FULL STORY: Angler's Mail to end soon



Mail legend Dave Coster's SIGGESC

the next TV chapter

GREYS



Anglers FISH OF THE



CRUCIAN CARP- 4 Ib 1 oz87.8% of
British
record

RUDD ace Riz Warman is in blistering form, having caught 13 fish of over 2 lb in two months. His latest two sessions, his last for the species this year, gave him Fen Drain beauties of 2 lb 10 oz, 2 lb 3 oz and 3 lb 3 oz.

March, Cambridgeshirebased Riz has continued to pre-bait mashed and crumbed bread, to keep the fish interested. He then returned to fish in the evenings, presenting slow-sinking bread flake on a size 10 wide gape hook. His second session of the weekend produced the biggest fish, just as daylight faded. Riz said: "I was having real trouble seeing my float, but small fish had started taking the loosefeed. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a good fish roll to my



left, only six yards out from where I was standing. I cast a bait there and almost immediately my float disappeared.



STUART TURNER enjoyed a productive 24 hours at British record crucian carp water Johnsons Lake, in Surrey, the best of his fish being this 4 lb 1 oz giant. The 40-year-old taxi driver from Wookey Hole, Somerset, added other crucians of 3 lb 14 oz, 3 lb 11 oz, 3 lb 10 oz and 3 lb 8 oz at the Godalming AS venue, which produced two equal-record fish, of 4 lb 10 oz, in 2015.

Stuart said: "They were tempted on a Method feeder with corn, and I caught a 15 lb mirror and a 20 lb common by accident."

. .

"As it was so close to me, I just bundled it into the landing net. I thought to myself 'that's big', and I weighed it at 3 lb 3 oz, beating the personal best that I'd set the week before by 3 oz. I couldn't believe it," concluded Riz.





■ CRAIG FISHER landed one on the six big sturgeon at New Celtic Lakes after hooking this massive 102 lb specimen. Telford, Shropshire-based Craig said: "I started the session by fishing tight to an island. After a few hours of nothing, and no signs of fish, I started to explore my swim a little more with my lead, to see if I could find any features to use to my advantage. "After about 20 minutes I

found some natural food, big clam-like shells, which I were wrapped around my main line. "I then put out a few handfuls of 20 mm Retro Baits Squid N Octopus boilies to the same spot, then dropped a rig consisting of a size 4 long shank hook with a snowman set-up on a long hair. At 4am the rod screamed off and after a 40-minute battle I landed a beast of a sturgeon."

JORDAN PASHLEY is in good form at Cambridgeshire's prolific Monks Pit, having bagged the much-sought-after Blackspot at 48 lb 9 oz for the third time in as many months. Arlesey, Bedfordshire-based Jordan offered Sticky Baits The Krill Active boilies at long range. His September successes have earned him a prize from Carp Global – see p.11.



E-MAIL YOUR PICTURES TO: anglersmail @futurenet.com

INSIDE this Oct. 6, 2020 issue.

The queen of Kings Weir

HIS dream barbel, a new venue record, crowned Stephane Van Langenberg's testing trip to the River Lea.

The business development manager smashed his PB when he banked the 17 lb 3 oz stunner from the Lea's famous Kings Weir, in Hertfordshire. The 32-year-old Enfieldbased angler said: "It was verified by fishery manager Andy Tredgett and another witness. Needless to say, I'm absolutely over the moon. "It would seem that Kings Weir holds a 'queen'. What's never seen, though, are the painstaking blanks endured to winkle out a dream fish.

"With anglers packed up on the far bank, I couldn't help but suppose that a mini feast was rolling its way down to meet my carpet of feed. I punched one rig out. My beloved local river is famed to throw up a surprise every so often, but nothing prepared me for this giant to test the integrity of my light hook link and quiver top. "An entire monologue is needed to describe the unbelievable fight that ensued in those wondrous depths. Staying poised was out of the

question, indicated by my 'jelly legs'. The experience of catching this specimen is one to be cherished, breaking my old 12 lb 6 oz PB by a landslide.

"The bait I used is a natural one, although I wouldn't like to divulge exactly what it was.
However, it was fished over chopped worm and hemp," revealed Stephane.
Kings Weir was one of the wonderful venues visited during the acclaimed third TV series of *Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing*. Find out about the next chapter for

the BBC show in p.5.



DAVE COSTER'S

FAVOURITE FISH AND TACTICS

COVER star Dave Coster is truly an *Angler's Mail* living legend. He's been a popular figure in the magazine for 40 years. Like the rest of the *AM* team, past and present, he's very sad about the imminent closure, explained in p.4. But Dave is here, sharing his experience, in all of our final weekly issues during October. He looks at his favourite species and key methods in p.34/35.

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victory, plus river & canal results

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THERE'S STILL TIME TO APPEAR IN ANGLER'S MAIL! This weekly magazine will, very sadly, be closing at the end of October (see p.4/5), but you can still join the masses of anglers who have appeared in print with us. If you've made a great recent catch, please email pix & info exclusively to: **anglersmail@futurenet.com**

DEVIS GOT A STORY? Email news editor Thomas Petch: anglersmail@futurenet.com Or call 01252 555051.

We're going... but not just yet, folks!

Angler's Mail magazine is very sadly set to close after a farewell issue that will go on sale on October 27. Tim Knight, *AM* editor for the past 18 years, and a staff man for over 29 years, reveals the reason why.

HANK you for reading this issue of Angler's Mail magazine, reading previous issues, and hopefully reading the final ones that we will bring to you in the weeks ahead. I don't usually start an Editor's Welcome slot with a 'thank you', but publications of all kinds are just self-indulgence without readers. Angler's Mail has been running since 1964, written by anglers and read by anglers. There have been numerous relaunches of the mag, and the current AM team and those before us had umpteen challenging hurdles to overcome. Now, in this most crazy of years, 2020, our course is sadly nearing its end. AM magazine will carry on for the next few weeks, the last issue on sale Tuesday, October 27. We aim to sign off as strongly as we can, ending with a 'farewell' issue. It will mark the end of an era. We have already been bombarded with kind messages and personal memories since the sad news was confirmed. It's overwhelming; thank you all. If you are reading the news

for the first time right here, I am sorry to break it to you.

week. Advertisers, sponsors, organisations and officials have helped us along the way.

launched recently. Check it out. You'll find AM advice and tips, plus lots more great stuff on the site right now. Lots more will go live over the months and years ahead. The AM staff have not left the building yet (we're working remotely from home, anyway). We are 100 per cent committed to producing top quality AM issues during October, before we bow out. The next three issues (October 13, October 20 and October 27) will be on stockists' shelves and heading to subscribers. Subscribers will receive a letter, outlining options, very soon.

2

Tough times

So, we are here, nearing the end of the line for *Angler's Mail,* as we know it, after our owner, Future plc, confirmed its intention to close the magazine for business reasons.

The main national Covid lockdown squeezed all print sales severely, and shopping habits have changed. Despite this, a resurgence in mid-summer sales gave *AM* magazine a brief bounce-back amid a boom in UK angling. However, as in every recent year for print magazines and newspapers, overall sales in shops are still consistently down year-on-year.

Seeking a buyer for *AM* and other options were investigated by management before they reached their final decision. It's a heartbreaking one for us all. Excellent contributors, great guests and YOU, valued readers, have made it possible for the *AM* staff (past and present) to produce a consistently interesting product, to tight deadlines, every single While so many magazines have come and gone, especially within angling, *AM* has survived as a weekly print title for over 56 years.

In recent times we have done our utmost to continue the mag, adjusting to staffing cuts and restricted budgets.

This has, of course, been against the background of shrinking public demand for print, and strident advances in free online content, notably via social media and video, and the growth in use of smartphones. Not too long ago, mags and newspapers were the 'internet', but the world has changed.

Print revenues have slid, nearly all magazines having lost newsstand sales, and *AM* has been going into fewer stockists. 2020's events have helped accelerate this downturn.

Final casts

Good luck on your next session, we hope you catch a good 'un. There's still time to appear in *AM* mag, like hundreds of thousands, probably millions, of anglers have proudly done during the past six decades. The main address to email your pix and info is: anglersmail@ futurenet.com All the best until next week's issue. Stay aboard and enjoy the epic ride to the end.

The future

Our new owners, Future plc, are leaders in digital media, and have already started incorporating some fishing content into advnture.com,



TIM KNIGHT EDITOR

about their favourite magazine memories, with or without images, to: **amletters@futurenet.com** Some of these reflections will appear in the print mag soon, including the final, special issue at the end of this month.

READERS' COMMENTS on Angler's Mail magazine - see p.62.

Smiles all round – Bob Mortimer and Paul Whitehouse in full laughter in an episode of their third TV series, which was shown over six consecutive Sunday evenings.



Bob & Paul set to go fourth! Great news for hit BBC TV show New series announced 1.8 million viewers

MORE angling will be on primetime television after the BBC announced last week that they have commissioned a fourth series of *Mortimer and Whitehouse: Gone Fishing.*

The third series, featuring comedians Paul Whitehouse and Bob Mortimer, who are helped behind the scenes by guide and *Angler's Mail* columnist John Bailey, has just finished on BBC 2.

Strong audience figures were consolidated, with an average audience of 1.8 million across the series. It was slightly down on the second series, which averaged 2.14 million viewers, but above the 1.5 million who watched the first series, which was repeated several times by the Beeb, before being bought for airing by Dave (a British free-to-air television channel) this year. Paul told Angler's Mail: "It's great news to get a fourth series, as it gives me a chance to drag Bob out of his house. "It is always a challenge filming the show, as we only get a couple of days for each episode, and there are cameras

everywhere, which isn't always great when trying to get a bite from a wily fish.

"Having Bob fall over doesn't help either, but huge fish aren't the main draw of any of the episodes, and I think many anglers can relate to that. "A lot of anglers have realised that getting on the bank, even if it is the first time in years, is the important thing, especially in these Covid-19 times.

"I love doing the show. It is a dream job to be able to fish and visit some of the nicest

66 It's great news to get a fourth series, as it gives me a chance to drag Bob out of his house.

Paul Whitehouse



places in Britain. It's amazing," concluded Paul.

Bob said: "I love doing this show. I'm over the moon to get the chance to go fishing with Paul again. I'm already working on heart-healthy recipes to cook and new ways to irritate him."

Patrick Holland, controller for BBC 2, said: "With so many rivers left to fish, so many stories to be told, and so many new ways for Bob to fall over, it was inevitable that this glorious series would return. Thank you Bob and Paul for making a truly unique show."

A date for the fourth series to be aired hasn't been set yet, but it is expected to be shown in the summer of 2020.

Angler's Mail columnist John Bailey is already busy behind the scenes, sussing out prime locations for the stars to tackle. Last week Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing was awarded a Televisual BullDog Award, and has been nominated for a TV Times Award. You can vote for the show at www.whatsontv.co.uk/ tvtawards2020

Paul and Bob are within touching distance of recording their fourth series after gaining a big vote of confidence from the BBC.

DEWS GOT A STORY? Email news editor Thomas Petch: anglersmail@futurenet.com Or call 01252 555051.

Nhole Lot of cat! 2.5 m 220 lb beast Brit abroad's boat filled Holiday business struggle

FISHING holiday host Jim Lightfoot has caught one of the biggest catfish in France - this estimated 220 lb beast from the River Lot - but he has revealed that Covid-19 travel restrictions are causing chaos for his business.

