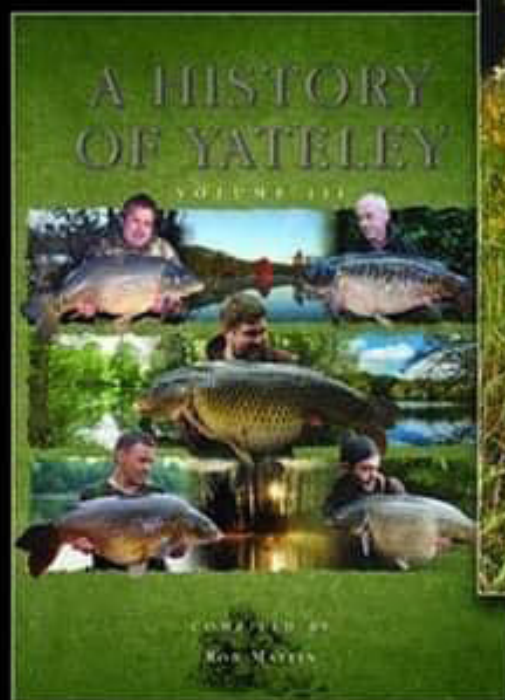
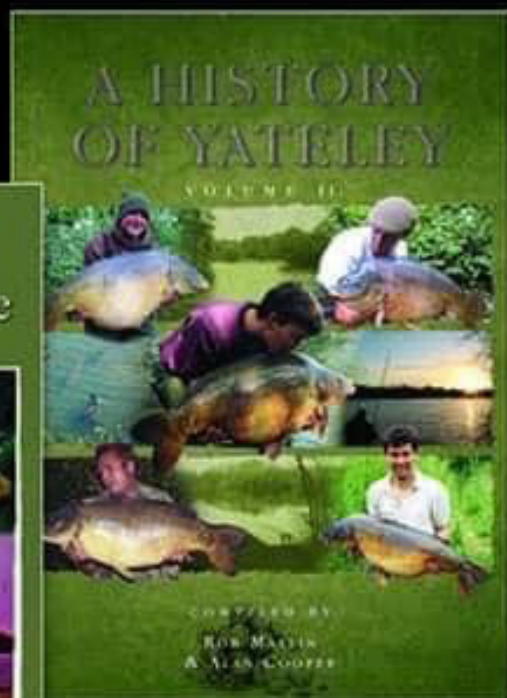
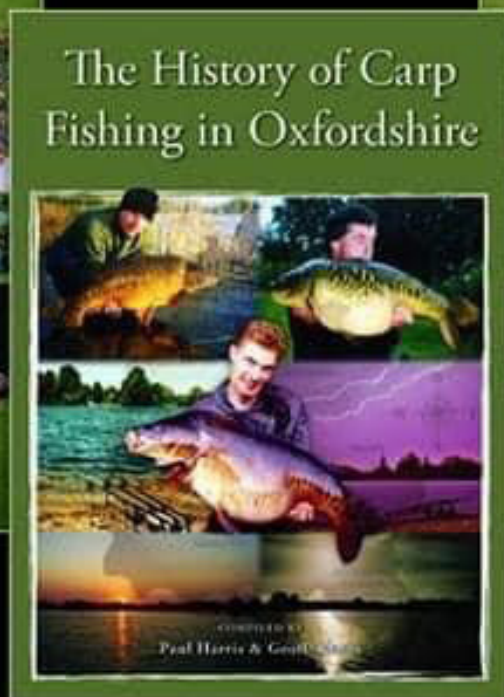
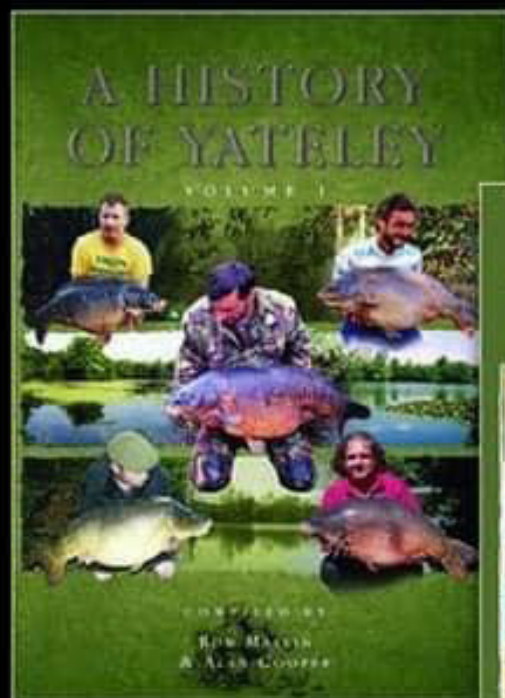
Peter Hall

new. It was a sad time too, as the atmosphere was special with all the old carp and anglers I had met. They were great times and memories. You only get to burn time once, and this was time well burned. Pit 1 was next on the menu – more old scaly beasts, but I'll leave that for part 2...