Experienced big fish man Jim offers customers at his quality riverside accommodation the chance to tackle carp to over 50 lb, zander to 20 lb-plus and colossal catfish. He was thrilled with his latest giant, and it's a firm reminder that French waterways have hidden wild treasures. A stretch of the Lot much higher upriver produced a surprise monster mid-70 lb carp for *Mail* editor Tim Knight last year. Mancunian Jim said: "This is a colossal, 2.5-metre giant, really gorgeous with a deep black mottled colour. "A big bream livebait was its downfall, species that they regularly prey upon here. Just look how it fills my 2.7-metre inflatable boat. "I'd seen this catfish feeding back in August when I was with my wife, and I said I'd go back and catch it. I caught it in exactly the same spot I saw it. "It is almost impossible for me to weigh them while on the boat, so I just measure them. I had a 2.45 m catfish while fishing from the bank, which weighed 220 lb, and this catfish is of similar size.



Alien control – the Angling Trust, environment groups and government agencies are joining forces to help halt the spread of a highly invasive non-native plant that's choking UK rivers and lakes.

Tiny fragments of floating pennywort, a North American species first discovered in Essex in 1990, can grow at an incredible 20 cm a day, forming dense rafts on the surface that block out light, stifle native plants, and make rivers and lakes less suitable for insects, fish and other wildlife. **Reading & District AA fisheries** manager Del Shackleford said: "Working collectively is the only way to deal with any invasive species, particularly one such as pennywort. With the EA, as with all organisations of their type, struggling to earmark funds and manpower, it's up to collectives to orchestrate funding, planning and delivery in a holistic manner, if we stand any chance of eradicating this environmental nuisance."



Del Shackleford is delighted to see joint efforts on halting the spread of pennywort.

Spawning cover-up? – the Angling Trust is angry at how the Environment Agency handled vital evidence for a planned fish barrier in a conservation area, and is considering action via Fish Legal. The row is over the barrier at Norfolk's Hoveton Great Broad, planned by Natural England. It is part of a £4.5 million scheme by NE to improve water quality. The Trust had to use Freedom Of Information legislation to force the EA to make public the views of their seven-year, £250,000 fish study, which showed that the proposed barriers would harm the recruitment of bream stocks. AT chief policy advisor Martin Salter said: "We now have it in black and white that the decision by the EA to grant a permit for these disastrous fish barriers was fundamentally flawed. "They've come up with the excuse of demanding the 'peer review' of every piece of technical advice that they offer in future. If this precedent is established, the EA will have committed a monumental act of self-harm."

"Normally I just admire them

Hulk on the hull – well-travelled carp and specimen fish angler Jim Lightfoot squeezed this monster river catfish into his boat.

for their sheer strength and unhook them at the side of the boat and see them swim off.

"The coronavirus pandemic has been dreadful for the whole of the travel industry, including for angling holidays abroad.



"I'd say since March some 60 per cent of my bookings were cancelled, and about the same number for next year. It is just dreadful. I'm just about keeping my head above water.

"If there's a vaccine in place

66 The 14-day quarantine stops guests from coming. 55

Jim Lightfoot

for next spring, I will be okay, but who knows when that will happen, if at all.

"I still have plenty of guests willing to travel, but the 14-day quarantine on return stops them from coming. "Hopefully, that quarantine will be lifted by next spring at least, to give people a chance to come out to France and not have to self-isolate for two weeks on their return," concluded Jim.

Jim's jumbo cat filled his dinghy.



What latest lockdowns mean for our fishing • Regional & county restrictions • Angling okay, even if travel affected



YOUR ANGLING WEEK AHEAD

Lunar predictions

Exclusive lunar predictions for October 6-12, written by the UK's leading astrologer **Marion Williamson**.

TUE: the chatty Gemini Moon brings new ideas to the table and encourages you to add some variety to your usual session. Chop and change as much as you like for best results.

WED: a challenging angle from fishy Neptune may slow or postpone your fishing plans. If you can't get out, read up on techniques and tips, or learn from experts online. **THU:** a watery Cancerian Moon is always an auspicious time for anglers. PBs lurk beneath the surface, and any fishing sessions should have a calming influence. **FRI:** Mercury kicks everyone awake today, lending speed and quick reactions to anglers with their eye on the float, tip or indicator. **SAT:** the Moon forms tense angles to three outer planets today. It's sink or swim! You'll bag up or blow out. **SUN:** a generous Leo Moon meets with unexpected events, throwing a few spanners in the works. Plan to get lost or for gear to misbehave. Bring extra coffee or other drink to help keep your full focus. **MON:** a helpful, sporting Mars highlights competitions and strong moves. Don't dither, the cosmos favours the bold today.

The ugly nature of the Covid-19 pandemic is creating ever-changing conundrums around the UK.

NGLING is still allowed In areas of extended coronavirus lockdown in the UK, but in many areas you can't meet a mate on the bank. Vast swathes of the Midlands, North West and North East of England and many areas of Wales are on a local lockdown, but at the moment angling is still allowed. Match fishing is also still permitted, as it's part of an organised sporting event, but in some areas spectators aren't allowed to watch. BobCo Tackle, a top shop in lockdown Leeds, in West Yorkshire, still says fishing is booming in and around the city.Shop assistant Jonathan Howard said: "We're advising all of our customers to be safe and only meet up on the bank with members of their own bubble. Most people just fish alone anyway. "The advice is just be sensible. People know what the risks are, although the rules are very confusing and haven't been explained well. "During the main lockdown in the spring, we did meet with council leaders. Angling is a safe pastime and we can see no reason why it can't continue.



blood, and it is very safe to fish as long as you obey all the rules on social distancing and mask wearing when in indoor public spaces.

Some shops could go out of business.
Mike Heylin

"We've had a lot of new customers over the summer, as people are getting into or back into the sport, and it is great to see. I know bait sales have been really good, much better than last year," he added.

Angling Trades Association vice chairman Mike Heylin hopes the government doesn't extend any lockdown rules to banning and restricting angling. Mike said: "I would be very worried if they extended rules to ban any hobbies in certain regions, as it would only mean anglers travelling to places that they could fish, and that could be worse for the spread of the virus. "Anglers have fishing in their "Even with the summer of the angling boom, some shops are still struggling. Any further measures to shut them down wouldn't be good, some could go out of business," warned Mike.

Stricter lockdown rules in some areas of Wales, including Cardiff and Swansea, highlight that you aren't supposed to travel outside of your local area. Many fisheries are now asking anglers for proof of address, including New Celtic Lakes, in Lampeter.

A fishery spokesman said: "Some places have gone into local lockdown, but we haven't here at New Celtic Lakes. We are open.

"We will need proof of address to keep to the rules. If any angler has paid a deposit and lives in an area that goes into local lockdown, they need to contact us as soon as possible." For full up-to-date rules, including links to local lockdown areas in England and Wales, visit the dedicated web page: anglingtrust.net/covid-19/



THE RIVER WYE WITH WILL MILLARD

Will flew the flag for angling's many mental health benefits on last Wednesday's primetime BBC1 *The One Show*. We're delighted to see the Beeb re-running the Wye series that he made first for BBC Wales. We know Will is an *AM* magazine fan, and he commented on our imminent closure: "Wow. That's very sad news indeed. Absolutely the end of an era." **BBC2, THURSDAY, 7pm.**

MONSTER CARP

The Korda boys score at French big carp mecca, Gigantica, after a memorable chance encounter with a river catfish when using barbel gear.

ITV4, SATURDAY, 8pm.

UK Weather Another mixture of cloud, sunny intervals and light rain showers. The breeze will be a moderate south-westerly and top temperatures will stay at 12-15 Celsius for all regions.

News This week's GREAT CATCHES Chef's recipe for success

RUI PEDRO has now landed double-figure barbel from seven rivers, after bagging this 12 lb 2 oz PB specimen and another of 11 lb 2 oz from Berkshire's River Kennet.

London-based Rui, 34, added three other barbel, and his pal, John Harrison, chipped in with five.

The Portugeuse chef said: "For my latest trip I met up with my good friend, John, and on our arrival the river had a little colour and had dropped slightly from my last visit. "It looked perfect for a barbel or two. We began the session by introducing a little bit of bait (boilies and pellets) for an hour and a half. We left the swim to rest while we tackled up and put the kettle on. We then discussed our plan of action over a nice drink. "John told me that it was looking good for a new PB Kennet barbel, and that I could even get my first double-figure

fish from the river. "We continued introducing bait little and often, and it wasn't long before the first fish

graced the net. We were up and running.

"It was great to get a new PB and a couple of doubles on my birthday, all falling to my centrepin set-up. I couldn't have been happier with the results, and I am still buzzing now."







LAURA WADE recorded the biggest perch of the season from Warmwell Holiday Park, in Dorset, when she landed this stripy, estimated at over 4 lb. The NHS worker float fished a slice of ham on a size 10 barbless

8 | 6 OCTOBER anglersmail.com

hook to 4 lb line from peg 4 on Kingfisher Lake. Laura said: "My previous biggest perch was not even 1 lb, so this fish was a huge shock. It gave a good fight, and I was overwhelmed to see that it was a monster."



from his local Dorset Stour. Bournemouth, Dorset-based Joe trotted hemp on a size 16 hook to a 0.12 mm hook link and a stick float of his own making.



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PAUL COCKFIELD was chuffed to tempt this 14 lb 7 oz barbel from the River Loddon, in Berkshire. Reading-based Paul filled a feeder with groundbait, mixed





LANDSCAPER Conrad Tuffin bagged this PB 15 lb 5 oz barbel from the River Thames, but he might have landed a bigger one the week before.

The 29-year-old landscaper from Addlestone, Surrey, offered an Urban Bait Nutcracker boilie infused with Himalayan rock salt and Strawberry Goo. Conrad said: "It's a PB barbel. I actually had one in the same spot a week earlier, but I put him back without weighing him, as he was a very angry barbel.

"It wasn't until weighing this one that I realised it must have been a



DANIEL GODDARD topped a super barbel haul from the River Wye with this 10 lb 2 oz beauty. The 27-year-old NHS worker from Cwmbran, South Wales, added eight others, including three ninepounders. He loaded 4 oz feeders with Shrimp & Krill groundbait and Robin Red pellets, and baited his hooks with a The Source boilie.

couple of pounds bigger. "I'm also trying my best to catch a Thames carp."





DARREN CLIFF had never caught a perch on a pellet until this specimen came his way at The Park Fishery, near Market Rasen, in Lincolnshire. The 45-year-old traffic management worker from Middle Rasen was fishing for carp and koi when the stripy struck.



SPESSY ace Tony Gibson ended his tench season with a brace of tincas scaling 8 lb 9 oz and 8 lb 3 oz. The semi-retired IT consultant from Northampton fished Dynamite CompleX-T boilies over matching freebies, particles and pellets at a local stillwater.



BOWIE DUFFIELD has been tempting plenty of good tench recently, but was especially pleased with this 7 lb 2 oz male tinca from a local lake. The 27-year-old angler from Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, said: "It fell to an overweighted quill float with two dendrobaena worms

on a size 10 hook, fished over a

pint of red maggots. I presented the bait in the margins, just off a reedbed, and the fish were on it almost straight away. "I had a four-pounder just after putting the float in, and 15 minutes later I was into this one, a real

hard-fighting fish. Hopefully there's time for a few more big 'uns before the end of the year," added Bowie. TEENAGER Hannah Truscott ended her catfish season in fine style when she increased her PB by 5 lb with this 64 lb 'moggie'. The 14-year-old student from Alfreton, Derbyshire, tackled a Berkshire lake with a Big Cat Stinky pellet, for her only fish in a 48-hour session.

This GREAT CARP CATCHES

Method madness

CARP maestro Craig McEvoy switched to Method feeder tactics on a social session at Shropshire's Monument 2 and bagged a dozen carp, topped by this 38 lb 12 oz mirror.

Wednesbury, West



Midlands-based Craig, 41, explained: "It (the mirror) is called Kinky Tail, and was a little down in weight, but it's definitely a Method feeder PB. I also added seven low-to-mid-20s.

"My mix was made up of scalded Dynamite Marine Halibut pellets and Hempseed & Snails, infused with Sweet Tiger Liquid, hemp juice and Evolution Hemp Oil.

"I presented my Monster Tigernut wafter and halibut pellet hook bait two inches away from the feeder, by folding an 8 in. braided hook link back on itself, then trapping it in the feed. "When fish move off with the hook bait, they feel no resistance, and then... bang!" explained Craig.



SCHOOLBOY Dylan Green, 11, obliterated his PB by 10 lb when he matted this 31 lb common during a 24-hour stint. His dad, Richard, chipped in with mirrors of 36 lb and

21 lb at a Mid-Kent Fisheries venue. Lydd-based Richard said: "His previous PB was a 21 lb mirror, caught from the same complex. Dylan had caught one fish before the PB, but it was only around 4 lb. He played a football match on Saturday morning, then fished from around 2pm in the afternoon until 1pm on Sunday. "We were using 18 mm CC Moore Live System boilies. We fed the same spot regularly with a small scattering of baits, and all the fish came on Sunday morning."

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Mega Monks haul wins September's main prize

JORDAN PASHLEY is the latest monthly winner of the Carp Global-sponsored carp catch photo competition. Jordan appeared in *Angler's Mail* with the biggest ever haul of heavyweights from

be proud of. He gets £100 to spend on anything he likes at carp-shop.co.uk "Second is Fred and Arlene Mackenzie. They definitely had a morning to remember. What a fish! And it was great teamwork. Those guys win £50 to spend on some new goodies. "Finally, well done to Harley Cowey for his captures, and perseverance. He gets a £50-plus box of goodies.

■ CAR sales executive Antony Wills had a fantastic family day at Holyfields Fishery, near Waltham Abbey, in Essex, as he caught a succession of carp, topped by this 33 lb 11 oz PB common. The 32-year-old carp nut from Edmonton, North London, presented a 12 mm washed-out pink pop-up on a spinner rig, and cast it over a few Urban Bait Nutcracker freebies. Antony said: "I took my dad and my brother-in-law. We had 14 fish between us in the day session. I landed eight between 16 lb and 33 lb 11 oz, mainly 20s. It was a red-letter day, to say the least. We have fished this lake for 25 years and never had a session like this before."



Cambridgeshire's Monks Pit – 24 carp to 50 lb 8 oz.

Jordan's catch has been selected by the guys at top retailers and community Carp Global as the main September winner.

Carp Global main man Danny Walsh said: "It's great to see so many amazing captures from across the UK.

"Well done to Jordan on his awesome achievement from Monks Pit. It's not an easy venue, and he definitely had a session to "Keep the pics coming... #carpglobal"

■ All three winners will need to fill out the prize claim form at carp-shop. co.uk within the next 14 days. Carp Global will send out the prizes.

Jordan Pashley shows the 50 lb 8 oz Monks Pit mirror from his winning haul. He also caught four doubles, nine 20s, seven 30s and three 40s in a hugely impressive hit of big carp.

MARTIN GARDENER enjoyed a fabulous first outing using the new Sticky Baits The Krill Active boilies, as he managed to bank this sought-after 45 lb 8 oz common. Martin landed the specimen, known as the Big Redmire Common, from the tough Split Lake at the Yateley complex, on the Hampshire-Surrey border.







Arlene and Fred Mackenzie jointly



■ LUKE GILVRAY has been in geat form, his latest trip to a local lake resulting in this stunning 40 lb 4 oz mirror and others of 37 lb and 35 lb. Witham, Essex-based Luke legered 12 mm Mainline Milky Toffee pop-ups over a good helping of whole and crushed Cell freebies, coated in matching Smart Liquid. landed this 50 lb 5 oz mirror carp at day ticket Kracking Carp Lake, in Devon.

Harley Cowey's catches included this 23 lb common.

To check out Carp Global, visit Carp-Shop.co.uk



Match News

Wakelin steers 'Rocket Ship' to victory

Adam Wakelin with the 17 lb 'hippo' that ensured his first draw at coveted peg 124 ended with victory. some nice perch on worm helped in-form Richard Chave (Garbolino Blackmore Vale MG) to victory from two pegs below the white footbridge at tempted on hemp and pinkies, 'Mugger' Manton who pipped Gary Etheridge for second by 6 lb 14 oz to 6 lb 13 oz. "Big thanks to everyone who supported the event on a cold, clear river, including our most of the organising," said SHAA secretary David Rigby.

£900 Dorset charity cheer

THE Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance service received a welcome £900-plus boost to their coffers following a highly successful charity Open that attracted 60 anglers to Sturminster & Hinton AA's stretches of the Dorset Stour. A 5 lb 5 oz tench and Colber, boosting his roach net, to 12 lb 10 oz, well clear of Guy chairman, Ian Paulley, who did







feeder ace

13-year wait to draw best peg 10-grand shot in Final

NGLAND feeder team international Adam Wakelin (Daiwa) has his sights set on the 2021 Golden Rod contest's £10,000 champion's cheque.

Adam clinched his place in the two-day Final at Larford Lakes on March 13/14 next year thanks to victory in the contest's second qualifying round, a low-weight affair fished amid gale-force northerly winds and lashing rain at Warwickshire's Barston Lakes. Having fished Barston regularly for well over a decade without ever drawing the lake's undisputed top peg – 124 Adam's reaction to finally getting his chance and winning was an equal mix of joy and relief. "It's taken nearly 13 years

Golden Rod qualifiers at Barston (left to right): Alex Walker, Adam

Black Horse gallop to **Northants title**

THE annual Northamptonshire **County Championships** attracted 12 teams of eight to the Grand Union Canal at Stoke Bruerne and Yardley Gobion to do battle for the title and the famous old trophy. A skipper's performance from **Graham West helped Preston** Innovations Black Horse to victory with 75 points, seven clear of Wellingborough on 68, while last year's winners, Browning Central, had to settle

Wakelin, Jason Dunworth.

for this day. Phil (Golden Rod organiser, Phil Briscoe) has drawn me the Rocket Ship, peg 124," said Adam.

"The wind was freezing and the rain was hammering down. I set up SLR feeder rods to cover ranges from 30 to 100 m, but with only three skimmers in the net at the halfway stage I feared the worst," he continued. Three carp in quick succession soon after he upped his pellet feed drew him back into contention, then five more, including a 'hippo' of a mirror scaling 17 lb, came his way in

the last two hours to wrap up a 64 lb 12 oz victory.

Joining Adam in the Final, where a total prize purse of £30,600 will be paid out if the remaining 18 heats all draw sell-out 60-entry fields, are Alex Walker and Jason Dunworth. Both topped their respective 20-peg zones, Alex netting 55 lb 8 oz of carp, bream and F1s on Hybrid feeder with pellet and wafter hook baits at peg 56, while Jason (Advanced Angling) tempted 52 lb 5 oz on long-range wafters over micro pellets at peg 16.

Lee dazzles at iffy Evesham



THE penultimate qualifier for the Angling Trust RiverFest Final found the Warwickshire Avon at Evesham in dodgy form, reflected in a shoresheet that showed 27 of the 60 entrants blanking or tipping back a few without troubling the scalesmen.

Former Welsh international Lee Edwards (Maver) was a runaway winner with a superbly taken 20 lb net, comprising four chub of 2 lb 8 oz to 3 lb, backed by several chublets and perch to over 1 lb, and a few roach, alternating waggler and stick float at peg 52. "With the water crystal clear, I just fed casters and buried a size 18 hook in a single shell, matched to 0.10 MVR hook length mono," said Lee. "It was nice to win and qualify from a zone that included the Isbourne mouth pegs. The wind was very kind on my peg, a steady upstream breeze. So now I'm into my fifth consecutive RiverFest Final, on



Runner-up Alex Clements also made it into the RiverFest Final.

a venue that I've only fished twice, but caught both times. I'll be off to White Acres for the Preston Festival the following day, so let's just see what happens," he concluded. Joining Lee in the Final are Alex Clements (Rive) and Mark Brush (Daiwa Gordon League), who won their respective zones at Evesham with 6 lb and 4 lb 11 oz. Turn to p.63 for our special lookback at Lee Edwards' epic record 316 lb haul of chub.

Final Trent trio make RiverFest showdown

THE last qualifying round for the 2020 RiverFest Final, on the upper Trent around Burton, was a feast-or-famine affair, many of the 60 entrants struggling for bites. The day's top five weights came from the same 20-peg zone at Sherratts, led by Derby rod Jason Fell with a 24 lb mixed bag of roach, dace, perch and chublets at peg 17. Jason's win denied runner-up Lee Wright – the 2018 RiverFest Champion – a chance to regain his title by a very narrow margin

after Matrix-backed Sensas Starlets teamster Lee scaled 23 lb 6 oz at nearby peg 14. Richie Reynolds (Daiwa Dorking) waltzed into the Final with a 17 lb 8 oz bag, which comfortably won the Municipal zone, while former double Fish'O'Mania champ Matt Hall (Cadence Bait-Tech Superteam) booked the contest's final berth with a 6 lb 8 oz zone win on the tough Andressey stretch.



Meanwhile, a last chance to practise the RiverFest Final

RiverFest Burton round qualifiers (left to right): Matt Hall, Jason Fell and Richie Reynolds.

venue's Burton Joyce stretches of the Trent drew 72 anglers to tackle Alan Henry's Sunday Open, where bonus perch and chub boosted the top weights. End pegs supplied the top two scores, Charlie Gooch winning with 22 lb 7 oz of chub from peg 1 in the Ferry Field for a £220 payday, from Rob Casterton (Drennan Van den Eynde Leicester), who included several big perch to 2 lb 14 oz in his 21 lb 4 oz net, from the first peg below the road stretch's famous outfall.



big fish or bust. I started slowly with just one 6 oz skimmer and three bits by 90 minutes," said Graham.

"I was going nowhere. After being double-boated for the third time, I decided to go all-out on a 14 m line with groundbait and pinkies. Within 20 minutes I started catching a few bigger skimmers, and the peg just got stronger, with a great fourth hour, when I really lined them up," he added. When the scales arrived, Graham's catch went 23 lb 2 oz, to put him top of the individual scoresheet, followed by teammate Alan Oakes on 15 lb 4 oz, with Wellingborough's Nick Antonacci slotting in third with 10 lb 12 oz.



Northants Champs Preston Innovations Black Horse.

for third with their total of 67. Dunstable-based Graham didn't really fancy his draw – peg 7 in C Section – though he'd drawn nearby many years ago and recalled that the area was deeper than nearby feature pegs. "This area of the canal has been decimated by zander in recent years, so we all knew it would be

Graham West was star man on the GUC.