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THE WALTON HOOVER

By Ralph Walton



I had an epic session on the Quarry a couple of weeks ago, which was certainly worth my 600-mile round trip from Cornwall where I'm working/living for the summer. Not only did I catch 13 stunning carp from 16 bites, but it was topped by a fish, an original, that I so wanted to catch Hoover at 32lb 4oz. I was super stoked when I saw her go in the net & another old scaly one the following morning. I found a spot tight to one of the islands and offered two balanced tiger nuts and put out a couple of handfuls of hemp, chopped up tigers and boilies. My first bite was in the evening on the first day, a plump 24lb mirror. I kept topping the spot up, and the fish kept coming at all different times of the day, with all fish between 20 and 32lb, all mirrors apart from three commons of 25, 28 and 29lb.

I first started fishing the Quarry a year ago and straight away fell in love with the place, its stunning carp and all the history behind it. I fished it once a month until I moved back from Cornwall to Essex last November, and when asked if I wanted a winter ticket, I jumped at the chance. Throughout the winter though, it fished rock hard with only a handful of fish coming out. Luckily for me though, I had a couple of low 20s. But I learnt a lot about the lake and myself and soon began to draw a picture of where and what was going on.

The following spring, after spending so much time here, (I'm here as I write), things started coming together, and I started picking up a few fish from a snag

Ralph Walton

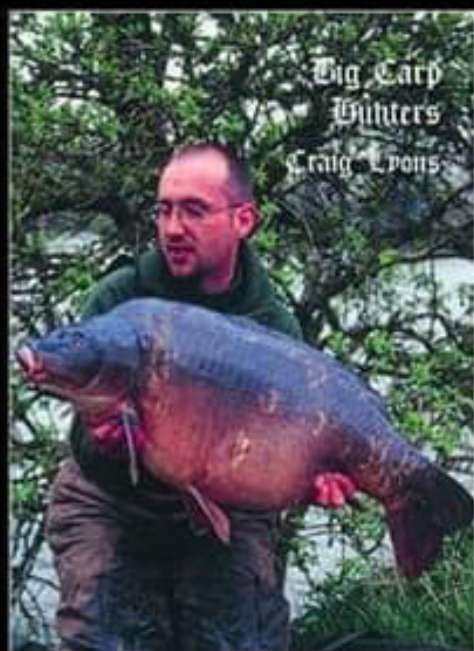
spot, including one incredible 30lber, which Ben Lofting the owner said was such an incredible fish that it needs a name. So after being totally blown away by the gesture I named it Ralph.

What was to follow blew my mind again when the snag spot produced one of the quarry's gems, Chanty, another old original, and my first from the lake. But then my season started again in Cornwall, and I had to move back, but as they say, you can't keep a good man down, and after a few monthly sessions this year where a few fish have graced my net, nothing prepared me for the last session, which was thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated. My season in Cornwall ends in a few weeks, and I'll be back with another winter ticket because there are still a couple of originals and gems I really want to catch, so watch this space!

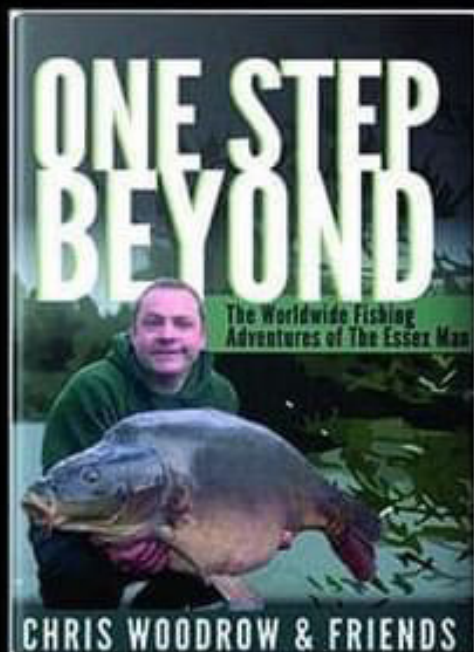
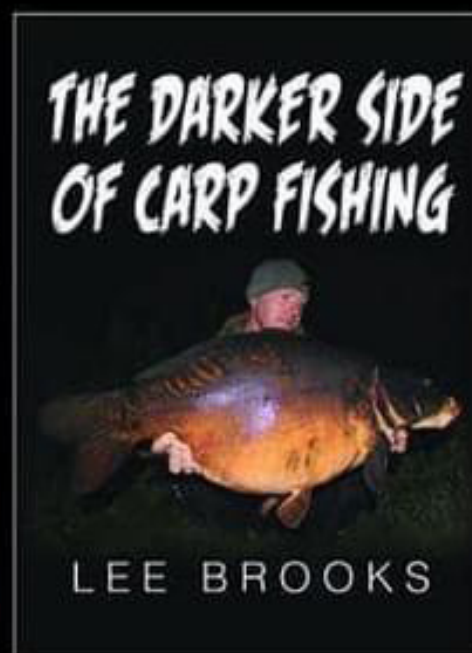