Devon dazzler at terrific Tamar



Regular *Angler's Mail* match fishing contributor Darren Cox reflects on tackle, tactics and lessons learned following a three-day feeder festival at Upper Tamar Reservoir.

RECENTLY returned from three fantastic days at Upper Tamar Reservoir in a festival organised by fellow feeder flinger Graham West.

After the Feeder Masters series was cancelled this year, securing tickets for this event, dubbed the 'WestFest', became a priority for my travelling partner Simon Fry and me. Located on the Devon/ Cornwall border, Tamar is one of the most prolific skimmer and roach venues I've ever fished. Combined with stunning scenery, it is a truly special place. Heading into the festival, hopes were high after an any-method event on the preceding weekend fished really well. Overall weight would decide the outcome, so everyone knew an attacking approach would be needed on such a prolific lake.

Before telling you about my results over the three days, I'll outline my strategy and kit required to tackle Tamar, which will also score at many other big stillwaters across the UK.

The two main stretches used for match fishing at Tamar are known as the Cornwall bank and the Devon bank. Both have unique contours, ranging from shallow bays with gravel and slate beds through to areas with steep drop-offs into 30 ft-plus of water on a deep arm on the Devon Bank. Success on big reservoirs requires discovering the depths at which your target fish are most likely to feed. There are no hard and fast rules, as every day is different in terms of prevailing weather conditions and water

Skimmers galore! Darren Cox displays his first day catch (main pic) and final day catch (inset) from WestFest.

Deep decisions

Like most man-made reservoirs, Upper Tamar was formed by damming a valley, resulting in deep water at the dams and shallower areas elsewhere.

There are few more delightful English settings for match action than Tamar. Darren is seen here enjoying it to the full.



temperatures, but there are some general principles that make the task easier.

Basically, in mild weather you'll find roach in shallow areas, while skimmers stay further out in deeper water.

After a practice session, Simon and I reckoned that depths of between 4-7 ft were right for the roach. In most areas this would mean a nice



short cast of between 8-13 m, ideally to areas with ripple on the surface. As for skimmers, our findings suggested around 15 ft was right in the lake's shallower areas, but in deeper areas with steep shelves, they preferred to graze over silty bottoms in depths of between 23-30 ft.





Darren's key tackle – window and cage feeders plus braid.

3 great days but no cigar!

So much for the theory, but how did my festival go in practice?

The first thing to say is how well organised it was, in a safe environment for all 50 entrants. Big credit is due to Graham West, and also Ben Smeeth of the South West Lakes Trust, who manage Tamar Reservoirs.

Naturally in these times, anglers' pegs were pre-drawn for them on all three days, and I had absolutely no complaints about my Day 1 swim – peg 10 on the Cornwall bank.

The peg is noted for skimmers, with a nice ledge and deeper water beyond at a comfortable 28 m distance. There are also plenty of roach on a shorter 10 m line.



Michael Buchwalder emerged triumphant at WestFest.

ended up with 36 fish for a total of 25 lb 10 oz and joint first in section. However, I fell further back in the overall stakes, as my catch that wasn't enough for me to stay in contention. I was now left fishing for pride, and Devon bank peg 4 on the final day gave me the opportunity to climb back up the leaderboard. I focused on catching skimmers in deep water at 48 m, and had a lovely day netting 60 fish for 37 lb 9 oz, which was the day's best weight on the Devon bank. Despite that, I had a poor hour in which I missed far too many bites and ultimately cost myself maybe 4-6 lb extra, which might have raised me to third overall, instead of my eventual eighth-place finish. Perhaps it was poor concentration, or maybe overfeeding sent the fish a bit scatty? I still can't figure it out. Congratulations to 'Buch' for winning the WestFest with a stunning 150 lb three-day weight, and thanks again to everyone involved in running the event. I can't wait for my next chance to fish at terrific Tamar.

Feeder specifics

Just as you'll need to fish different depths and distances for reservoir roach and skimmers, you'll require different feeders and rigs to maximise success with those species. The principle is simple: cage feeders for shallows; window feeders for deeps.

Roach and skimmers both love to follow a cloud of groundbait through the water. Nothing beats a cage feeder for this. The aim is to have a constant column of bait falling through the water, which draws more roach into the swim and makes them easier to catch.

However, fishing a cage in deep water can be disastrous, as the fish will often move up in the water column to intercept the feed way above where your hook bait will settle.

This is where window feeders really score. Their design is an adapted block-end feeder that ensures you can deliver feed and concentrate fish much closer to the deck. There are times when a cage can be an effective opening gambit to draw fish in, for a few casts. After that you'll need a

window to keep them there.

After feeding enough bait on my long line to hold a skimmer shoal for at least 90 minutes, I gambled by starting on the roach line.

That was my only mistake of the day. A first hour total of 68 small roach and perch was way off the pace, so I was forced to visit the long line earlier than I'd planned.

The fish were there, but they hadn't settled. After a frustrating 40 minutes, I hit my stride and ended up with 78 skimmers to boost my net to 45 lb for fifth overall, on a day won by Michael Buchwalder with 68 lb.

On Day 2 I was tackled up at peg 17 on the Devon bank. I didn't fancy it, as the slate bed runs out too far to catch fish consistently at close range. A 50 m chuck into deeper water was needed, and the first half of the match was terrible for me. Eventually, after casting every 2-3 minutes, alternating between a small Guru window feeder and a Garbolino heavy three-square cage, the skimmers arrived.

My preference for shallow-water roach work is a small three-square cage, to delivers just enough feed every cast. To catch roach well, you'll need to cast every 30 seconds. Yes, that's twice per minute.













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- THIS WEEK'S WISSION

It had been a hectic day in the office, and by the time the clock was showing 3pm I'd had enough of it all. I wanted to grab some kit and sneak out to restore my sanity. I set off to my favourite little river in Nottinghamshire, wanting to sit back and enjoy what was going on underwater. **VENUE:** the River Maun is controlled by Nottingham Anglers Association. More details can be found on their website:

nottinghamanglers.co.uk **WEATHER:** a mixed bag of weather, with high pressure one day followed by low the next. A swing in air pressure from one day to the next can make fishing pretty tricky. Temperature: 15 degrees Celsius. Wind: west-northwesterly 8-10 mph. Air pressure: 1,005 mbar. for is usually very clear, and when I arrived I could see that it was very low, the result of this region having had no rain for a while, which is unusual for the beginning of October. Its residents would be at their wariest, making them right up my street.

My adrenaline levels shot straight up when I crossed the bridge and caught a glimpse of the river for the first time in ages. Even when driving at 30 mph, I could see that it was as clear as crystal and low – perfect. I relish tackling a river that's down to its bare bones

FISHING a small, intimate river has to be one of the most pleasurable forms of angling on the planet, but it can be equally frustrating, which I suppose is what attracts me to them in the first place. My latest river session was born out of frustration. I couldn't stand writing another email beginning: 'I hope you are well,' and including: 'in these strange times'. Nor could I stand reading one. Every phone call and meeting couldn't end, everything was up in the air, and no one could predict what was going to happen in the future. I decided to take matters into my own hands and go fishing. There was no prep, whatever was in my bag was in my bag. I was offski.

The river that I was heading

and showing all, as the fish are easy to locate, in theory. Any snag, any tree trunk and any kind of cover would almost certainly be home to a few fish, and the fish that I was after today was an old adversary of mine, the chevin.

Continued over

A chub from this place is worth 20 from another.

66 Any snag, any tree trunk or any kind of cover would almost

certainly be home to a few fish. 99





Inspired by Bob Mortimer's enthusiasm on telly the other night, I had probably bitten off more than I could chew when I threw my bag in the van without rummaging through it.

Luckily, my Sport Billy kind of rucksack contained a bag of pellets and some paste - you can't beat convenience bait. It's not great for the maggot and caster trade, but it allows sessions like this one to take place. My first job, and it's an essential job for anyone who wants to try to fish these types of waters, is to take the lid off your bucket. While studying fish for a thesis a few years back, I learned that ripping the lid off a plastic bucket can scare fish for a thousand yards. Travelling very light with an unhooking mat for a seat and everything to hand in a bucket with no lid, I entered 'Mosquito Alley'. Within seconds I was grimacing, as a bugger landed on my right hand and went straight into a vein. I couldn't slap it, for fear of scaring any potential chub customers away. Once you frighten them, your short session will turn into a very long one, as they take time to become confident

for yards, anticipating a big shape at any moment.

I kept pellets going in, albeit in very small amounts, hoping that the recognisable smell of CompleX-T would waft right under a snag and entice a fish out of it.

I couldn't gauge the flow, so I didn't throw a handful of them in right away. I didn't want any bait going right under the snag, giving them no reason to venture out, a bit like giving them a Just Eat home delivery service. I wanted them to get off their bums and come to Steve's Drive-thru.

the party, writhing and turning like a crocodile's death roll as they tried to bite bits off the pellets. This is what I had come to see. No emails, no calls, just me at the 'Underwater West End' watching a blockbuster.

The main stage was lit up, and the bit-part actors (gudgeon and small roach) did their best to provide me with entertainment, trying all the time to distract me from the fact that I had lost nine pints of blood to mosquitoes. Part One was dragging on too much for my liking, so I decided to direct things myself, by introducing a big blob of paste. This stuff stinks, and I was sure its scent trail would tempt a chub out.

As I watched it trundle into place, a thousand fry biting it, the main show began. A fair-sized chub decided to see what was going on. What happened next amazed me. I was sitting just inches from these fish and yet they couldn't see me. I was a fish pervert.

The chub decided to attend the fry's party, but he didn't eat anything, he was just inquisitive, then disappeared. How many times does that happen when we can't see it? Then I saw the power of smelly bait. Another chub appeared, then another one, followed by another. It was time to lower my hook bait in. The fish were confident that this was going to be child's play, but then a swan from bloody nowhere came to see what was going on and spooked the lot of them. I thought that they lived harmoniously? Not in this river. I was beginning to really see first-hand what these chub were up to. They weren't the voracious feeders that I thought they were, but instead they fed in groups, big single fish being the most tentative. I thought the swim was done, thanks to Swanny

After my first handful, the theatre curtains opened. Tiny gudgeon, which appeared almost transparent, came to





Sitting in prime position, my hand looked like a working men's club dartboard, every bug in the thick undergrowth dining on me. Boy, was I going to pay the price tomorrow. In front of me was a theatre. I could see every insect, every stone and every single tiny fish

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66 It would be a bit like giving chub a Just Eat home delivery service. **99**

McSwanface, and the words that I uttered to him could only be understood by farmyard animals. I kept bait trickling in regardless, and then reached out and plonked my lead in an area where I could see it. I was just about to WhatsApp a video to Chappy, who is currently not very well,



All I needed was a net and a mat.



If you look hard, you'll be able to spot a chub in the clear water.



when I managed to catch one. You have no idea how happy I am when I'm catching any fish from small, intimate rivers, and this chub had definitely not graced the banks before. It was a mint-conditioned 'chubbly-bubbly'.

No sooner had I clumsily taken some photos than I slipped him back upstream, mindful of my other primed swim.