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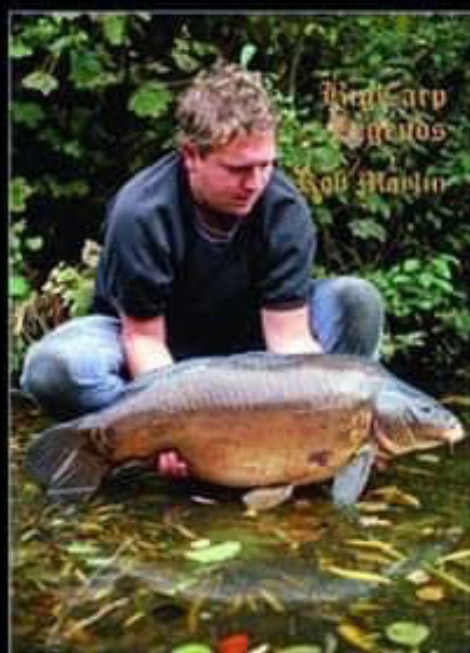
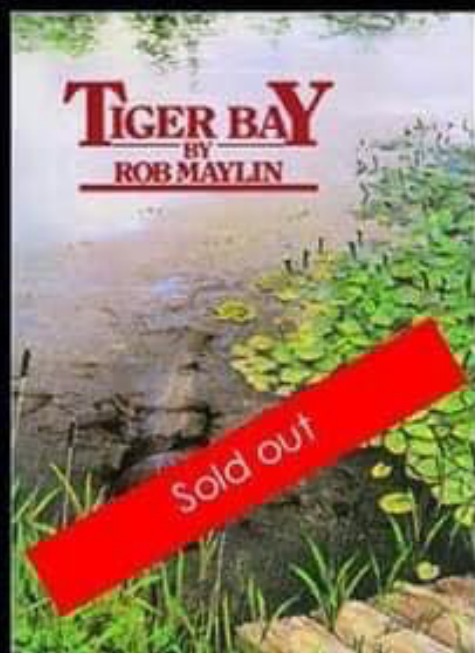
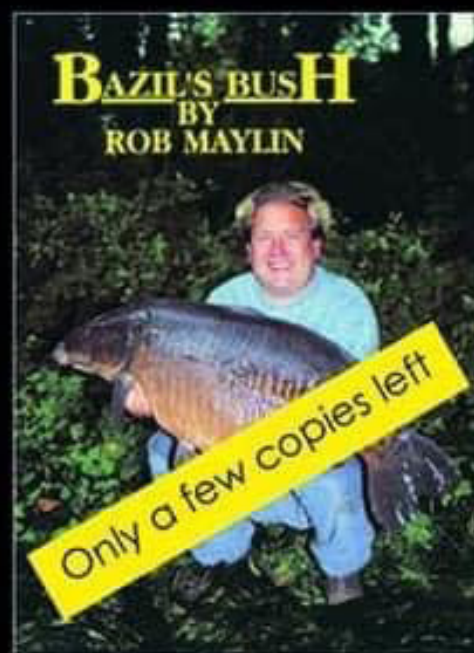
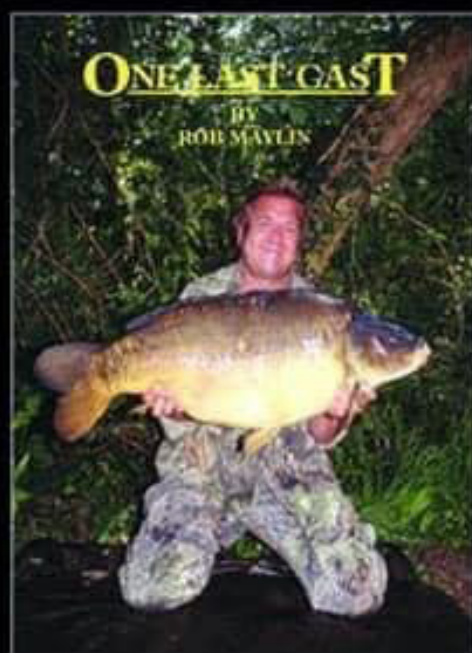
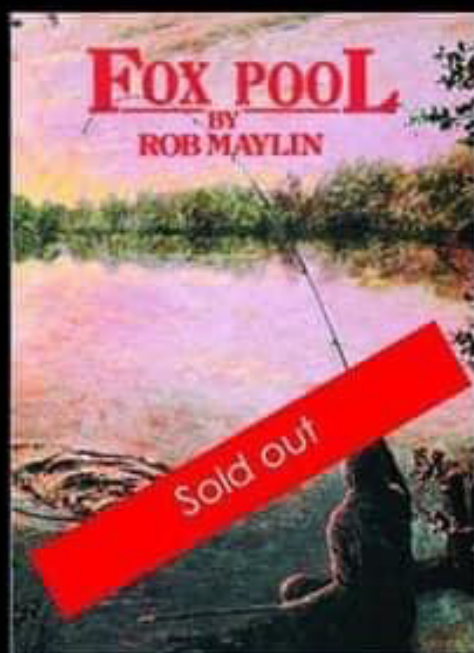
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DIARY OF AN URBAN MYTH