I crept back into position, and I could see a fish gliding in and out, inspecting every leaf, every twig and every bit of weed that flew past him in the flow. I dropped my lead and paste right in front of him, but he wasn't interested. Lifting the rig slowly caught his attention. I had learned that this fish wanted a moving bait, it being wary of a static one.

I removed the lead and moulded more paste around the hook, just enough to lift and drop it past his lair.

Right away, his big white lips engulfed the paste. I counted to one quickly, struck, and the tiny river erupted.

My happiness and love for this sport was incalculable at that very moment. This fish had no idea how much fun I had just had trying to catch him. He didn't look too happy with the arrangement, but I was.

My new rod extension - one of my arms!



Pretty soon this little river will provide me with another challenge – falling leaves and floodwater. I'll be back, learning more while enjoying every second of it.

I love a bit of retro kit, don't you?













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Solution You'll always learn loads and be inspired by this vastly experienced traditional angler, who also relishes exploring the latest coarse techniques, with help from his friends.

How do we get better at fishing?



Now that Series 3 of *Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing* has drawn to an end on BBC2 TV, the question I get asked more than any other is whether Bob Mortimer is actually getting better as an angler?

My simple answer is: yes, he is. Importantly, he is beginning to get the idea of watercraft, and his river fishing is improving to the extent that he actually guided one of the cameramen to his first chub on the Wye. Bob's enjoying the sport more than he ever has done, and he is going fishing on his own now. An angler has been born. Bob is only one of millions of us. What do we mean by 'better'? How good do we want to be? How do we measure success? I've spent 28 years guiding, and all my clients have been looking to improve in one way or another. I'd say that most have got better, some have not and some simply cannot. To some degree, angling is like any top sport. There will always be great anglers, but the vast majority will be average to adequate, village football players if you like. The very best anglers I have fished with include Paul Boote, Chris Yates, Rod Hutchinson, Ivan Marks, Bob James, John Wilson and a good few others who are not so-called celebrity anglers. All the aces I named are

naturally brilliant. Like George Best, they have not had to try to be brilliant. Where does that leave the rest of us?

In this column, I'm only going to look at the nitty-gritty of angling. I'm not talking about the smelling roses stuff, such as friendship, kingfishers or a smoking Kelly Kettle. All such things are integral to the sport, but they are not central to getting better at it. I'm going to be honest, some would say judgemental, but after 60 years in angling I have earned the right. I am not going to be sanctimonious though. You do what you want to do and that's fine by me, provided you are not harming fish. One thought before I start: if you are over 50, you'll probably be harder to teach to get better. You'll have made your way in life, and you are comfortable in your own skin. This can lead to fixed ways of doing things, which may not always be right. My earnest plea is to open your mind to new ideas and see where they get you.

Bob Mortimer at work during the recent BBC TV series. He may be one of UK comedy's greats and a genius at falling over, but he's also got to grips with fishing, more than it may appear on your TV screen.



Dave Coster – what an all-rounder, and what an influence he has been

How do you want to learn?

There are so many ways to get better, including great articles in *Angler's Mail* (how good is Dave Coster?). So much these days is on the internet, which has contributed so much to the decline of print sales and loss of so many angling mags. Info is

on us all for four decades, via the pages of Angler's Mail magazine.

out there, especially on YouTube, films showing techniques unimaginable a decade ago. There are also so many differing types of instructors teaching everything from fly casting for salmon to tying carp rigs. My advice is to make use of any or all of these aids, but nothing beats learning on the bank. Get yourself some mates and bounce ideas backwards and forwards with them. Above all, try things out for yourself. Yes, ask for advice and listen to it, but put your stamp on it. Take ideas, for sure, but think them through and adapt them to your



waters and to your skill set. I have, for example, read loads about stret-pegging with a float since I was six years old. I'm now good at it in my own way, not in a textbook way. My bastardised version of the technique has caught me thousands of fish, even though an expert might wrinkle his nose in horror at it.

How much do you want to learn?

It could be that you are quite happy doing the same old thing and you don't really want to develop your skills, which is fine. Experts, on the other hand, practise what they are not good at, whereas ordinary mortals plod on with what they know. If you want to really get better, stop doing the old, mediocre thing well and risk doing a more challenging badly, at first at least. For example, you can whop out barbel on a feeder and you can get a bit better at it over time. But if you really want to

become a top barbel man, you'll need to learn how to catch them on a float. You'll be crap at first, but the fish will start to come and you will move up a real rung on the skills ladder. Do things the same way and you'll always get the same result. Don't be afraid of initial failure if you want to get out of a rut and get truly better.

Important practice

Getting plenty of practice is the most obvious piece of advice in the whole column, but getting better demands the honing of skills. I remember a big fish conference back in the 1980s and a lecture given by a top matchman. His message was that specimen hunters couldn't cast well because they simply plonked a lead out and sat back asleep till a whopper came along and hooked itself. He held out a bucket and challenged any of us to cast a float into it from ten yards.

 Pingers with yet another 30. He has made drifter float fishing for pike his signature method.

Trefor West and Tony Miles stood up and they both did it ten times out of ten. I've watched carp anglers put a boilie on an area the size of an old sixpence coin at a range of 100 yards every time. I've watched river men trot a float the same course whatever the wind or the current. I've watched river trout anglers land a fly on the nose of fish after fish, despite a howling gale. These abilities only come after you have put in the legwork. Gary Player said: "The more I practise, the luckier I become." It is the same with angling as it is in golf, soccer, cricket or any of the top sports. You can't learn greatness from an iPad.

Learn from each other

Although I am loosely termed a big fish man, I learn from every discipline in the sport. I learn from carpers about bait and rigs. I learn from matchmen about floats, pole fishing and Method feeders. I learn from fly anglers about travelling light and not taking gear that I don't need.

I have got better at reading water, and realising what insects fish are feeding on. For example, my tench eat way more caddis grubs than they do pellets. By using caddis grubs as bait, I turn that knowledge into fish on the bank. Live in an angling bubble and you'll spend your life imprisoned.



Travel matters

For 20 years I travelled to scores of countries. I have learned amazing things from Czech, Danish, American, German and Swedish anglers. I don't go abroad much now, and the chances are none of us will for a good while, due to the pandemic. Long-distance travelling matters not. Take my love of river roach. I get better at understanding them by travelling within this country, to the Test, Avon and Stour, and talking to anglers such as Mark Everard, Brian Wilson, John Andrews and the rest than I do by staying at home and conversing with myself.

something that he does best.

Improvisation

The boxing legend Mike Tyson said that everyone has a plan till they get punched in the face.

It's one thing to have a preconceived plan of attack, but you get better by developing your ability to improvise and change tactics when you are faced with the unexpected.

Sudden floodwater could strike, squally wind could take you by surprise, and your favourite swim might be taken.

If you sit back, take stock and adapt your plan, you are on the way to getting better. You will also get more adept at exploiting angling windows when they come your way.

For example, carp suddenly come to the top and you are then ready to get your baits off the bottom. You see a pike rolling and you have a lure rod ready to cover it at once. You are alert, you are flexible, you start to catch more fish.

Big fish are another world

If you want to get better, you move on from the ordinary to the extraordinary. Most of us can catch a 3 lb chub, but a seven-pounder is a completely different proposition.

A 10 lb carp or a 40? It's all

the same. The step up demands you to become a better angler if you are going to cope with the massively enhanced stakes.

You have to find big fish, and your gear, bait and approach have to be perfected. Above all, playing colossally bigger fish is a completely different ball game. You are setting yourself up for a fall, but you have to go that way to improve.

It is no different if you are a matchman, I guess. You may be competent at club level, but stepping up to compete in an Open is way more terrifying. You may be a successful trout angler on a heavily stocked



pond, but will you have to get on a chalkstream after wild browns if you want to improve. You'll fail once or a hundred times, but you'll be on the right road to improvement.

Fluidity or F1s?

In today's rapid world we have swift service providers such as Just Eat and Amazon Prime. We have moved into a landscape where anyone can have instant gratification.

If you want a netful of commodity fish, get to a commercial and whop out one identical F1 carp after another. If you want a bigger carp, read articles, watch films, put a boilie on a hair and go to sleep till the alarm wakes you up. If this is what you want, fine. You'll get no judgements, no sanctimonious stuff from me, but you can do better. You have it in you to find your fluidity and your flair. We can all break out of the chains that the commercial world have shackled us with. You can meld with the natural world and read what waters are telling you. You can become a fish detective and suss the clues that they are giving us. Nearly 40 years separates Robbie Northman and Rob Olsen, but they are brothers under the skin. They are the best of anglers, and they constantly get better because every session is a learning curve, a time to watch, to think and to put new inspirations into action. Their angling lives have been all about adventure and enlightenment, and they have never done a single thing by rote, not without thinking it through.



Learning from each other brings mighty success.



John's POINT OF VIEW What's caught my attention this week!

Pike time

IT'S HARD to believe that the summer is gone and autumn is wearing thin. When I put away my pike kit last March, I could not even guess at how quickly I'd be needing it again.

The world has changed since that last pike trip. Covid-19 was on the horizon, but none of us around the lake could guess at what was to come. So many questions have emerged. Are we coping with Covid or will piking be put on lockdown hold? What weather will we have? Will floods put rivers out of order? Will pike fall to old methods or will we have to dream up new approaches, rigs and baits? What we know is that our gear must be tip-top. Lines need replacing, hooks sharpening, traces retying, rod rings checking and even the bait freezer needs clearing of years-old rubbish. As ever, we must also hone our conservation techniques. We are the pike's major predator, if you like. When we hook, play and land one, their lives are literally in our hands. Make sure, please, that our grip is a sensitive one. Me included!

The Simons, Clark and Ratcliffe, with a brace of chunky Wensum chub. You are never too old to get better.



Signature methods

After all that, I'll leave you with something down to earth: all of us should develop one approach that we are happy with and that we can return to again and again.

Over the years, our signature methods will become better and better, and at least in one way we will all achieve a greatness of sorts.

Take me as an example. Some 50 years ago I realised that I was okay at tackling a brisk piece of river running between 3 and 6 ft deep with a stick float and maggots. Today, if I see a swim like this, I just know I'll catch fish from it. No one is better than me at this one thing. Take The Vicar, one of my oldest, dearest fishing partners. No one would call him a genius, but he has perfected float fishing under the rod tip for carp, pike, bream and tench, and James Buckley, who appeared with John on TV a decade ago, has become one of the best anglers of the younger generation.



Mad for mullet

IT WAS so nice to see an 8 lb 4 oz mullet in *Angler's Mail* recently, especially as it was caught by evergreen Bill Rushmer. Two points of interest stuck out for me.

Firstly, the catch just shows what a wonderful sport angling is. Bill is not in the first flush of youth, yet he has caught one of the most sought-after fish in the UK. Mullet are excruciatingly hard in my woeful experience of them, and I'd love to see me with a bruiser of a specimen in years to come. Apart from congratulations, the fish also got me thinking about the toughest prizes in angling. Mullet are up there, and we must add ferox trout. all the glacial water whitefish species, such as powan and artic char, silver bream and perhaps even 100 per cent true crucian carp. I'd like to add shad and bluefin tuna, but I guess you are not actually allowed to fish for these, so they don't count.

How can you not love The Vicar? He's a master at fishing close in.

has caught whoppers of each species. I wouldn't want The Vicar to fish for my life but, by God (pun intended), there is no one better at three yards. Which brings me back to Bob Mortimer. He's no Dave Coster, but watch him freeline flake for chub and you'll see he is getting better, and that is what we should all be aiming for in our own differing ways.