By Terry Dempsey



Rob Maylin: We are into September, and the weather's changing. It's definitely colder in the mornings, and there are the first signs of a few bronze leaves on the trees as I was driving down here this morning to meet up with the urban myth himself, Terry Dempsey. We are only a week away now from the autumn equinox. I suppose most of you know what that is, but it's the time of the year when there are equal amounts of daylight and darkness, which happens twice a year, once in September and once in March. I find those times of the year a turning point in the fishing, a really good time. In March is when the nights start lengthening out, and you can noticeably see a difference in daylight hours in the evening with the fish feeding. It's the same as in September with the approach of winter and the fish knowing that just round the corner there are tough times ahead of them. They know they've got to get their heads down and pack a bit of weight on for the winter, so I've always loved September fishing.

Anyway, I'm in the coffee shop with Tel, and he's been smashing them out, I tell ya, and with such limited time as well. You just can't take it away from this fella; he can certainly catch them both in the UK and abroad. I'm very pleased to meet up with him and let him tell us his story today because I've been following on Facebook and seeing some of the fish he's been catching. I don't know whether you see much of the stuff on Facebook, but if you had,

Terry Dempsey

you would have also seen just this week Tel's just had his all his bloody fishing tackle nicked again – the sixth time or something like that! It's just mental, mate. I hate to think it's anglers nicking anglers' stuff; it's probably not, but you know, it's just a sign of the times. Still, you just can't leave anything anywhere or someone will steal it. We all know as anglers you get an attachment to your tackle over the years, and to have it taken away and know you will never see it again is horrible. I've had my tackle nicked a few times myself. Anyway, I will pass you over to Tel so he can tell us about his fishing at home and abroad.

Terry Dempsey: Good to see you, Rob. Where has this year gone? It seems to go quicker and quicker as we're getting on, doesn't it? I've had quite an eventful summer; I've been really busy with the bait as always throughout the middle and early part of the summer. Every year is the same once you come to the back end of spring. I'm just so busy that I've just got to concentrate on





that, but during the summer holidays, I tend to get out a bit more, and once the kids have broken up for school and Daniel goes and stays with his nan, I get a bit more time. I've had a few good sessions, and I suppose the first really good session that I had was with my old mate Bob Copeland down to the reservoirs – old Two and Three – for the day.