GUEST INSTRUCTION

Get your Mojo working for quality perch

Mark Parker with a specimen perch, caught on a Mojo rig.



When it comes to angling, HB Total Media's **Mark Parker** has been there, seen it and photographed it. The jovial photojournalist has produced 2,000 features on the country's top anglers, picking up cutting-edge methods from them along the way. He was keen to reveal one of them, a Mojo rig, to help you get your mojo back.

TONLY seems like yesterday when I was lightly cradling a heavily spotted River Tees brown trout in my trembling hands. Was it really almost 45 years ago? Sadly, it was.

As they say, kids never remember their best day of television watching. It was during my salad days of trotting a worm under an enormous bobber float that my love of fishing, predator angling in particular, was ignited.

There is something majestic and aloof about predators. It is all on their terms, and that is something that I have always loved and enjoyed. They are quite unlike a carp or barbel, species that you can 'bore' out of any water.





Predators eat when they want to eat, and will gladly ignore a well-cast lure, a deftly presented fly or a carefully positioned deadbait for hours, if not days. I'm now 51, bent, grey, aching and elderly. My flesh may be a lot weaker, but my mind is still as keen as it ever was. In my pursuit of predators is a flame that still burns brightly. These days it is nearly all about lure fishing when I target predators.

Going my own way

am what you might call a 'specialist' angler, fishing for species that are feeding at any given time in the season. I reckon carp are hard enough to catch in August, so why fish for them in January, a time when our nation's waterways are heaving with chub, pike, roach and perch, species that are all too eager to feed in winter? That said, it wasn't always like this. I started fishing at the tender age of five with my late father, who was an out-andout fluff-flinger (fly angler), game fishing and field sports in general the abiding passions in my life. I'm sad to say this, but prior to my teenage years I could never understand why you would catch and then put back a delicious and fresh meal. Before you start to bombard the Mail with letters, comments and emails, my attitudes have changed greatly. My fish care has gotten to such an extent, I weighed less than a dozen fish last year. I tend to look at them, photograph them as quickly as possible, and then get them back. Our obsession with figures and weights decreases our love of the sport, or is it me just being cynical? My angling these days is purely for pleasure, and quite often I spend most of the day taking photographs, my other abiding passion.

Capturing wildlife – a couple of shots from Mark's photo album.

As kids, we all start off wanting to catch fish of any size, then we want to catch more fish, then bigger fish.

For the past 20 years or so, I have been lucky enough to make a living from angling. I was the features editor of *Improve Your Coarse Fishing* magazine, then media and marketing assistant for Dynamite Baits, and now I'm a freelance photographer, videographer and journalist, running my own company, HB Total Media (hbtotalmedia. com). during the week. On the positive side, having worked for so long in this crazy business, I have had the pleasure of working with, and enjoying personal friendships with, all the good and the great of angling, including Matt Hayes, Mick Brown, Bob Nudd, John Wilson, Chris Yates, Bob James, Steve Ringer and *Angler's Mail* legend Steve Collett, to name just a few. As it stands, I've had in excess of 2,000 features and articles

Crazy business

Even though I continue to love my job, working in angling has greatly affected my fishing. If I see a rod and reel at the weekend, I may well beat you to death with it, having been surrounded by fishing 24/7 and papers, many of them now gone, sadly. My working life in angling has taken me to some of the most beautiful and delightful places in the British Isles and abroad. Some jobs have been more eventful than others. When doing a pike feature in the

published in angling magazines

Republic of Ireland, I met a pike

Continued over

fishing guide on the banks of 'Lough Seamus O'somethingor-other'. It was only around 500 acres, so the Irish government had deemed it too small to bother drawing on any map. Dazed and confused, I pulled over and wound down my window to speak to a local walking along a deserted country road. "Excuse me," I said, "How do you get to Lough Seamus O'something-orother?"

Giving me a look like I had lost my mind, his genuine reply was: "... my cousin takes me." I wound up my window and carried on.

It was working with angling photographer and great friend Mick Rouse that saw me moving whole heartedly into the realm of photography. For me, getting a killer image is worth more than a 40 lb carp, a 15 lb barbel or a 4 lb perch. I'm classed by many of my peers as being one of the best in the business when it comes to capturing an image. In a strange way, taking pictures of other anglers is quite cathartic. Not only do I find it extremely enjoyable, it gives me the opportunity to observe and learn from what they are doing. Thanks to picking the brains of the best in the business, I have an impressive list of personal bests.

a tactic that works best where there are shoals of fish.

When boat fishing a big water, you soon drift over a shoal, unless you have an expensive spot-lock motor, or are in water shallow enough to allow you to anchor up, so you need an alternative method.

I like to take a leaf out of American bass anglers' book and use a Mojo. Coming from the ultra-competitive largemouth bass scene, the Mojo rig is what stateside anglers think of as being a finesse rig, using it when other set-ups have failed. It is perfect for UK perch fishing.

It is akin to a carp angler's zig rig or pop-up boilie presentation, a floating lure working above a lead. leader with a tapered rubber peg, called a Peg It.

A Peg It is like a very long and slim rubber nail. It is pushed in the centre of the barrel weight, before trimming any excess. It acts in a similar way to a rubber float stop. The weight can be moved up and down the leader without fear of damaging it, and you can also control the height at which the lure pops up from the bottom.

The method will work on slow-flowing rivers, streams, stillwaters or canals, the floating lure attached at the end of a leader acting naturally in the water. The slim barrel weight can be pulled through weed or snags easily, the lure floating just above it, presenting perch with an easy meal. To fish the lure further up in the water, simply slide the barrel weight further up the line. When boat fishing, all you need to do is cast out, let the rig sink, then allow the speed of the drift to work the lure.

which doesn't sink as quickly as fluorocarbon, but it is not as invisible as fluoro.

I use 3.5 or 5 g Top Brass Pro-Jo weights. They may seem very light for fishing deep reservoirs, but the Mojo is meant to be fished with very light tackle. If you use a weight that is too heavy, you will anchor the lure and it won't move naturally when you flick the rod or wind in line.

will start with the lure popped-up four to five inches. I will adjust the height until I start to find the fish or when I catch weed. The longest I will go is around 2 ft, perhaps longer when fishing the lure stationary against structure, be it a jetty, wall or overhanging bush. Like all styles of fishing, there are no hard and fast rules. I choose any lure that floats. The 2.75 cm Z-Man TRD TubeZ or any other of their range work well, but there are lots of soft plastics that float. Floating tube lures are also good, and you can fill their cavity with a flavoured gel. If you jerk them, an air bubble that gets trapped in the body often comes out, producing a distinct, popping noise, almost like the noise of a surface popper, only in the water. It is really about giving the fish a presentation that they haven't been caught on before, something that looks natural and, more importantly, is easy for them to eat. For me, that often means getting a Mojo on.

Mojo mechanics

One tactic that I've learned from experts is a Mojo rig. Being around fishing all day, every day can get tiresome, so I don't fish as much as I used to, and this is the reason why I find lure fishing so addictive. I can get on the bank at a moment's notice, fishing for only a handful of minutes or hours at time, but still have a great deal of success. Short sessions tend to keep me focused, as I'm constantly moving, casting, retrieving, looking for fish and playing them. I tend to stop halfway through a session to take a picture of something that has caught my eye. Although I fish all sorts of lures, depending on what I'm targeting, a Mojo rig is an approach that has really transformed my perch fishing, particularly when fishing places such as Pitsford Water, in Northamptonshire, though it will work on all waters on its day. The problem with places such as Pitsford is that they attract a huge amount of lure anglers. The perch get to see every type of lure in the world, so they become much more difficult to catch. Many anglers have turned more and more to drop shotting,

It basically requires you to thread a small weight, known as a barrel, onto a fluorocarbon leader. For the tactic to work at its most effective, you need to use a floating lure. When you work the rig back towards you slowly, the lure darts and dips, then slowly rises when you stop retrieving line. It is a perfect way for getting bites from finicky fish that have seen it all before.

Although it is not as mainstream as a Texas or Carolina rig, it has been used in America to great effect for many years. It is very similar to a Carolina rig, the weight and lure being separate. But, unlike a Carolina rig, there is no swivel, as the barrel is attached to the Every now and again, I will turn the handle of the reel or flick the rod to put a bit of movement into the lure.

Tackle for the job

I use a 6 ft (1-7 g) Illex Blue Shadow, a Shimano Stradic Ci4 1000 reel loaded with 0.06 mm Sufix Nanobraid, a 3 ft leader of 0.10 mm Sufix FC21 fluorocarbon, and an off-set or worm hook. You could use copolymer line,

How to set up a Mojo rig



Thread a barrel weight onto a fluorocarbon leader.





2 Push a length of Peg It into the barrel.



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Trim the rubber sticking out of the barrel.

Tie a hook to the end of the leader, then mount a lure on it. Set the height by sliding the barrel weight along the leader.



Mark loves lure fishing for predators. Here he is with a boat-caught 12 lb zander.





DAVE TIPPING The talented writer, photographer and angler shares his views and tactics in this exclusive mini series.

A charance of the



F you want to catch carp, barbel, pike or tench and need a suitable venue and some tactical advice, pick up a copy of *Angler's Mail*, or treat yourself to a book or a DVD. But what if you want to catch an Arctic char? When did you last read a feature entitled '100 Top Char Bagging Tips You Must Try This Weekend?' If you want to catch this relic of the Ice Age, you will have to do all the groundwork yourself. Finding the vast glacial lochs that they inhabit is not a great problem, but thereafter it becomes a three-dimensional challenge. Are the shoals close to where you are fishing, or are they several miles away, at the other end of the loch? Are they on the bottom, near the surface, or somewhere in between, in depths that might run to hundreds of feet? Forget about advanced rigs and baits, you are not going to succeed if

you can't locate the fish. If and when you get it right, the fish that you catch will probably weigh ounces, and rarely more than a pound. Is it worth all the effort? If you don't know, I can't tell you. Over the years, I've been lucky enough to catch a few char, although I dread to think of the hours and days that I've totted up in the unsuccessful pursuit of these fascinating fish, although catching heavily spotted brown trout amid fantastic scenery and wildlife while trying to do so has given me a huge amount of pleasure. Recently, I got wind of a small and remote Scottish Highlands loch that sounded as if it might have potential. Did I say small? At around a mile in length and with depths in excess of 60 ft it was no puddle, but it is small when compared to many char lochs. All I needed to do was to





Success – a charming char with a length of five inches.



Heavily spotted brown trout are always a joy to catch.

shown towards two complete strangers, who weren't even paying for the privilege. remained motionless, but suddenly the smattering of feed around Martin's swimfeeders was discovered, and thereafter bites came frequently.

find out who to approach for I'll be permission to fish, so I carried ye get out an internet search, made been r

I'll be interested to hear how ye get on." There might have been no charge, but needless to say a bottle of whisky changed hands.

Martin swings a trout to

hand while on the banks

of a picturesque loch in

the Scottish Highlands.

The keeper's colleague waved a cheery goodbye, and as the pick-up rumbled into the distance the only sounds that remained were water lapping against the boulder-strewn shoreline, and the cackle of grouse among heather.

The bankside terrain made walking difficult, especially with the burden of tackle, but we stumbled along the shore for some distance to find the deep water, which we hoped the char would favour.