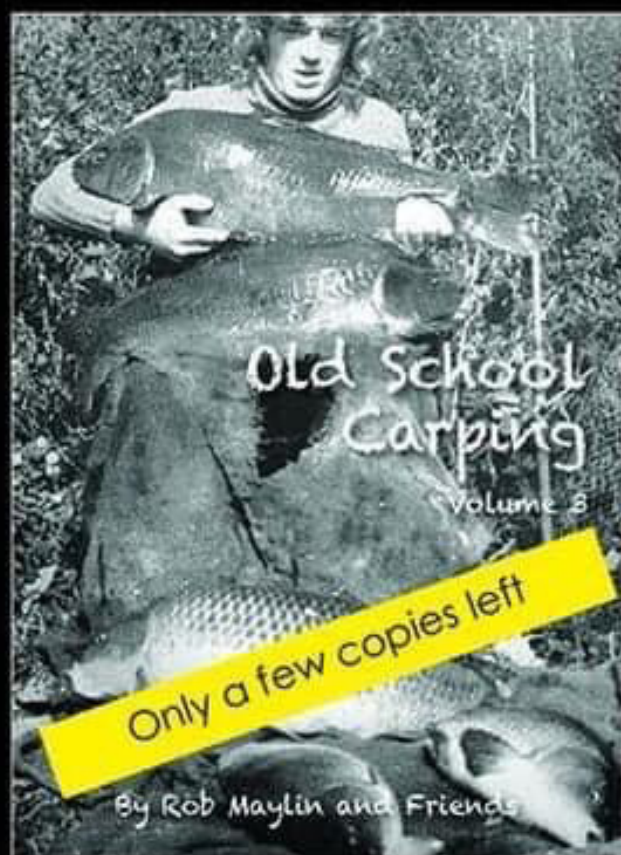
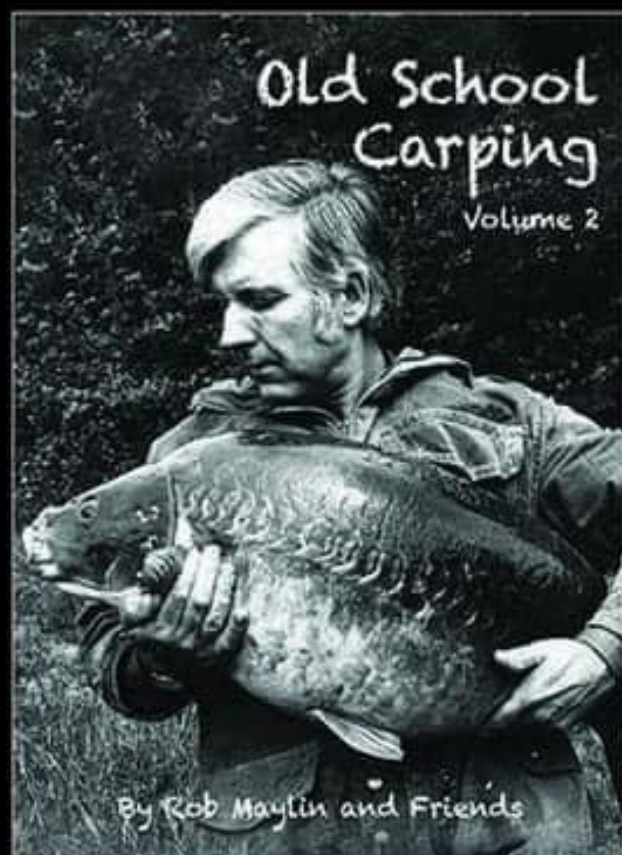
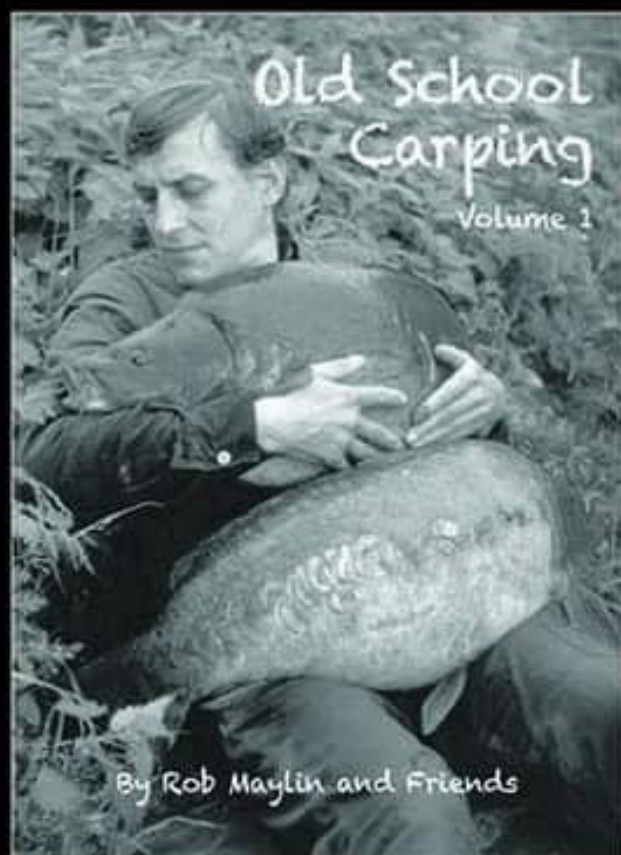
We hadn't been up there for quite a while, and there had been a big fish kill on the Number One, but we had been told that all the decent ones were still in the Three and the Two, so we thought we'd go have a look up there. As you know, I've fished the resies since I was about fifteen... well... no... twelve years of age, and it's strange that I'm still fishing for the same fish that I was fishing for then, which was great. I was catching some of those fish in the early 80s you know, and here we are in 2017, and I'm still fishing for the same old fish! It's insane, isn't it?

We originally we went down there to do a bit of filming with Alan Stag for

Terry Dempsey



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Urban Bait to go on our YouTube channel. We did an afternoon down there, Warren Fenn and me. We didn't see much in the morning; we sat in the Two and we saw one fish, and then I went and had a little walk up to the Three and saw about four or five fizzing up all in close, so I grabbed Warren and we fished with one rod. We did a bit of filming, and then Warren had to go, but I hung on for an hour or two more, and all of a sudden the rod was away with a lovely common of about 20lbs. I was really over the moon; I really love fishing the Two and Three – I've fished over there for so long. I put him back in the water and thought, I'm going to come have another go at this 'cos obviously there were quite a lot of fish there.

About a week later, Bob and I went down there early in the morning, and there was no one there at all. We barrowed our gear up to the Three. The gate opens at seven, and a lot of the guys down there we met on the previous trip were saying single hookbaits, stringers, and stuff like that were working, so we took a bit of notice of what they said and put a couple of rods out between us. Bob put all his rods out on just singles and stringers. I put one or two rods out on light baiting, but then, as I've always loved putting a lot of bait in, especially over the reservoirs, I stuck one right out in the middle about eighty yards, and I must have put 25 spods on it full of boilies, a mixture of 18mms and 14mms and a bit of crumbed-up bait.

I stood there spodding for ages, and a guy turned up opposite me. You could see he was pulling his hair out seeing me putting all this bait out and probably thinking what is he doing just for a day session? I was thinking the same, considering what I'd been told, but we were only there a couple of hours when the rod with all the bait around it was away, and I had a big old fish on the end, chugging up and down. Now this fish fought so hard, it was unreal! It really did power off in every direction. When we got it in, it was one of the big, old, original mirrors, jet black, absolutely stunning with loads of scales all over it and about 36lbs. It's probably one of the biggest mirrors of the originals left in the Three, so I was well happy!



I got the rod back out there with another dozen or fifteen spods of boilie, and an hour later I got another one – 29lbs and an absolute beauty – jet black. So that was a good start to the summer holidays. Bob ended up putting a bit of bait out there too. He was in the next swim along, and he went and spodded up a load of bait and he had two as well. So we nicked four fish in a few hours' fishing – all cracking old fish and real beauties.

The following week I had a bit of a grueller. I went down to Savay and did a few days down there. I got in the swim where the fish were, but they were showing at long range. They were at about 140 yards, and I didn't have any tackle to get out there. The rods I was using probably max out at about 120, and I was dropping well short. I sat there for three days and didn't get anything, but every morning I was seeing one or two heads pop out right out on the other margin at about 140/145, so I had all the intentions in the

Terry Dempsey

world to get back down there with lighter line, as I was using really heavy line down there.

The following week I was off rota. My son was away, and my wife had gone as well to the mother-in-law's, so, you know... when the cat's away, the mice come out to play, as I do every year when they go away in the summer holidays. We decided to go down to Linch Hill on the Christchurch complex. I fished it about three or four years ago, and I think I caught a nice old scaly mirror that I thought I would put in your magazine. It was an absolute belter, and I always said I wanted to go back, as the fish in there are stunners.

Anyway, we went down there with a fella I know called Steve. He likes using our bait and said he would come down there with us. We got down there in the morning as the gate opened, and the place was absolutely packed, but there were a couple of lads packing up. One lad was moving swims; he'd had a fish, and while we stood there, a couple of big heads came up, but he



fancied his chances further up the bank. So he packed up, and I asked if he minded if I got in there. He said it was no problem at all. Anyway, I went in there and chopped a load of bait up. I must have had about ten or fifteen kilos of bait. I literally found a couple of spots just at the back of the weed, and I got a nice drop on them. You could tell the fish had been feeding on them – they were nice and clear. I got loads of bait out there; I stood there Spombing it out for a good couple of hours and got a big slick going full of salmon oil.

To cut a long story short, in next few days, I hooked four fish, which was a right result. The following morning I had the Fighting Machine, which is a really long, cracking old 35lb mirror, an absolute beauty, so I was over the



Terry Dempsey

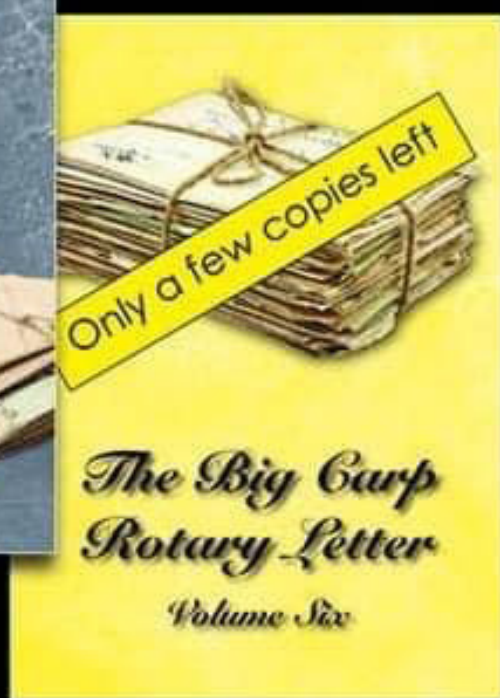
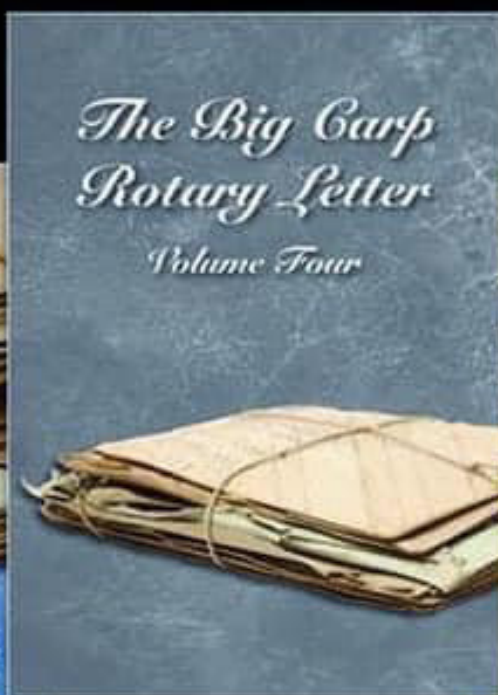
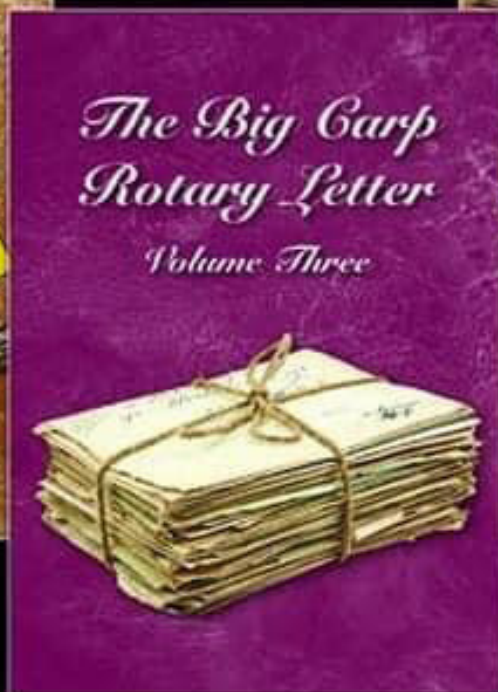
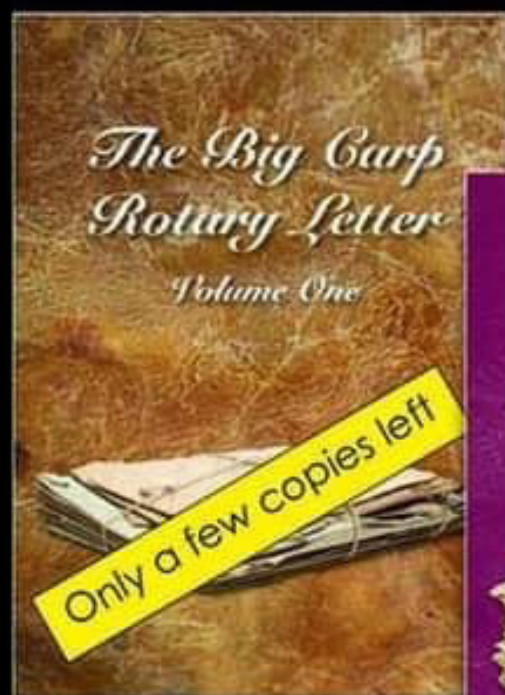
moon with that great start to the session. The following morning we had a big storm come in. It was raining all morning, and it was about eleven o'clock when I got a screaming take. I played this fish in, and it weeded me up. I couldn't move it; I had it on for about an hour, and one of the lads down the bank phoned the bailiff. The bailiff came down, and we went out in the boat and got it moving. We netted it, and it was a fish called the Coke Can Common, which is one of the big forty commons in there. We weighed it, and it was just under 40 spawned out, but obviously I was over the moon – two nights and two of the big fish.