Swimfeeder rigs baited with worms or maggots were launched into the rippled loch. We both fished two rods and experimented with presentations, fishing our baits on the bottom and also popped-up a couple of feet.

The distant, hoarse croaking of ravens carried from the craggy slopes on the opposite side of the loch. We saw a huge bird circling over the hillside; it could only have been an eagle, although whether it was a golden or white-tailed variety was uncertain (we were told that both are present). For a while, our quivertips Unfortunately, the culprits were invariably dark little trout, greedy for the maggots, which must have seemed like a rare treat in such an impoverished habitat. Martin had already landed quite a few fish by the time one of my quivertips flickered and jabbed for the first time, something having found a popped-up double maggot bait to its liking.

It was clearly a small fish, and there were times during the retrieve when I almost doubted that it was still hooked. It came splashing across the rocky margins, and when I swung it to hand I was surprised and delighted to see a little char. The capture of any char is an event, and I was elated with this one, even though it was a mere five inches long. It turned out to be the only char caught during our two days of fishing, although we had plenty more bites from trout and even more from midges. We departed for the long drive home with an open invitation to return.

phone calls and sent emails. Perseverance eventually paid off, as I was given the phone number of the headkeeper on a small shooting estate where the loch was located. I was half expecting a gruff refusal in answer to my call, but I could not have been more wrong. "Aye, ye can have a few days. Nae, there's nae charge.

My companion, Martin, and I were met at a padlocked gate by the keeper's right-hand man, and we followed his pick-up truck for two and a half miles along a rough gravel track, until the loch finally came into view. We were astounded by the level of trust and helpfulness



The smallest tactical change or tackle tweak can transform your fishing session, so here are some of the very best fishing tips to help you put more fish in the net.

Here's a great rig for searching out river barbel



When fishing slow-flowing rivers, you don't need to nail a bait hard to the bottom when targeting barbel.

A light leger, 10-12 lb main line, a 2 ft hook link and a strong size 8 hook buried in a couple of big chunks of luncheon meat will allow you to work your hook bait slowly downstream and search out barbel. A hook buried in meat is less likely to get snagged on the bottom than it would when left exposed. Use a weight that is just heavy enough to hold the rig on the deck, then lift the rod tip every now and again to allow the rig to roll a bit further downstream.

Barbel like a big bait, so don't be afraid to use large chunks of meat, and don't be surprised if you hook a fish right by the near bank in fading light, as that's a time when barbel usually feed more confidently.



A pellet waggler still catches carp in autumn

Presenting a pellet waggler rig off the bottom while pinging in 8 mm pellets is still a productive method for autumn carp in shallow waters. It's also worth taking a bomb rod, ready to capitalise on fish that are feeding on freebies that have sunk to the bottom.





Waterproof your kit with Fabsil

If the waterproofing of your brolly, shelter, luggage and/ or fishing clothing is starting to deteriorate, treat it with Fabsil Universal Protector Water-Repellent spray, which is available from outdoor equipment stores.

It also comes in liquid form, which can be painted on all kinds of fabrics, and is especially useful for bigger items such as tents, bivvies, brollies and luggage. It's a job worth doing before the weather deteriorates.

It's time to catch on casters

Apart from a few predators, freshwater fish love crunching on casters in autumn. They're a quality bait for roach, bream, perch, carp, F1s, chub and barbel. Big carp maestro Terry Hearn even catches heavyweights on them.

They're great when combined with hemp or chopped worm, and can be banded or hair-rigged. Darker casters tend to sink more slowly, and are particularly effective at tempting wise roach.







Hook more fish with a sharp point

Always use a sharp hook, no matter what species you are targeting. Reeling in a rig over tough terrain or through snags is all it can take to blunt the point of a hook.

Missing a bite or two is a tell-tale sign that your point is not a sharp as it could be, as

is losing a hooked fish during a fight.

Sharp hooks are especially important on self-hooking rigs, the point needing to penetrate the mouth of a fish when it picks up your hook bait.

The same advice goes for lure hooks.



Night bites

If you are not hooking carp in the day, it could be a sign that they are only feeding at night. Set your alarm for 1am and then listen and look for carp activity, such as a fish rolling on the surface in moonlight. If the fish are feeding at night, you can then do away with day sessions and concentrate all your efforts during the night-time feeding period.

You could end up with some big carp in your sling, ready to photograph at first light.

Pictured here is *Angler's Mail* carp columnist Colin Davidson, who is a big fan of daytime carping, but he also recognises that carp in some waters tend to feed more at night and is therefore more than willing to change his habits to capitalise on the feeding habits of carp. Just remember to take a bivvy, warm clothing and a sleeping bag now that we are in autumn, air temperature dropping sharply at night.

Dr ANWELCH The well-travelled freshwater biologist and top angler brings you his fascinating weekly insight into the secret lives of fish.

Bristing with SPECIAL SPECIES Few species epitomise the onset of autumn as much as perch. When water temperatures drop, they become FOCUS a target for an increasing number of anglers, in both

flowing and stillwaters. They are the species under our fishery boffin's scientific spotlight for October.

ERCH (Perca fluviatilis) are a member of the Percidae family, and are a native predator of the UK. The European perch, as it is also widely known, is native to much of the European continent, although it is absent in the Iberian Peninsula. Their range extends as far east as Siberia, where they are regularly fished for by a huge number of passionate, some might say mad, Russian ice fishers. The species is also known to inhabit the brackish environment of the Baltic Sea, where it feasts on huge shoals of juvenile herring, and has been widely introduced to countries in the southern hemisphere, including South Africa, New Zealand and Australia, where it is thought to have had an adverse impact on native Australasian fish species. Arguably the most distinctive species in British fish fauna, they have a largely green body colouration with a series of black vertical stripes. The body is covered in small, rough scales, and there are two distinct dorsal fins, the anterior comprising strong, sharp spines with a distinctive black spot at the posterior end. The pelvic and anal fins and the lower rays of the caudal fin tend to bright red, particularly in clear water. They are one of the more widely studied fish species in

British fauna, and scientific literature is extensive, much of it relating to the fact that a commercial perch fishery was established in Cumbria's Lake Windermere to provide a supply of fish protein during World War II, and I am reliably informed the species makes fine eating.

Males become sexually

important items of prey. Growing perch switch to an opportunistic predatory lifestyle as soon as their size enables them to do so, and they will actively hunt and ambush small fish from cover, where their body colouration affords them superb camouflage, particularly among reed stems. Although they frequently ambush prey, they tend to be far more active predators than pike, usually hunting in shoals in prolonged attacks, rather than in short bursts. Their jaws lack teeth, but the inner surface of the mouth is roughened to aid prey capture, which is often attacked from the rear and taken tail first. Like their Percidae family members the zander (Sander lucioperca), perch are particularly effective crepuscular feeders, having a highly developed array of rod cells within their eyes that provide good low-light intensity vision. Most of us will have seen the water surface erupt with a scattering of small prey fish as shoals of perch begin to hunt as light intensity fades. Unlike zander, perch lack the specialised retinal lining that would make them nocturnal feeders, activity tending to cease in full darkness. A sophisticated array of sensory pores along the lateral line give highly sensitive

mature at two years of age, females between two and four. Like most predatory species, they spawn early, though later than pike, to allow the fry to prey upon younger fry of other species, the period from April to May usually the key months, with 10 degrees Celsius the minimum water temperature required to trigger the process.

As spawning time approaches, the fish tend to exhibit a degree of spawning migration, the females in particular moving in groups towards areas of snags, particularly submerged trees and branches, which they favour for laying eggs. Juveniles feed almost

exclusively upon zooplankton, such as ciliates, rotifers and cyclopods (such as Cyclops), along with unicellular algae. As they grow and develop larger mouths, the size of food items that they are able to ingest increases, benthic invertebrates such as insect larvae, leeches, water snails and shrimps all becoming

detection of movement, but the species shows a varied response to picking up dead fish, which appears to be related to individual venues, some responding reasonably well to freshly killed baits, others not. There are few finer sights in fishing than a large perch holding its dorsal fin erect, bristling with aggression and bravura. Make sure you get out and fish for one this autumn!




Favourites come and go

Dave Coster has trouble listing his favourite species, because he constantly changes his target, a bit like the weather.

PRIME PERCH The capture of my first 2 lb perch was a complete accident. I was very young at the time, fishing a favourite park lake in North London. I grew tired of catching gudgeon and trying to fool crafty roach, which would swirl on the surface for everything that I threw in, except for what I had on my hook.

I tried legering a piece of bread flake, something that I had never done before, and amazingly my rod nearly flew in. A big stripy had mistaken a fluttering piece of white dough for something else, and it was the first decent fish that I had caught.

There have been many



more magical two-pounders since then, spanning several decades, and they still give me goosebumps.



CARP CAPERS

I sometimes fish carp venues, and occasionally carp-dominated matches, but generally they don't rock my boat. Anglers fretting over whether they have exceeded the net limit, or whinging that they have only filled three keepnets, is a bit surreal. Double-figure nets of fish on a canal or drain give me greater satisfaction than catching match-sized carp on a muddy puddle all day long, although I do admire the ability of some of the top carp haulers and big money earners. I'm happier away from that scene, much preferring wilder fishing. I do enjoy a decent carp putting a good bend in my rod, or stretching my pole elastic to its distant limits, but occasionally is enough for me.



CASTER CHUB

I began seriously fishing for chub on the Lower Lea Navigation when stretches such as the Crown Fishery, Ponders End, Cooks Ferry and Tottenham Locks held a good head of them. Waggler or bomb tactics were needed to put a decent catch together. You had to cast within inches of any far bank features to get a bite, feeding casters with a catapult. I got well into this style of fishing and won lots of matches. I also discovered that the method worked well on other chub-infested venues, such as parts of the Grand Union Canal and quite a few Thames backwaters. I got a great buzz from achieving perfect casts, knowing that a waggler brushing far side foliage or the side of a moored boat would result in a bite.



CRAFTY CRUCIANS

I've bumped into a few decent-sized crucian carp throughout my fishing career, mostly by accident. My first really big one was around 3 lb, caught from the Metropolitan Police West Drayton Pits. I was fishing for tench at the time, but was well made up with the surprise fish, not realising what a specimen it was. Now that I'm living in the Midlands, I'm bumping into a few more of these welcome 'bars of gold'. I've had some decent bags of them at Willow Lakes, just off the A1 at Foston, topped by the golden beauty in this photo. They are also turning up at Ruskington's Priory Lakes.

HEFTY HYBRIDS

My best hybrid fishing has been in Ireland, on vast loughs and the River Suck. I won a match on the Suck by catching unusual torpedo-shaped lumps that I think were rudd/bream hybrids. They fought like chub, and along with big bronze bream gave me a thumping victory. Some loughs in the Emerald Isle have so many hybrids, locals reckon they breed. I've caught some corkers over there, mainly when long pole or feeder fishing. Some crossbreeds are obvious, while others cause your heart to race when they



surface, looking like massive roach from a distance. The only thing that gave this one away was a dodgy, skimmer-like anal fin, which is hidden by my hands.