About an hour later, the same rod was off again. I played this fish in, and it weeded me up again. I put the rod back on the rest, and it started moving



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again. I got this big common right to the net, easily as big as the one that I'd just put back. There is a fish in there that's called the Toe Jam Common. Anyway, my friend was out there with the net, and he said, "That's the Toe Jam Common!" Just as we were pulling it over the net, the hook came out, so that was a bit of a miserable one.

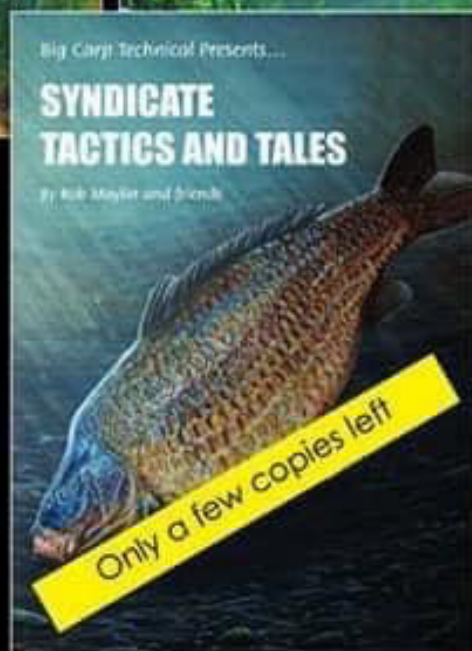
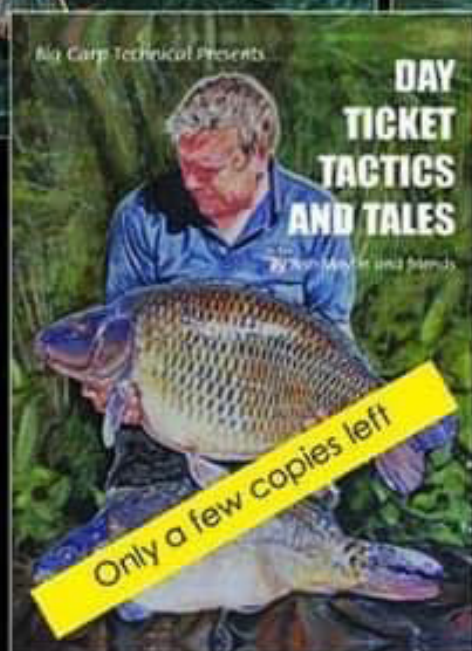
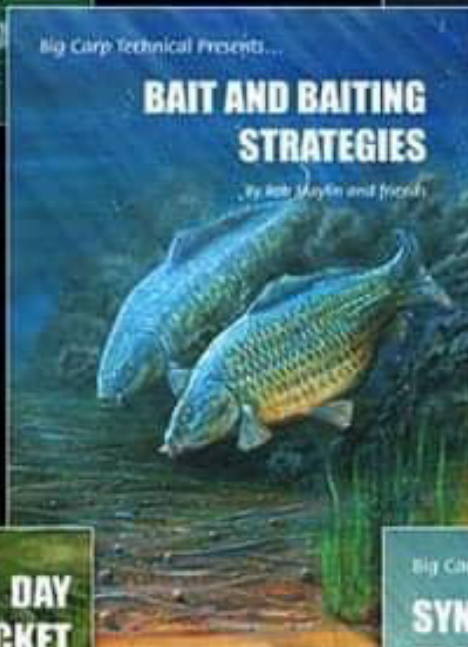
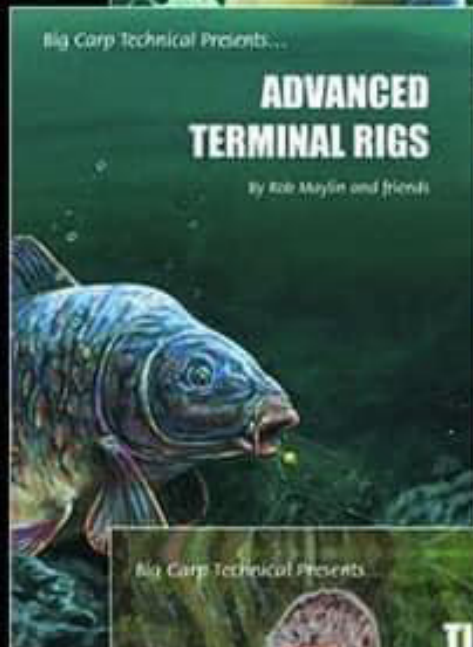
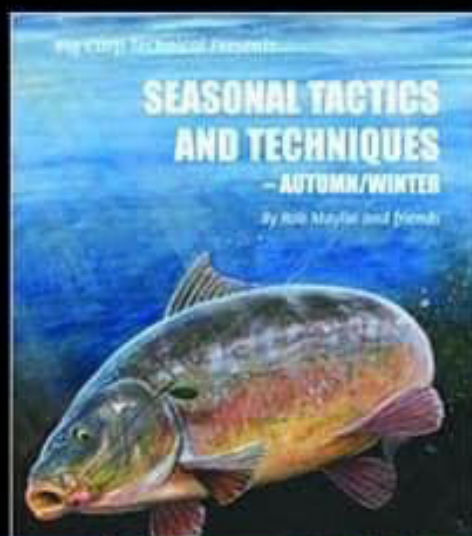
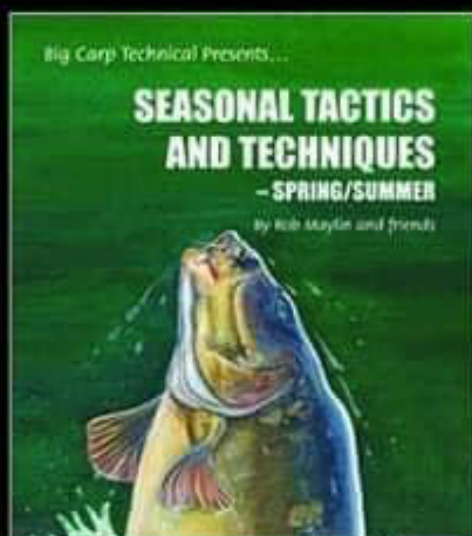
The following morning, I got another nice scaly mirror, and Steve who I went with caught one as well, a 20lb common, so we had a great trip, and I didn't want to go home! I met some great lads down there who started using our bait; they started catching straight away, and they have had some great fish since I left up to mid forties, which is great. I haven't had a chance to get back down because I've been so busy, and also I had a trip planned in Croatia. As you know, I never really fish abroad; I don't really get the time to fish in this country as much as I'd like, so fishing abroad is a bit of a no-no. But there is a guy who uses our bait, and he runs our Urban Baits Austrian page. He's been asking me for the last year to come out and fish Lake Sumbar in Croatia. A few guys he knows are going out there, and they have booked the whole lake. Anyway, I really wanted to go, but I didn't fancy the thought of driving for two days on my own at all.

We went to Carp in the Park with Urban Baits, and while I was there, I bumped into Frank Warwick and chatted to him. I get on well with Frank, and while having a good chat with him, he said, "I'm going to Lake Sumbar in a couple of weeks' time," and I said, "You're joking! I'm meant to be going there too! I've got a free swim!" He said, "Jump in with us, then!" So we matched the dates up, and they all corresponded, and that was it – before I knew it, all the gear was loaded up into Frank's van. There was me, Dave, one of Frank's friends – an old school angler – and another lad, Henrik from Norway, and we all drove out there. We had a two-day drive, which was an absolute grueller. I think we went through seven countries: France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Slovenia and then into Croatia.

NEXT MONTH: Terry gets to grips with the mighty Lake Sumbar

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