TENACIOUS TENCH

The thing that always gets me with tench is the way in which they fizz bubbles all around your float for ages, while cleverly ignoring your hook bait. Sometimes the float tip will tremble as the crafty tinkers brush your line. The only time your float seems to go under is when your concentration wanders. Tench bites can be fast, to the extent you need to try to anticipate them to have any chance of connecting with a fish. The other thing that fascinates me with 'teddy bears', an affectionate name given to them by Steve Collett, is the way in which they go missing. On many venues you need to start very early or late to catch them, as they seem to vanish at all other times.



BASIN BREAM

Bream are another species that can drive you bonkers. When skimmers and 'slabs' decide that they want to inhabit an area, there's little that you can do to shift them. If you are not pegged on the 'Bream Hole' on a match, you need a miracle to be able to be able to compete. I remember when a canal stretch renowned for

skimmers was drained completely. All the fish were washed down

to the next pound, and after the water returned I found a mate fishing a flier peg. "This has been empty for weeks," I informed him. "My keepnet isn't", he replied. Somehow the fish had got back to their favourite spot, and it was like they had never been away.

ROACH READY Roach are masters at disappearing and reappearing. know several lake venues where redfin fishing is great in winter, but a complete waste of time in summer. Where do these fish go? They just seem to fade into oblivion, returning only when the first frosts occur. On other river and drain stretches it's the other way around, the roach responding well in the warmer months, particularly when you use seed baits, and then go missing when it goes cold. I haven't covered all of my favourite species here. I only need to catch a barbel, big rudd, plenty of dace, humble gudgeon or an accidental pike and suddenly my chart-toppers will alter completely.







Choose the right feeder



How do I choose between Method, Hybrid and pellet designs?



Ask Sakun EMAILYOUR QUESTIONS TO: anglersmail @futurenet.com

Or write to: Answers, *Angler's Mail*, Future, Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough, Farnborough Business Park, Hampshire, GU14 7BF.

To receive your prize, please include your name, address and phone number.

Tom Truman, Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

You never quite know which type of feeder the fish are going to respond to best, so it's a good idea to go armed with all three of the major designs that you mention.

The weather can also influence proceedings. Pellet designs often wander and struggle a bit in side winds, requiring a change to a Hybrid, which can zoom out like a rocket and rarely fail to reach the intended target area.

Method feeders are not as good as Hybrid or pellet designs when the fish are feeding well, being slower to load and prepare.

Top anglers tend to change feeder designs and sizes regularly, always striving to find out if there's a better way of presenting their feed and hook baits. There are various quickchange beads that you can use to attach your hook links, and they are also easy to remove,

PRIZE WINNERS NOW WIN A RidgeMonkey ThermoMug and a GorillaBox Tech Case



allowing you to switch to various in-line feeders. Some feeder designs even have tubes that allow them to be switched without breaking rigs down.

There is no easy way to make the right feeder choice, because every session throws up different demands, so it's a case of being versatile.

DAVE COSTER'S RIG BITS CLINIC

Dave reveals the traditional and modern end tackle that will help you catch more fish.

RIG RINGS

Carp anglers have been incorporating tiny metal rings into their rigs for many



years. As with most specimen tackle bits and pieces, general coarse anglers are now finding ways of using them. They are a popular solution for attaching short, looped hook links to elasticated feeder tubes, and I'm in no doubt that there will soon be other reasons to carry a few of these simple rings in your tackle box.



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Go like a rocket

Are you in need of a spod rod and reel? Worried about your £30 of expensive braid not sitting correctly on your reel? Follow Colin Davidson's common sense spod kit advice and you'll avoid the expense and irritation of having rocket kit that fails to launch a spod in the manner that you'd like it to.

Epic Emblems

I'm a massive fan of Daiwa Emblem reels, having used them for fishing and spodding for 20 years. Many of them were produced back in the day, and you can now pick up these workhorses for very little online, about £35-50.

They don't have slow oscillation, infinite anti-reverse or any of the other stuff that modern reels boast, but none of those technical aspects really matters when casting spods.

Their spools are large, the line lay is excellent, and even the smaller 4500 models retrieve within a whisker of a metre with each turn of the handle.

They are absolute workhorses, and well recommended. If you can't cast far enough with them, the problem is not the reel, it's your ability. The only downside is their line clip, as they tend to snap when the line stops peeling off the reel, having reached the clip. It is enough to put some people off using them, but you can buy replacement line-friendly clips online and fit them yourself easily enough. You'll then have a spod reel that will cast and retrieve forever. I've also used the Emblem A model, with the reverse taper spool, and I can report that they are also ace spod reels.



An alternative hardware solution is to buy a dedicated spod reel, which have appeared in recent years, and are typically loaded with low-diameter braid when you unbox them. They are generally available at an entry-level price point. You won't get the best reel or the best braid, but you will get a convenient, instant solution with no spooling-up required,

These workhorse reels are best loaded with braid to just short of their lip, not to the very edge of it.

no additional purchase, and a line-friendly spool clip.

There are more expensive dedicated spod reels on the market, and from what I can see their sales pitch is that they have a greater retrieve rate, requiring fewer turns of the handle and less work.

When compared with the retrieve of any other big reel, I would suggest that a difference of 5-10 cm per turn of the handle across the time spent in putting a bucket of bait out at 90 yards is a difference that you will never notice. 300 m of braid, you will need to load the backing to within 5 mm of the lip and then add braid. A double grinner knot is all you need to join the braid to the mono.

The differences in spool width and depth, and the diameter of the braid, amount to no real difference. If you leave a gap of 5 mm, you will always have an acceptably filled spod reel.

Braid is a lot finer than nylon, so even a slightly underfilled spool won't affect your casting performance. Given a choice, I'd pick slightly underfilled, as the extra drag will stop it coming off the spool enthusiastically and wrapping itself in an expensive bird's nest, which is a very real danger if you overfill a reel



Getting lippy Braided lines used for spodding are much lower in diameter than monofilament. You'll need to put mono on most big pit reels before adding braid, to avoid it being seriously underfilled. For virtually all big pit reels, here's a simple rule: if you have

A reducer collar cuts down on the amount of nylon backing.

with braid. Braid that's slightly below the lip isn't an issue, and it won't affect distance at all.

However, plenty of reels come supplied with a shallow spool, which can be loaded without backing. With about 300 yards of braid on the spool, you will be in the ball park of having a well-loaded reel without messing about.

Some reels, like my favourite Emblems, also have the option of a reducer collar, which reduces the amount of nylon backing required, though not enough to do without it.

A super-shallow Emblem spool is basically a tournament-casting spool, second-hand ones cropping up occasionally, having been imported from Japan. Mine came from reel-trader and importer Jon Mitchell (email: mitchellsreels@yahoo.com). Make sure that you secure the braid to the spool with a few wraps of electrical tape after knotting it. If you don't, the braid may revolve around the shiny, smooth spool, having nothing to grip to. When using backing, braid will bed in the nylon.

When loading braid, I always have a narrow container full of water, as it prevents a spool from sitting flat, allowing it to spin when line is retrieved. Keep it under steady tension and use a glove or cloth to prevent your fingers from getting warm.

Braid doesn't suffer twist in the same way that mono does, and it's quite hard to load it badly, even if you tried to do so. Just keep the tension constant as you load the reel.



Braid will bed into nylon line, but you'll need to tape it when knotting it directly to shallow spools, to prevent it from spinning.

terminal, but the real danger is a wind knot down the line that leaves you unable to bait unless you unpick it. If feeding with a rocket is a standard part of your approach, make sure you have a spare spool filled with braid and attached to a leader. Should disaster happen, you can switch one spool for the other and carry on baiting. The expense of the additional spool and braid more than makes up for the cost of your session, including fuel, bait and ticket.

tie a large figure-of-eight loop, around 10-12 cm long. Then tie a 5 mm figure-of-eight loop in the end of it. When you want to add the spod, pass the end of the loop through the swivel or eye of the rocket, open out the larger loop and pass the rocket through it, connecting it to your braid, loop-to-loop style. No knot or clip is required. The second smaller loop gives you a tag to pull to reverse the process and remove the rocket when you pack up. If you try it with an overhand loop, the small loop will slip open and disappear first cast. Just be sure to put the extra twist of the figure-of-eight knot in there.

It's a wrap

One warning for anyone filling shallow spools with braid: tying the braid to the arbor of the spool and then filling it can be a recipe for disaster.

Going spare

Even with reliable reels, quality braid and a well-tied leader, there's always room for a mishap when casting spods repeatedly.

You might lose a rocket, which is expensive but not



On the pull

Once you've spooled your spod reel, do not forget the quick-change spod hack. On the end of the braid or leader,



Colin's basic tools for putting line on his spod reel.



Tie a large figure-of-eight loop and smaller loop at the end of it.



Safe and sound, this baiting device is attached securely to braid.

BILLY & JAME

Long-time pals Billy Flowers and Jamie Londors are two of the World's most consistent carp catchers. The two England Carp Team members share their sessions and insight in *Angler's Mail*.

Feed the Ox and you will catch!

This week: Billy gets his tactics right on a lively return to Linear Fisheries, a succession of carp keeping him up all day and night.

Our brilliant 48-hour session a few weeks back on Linear Fisheries' Oxlease Lake left me gagging for a return trip to the Oxfordshire complex.

This time I travelled from my Essex home alone, but I was accompanied by plenty of bait and rigs, which would help me to cover all tactics, depending on which water I went on.

I wasn't going to be fishing for as long as last time, so it was important to get my tactics right from the off. I arrived at Linear late afternoon, and I could see that it was busy while wandering around the venue. Areas where I spotted carp were taken by guys who were pitched up for a few days, leaving me with an awkward dilemma of where to set up my stall.

I really fancied a go on Manor Farm or St Johns Lake, but I didn't have a good feeling about the few swims that were available. I headed back over to Oxlease and walked around it again, before eventually selecting a swim on the far bank that gave me access to the middle of the lake.

Search for a soft silt spot

I cast a lead around, 'feeling' for features, and with just over an hour until it was due

Billy was delighted with this 27 lb Oxlease mirror, with scales that look like big apple slices.



to get dark I found a soft silty area at just over 80 yards that seemed the ideal place to catch a few carp.

I placed the line in the clip of my reel on my spod rod, then did the same with my three fishing rods, the plan being to fish all of my rigs in the same spot. It's one of my favourite styles of fishing, and it works perfectly at Linear.

My spod mix included crushed and whole 15 mm Mainline Cell boilies, 10 mm Cell, lots of sweetcorn, Power+ Particle Multi-Stim Hemp and The Pulse, and plenty of Cell Smart Liquid, for added attraction.

I started by putting out 15 large Spombfuls of bait and then cast three spinner rigs over the top. Two of them were baited with yellow pop-ups, and other one with an orange pop-up. I know that these rigs work well on Oxlease with high-attract pop-ups, when presented over a bed of bait. Once all the rigs were in position, I set up my brolly just as it was getting dark, then put the kettle on for a much-needed brew.



Cooking on gas

I didn't have to wait long for action to begin, a 24 lb mirror interrupting me while cooking dinner. The food got a bit burnt while I played the fish to the bank, but it was well worth it. I was there for great fishing, not to enjoy fabulous meals. 31 lb mirror, then a 33 lb mirror. Both fish took a yellow pop-up nailed on a spinner rig.

I was beginning to feel really tired, but with the temperature rising and the sun beaming into my bivvy it felt far too warm to even consider trying to get a bit of sleep.

I wanted to make the best of my fishing time, so I changed two rigs for zigs, as it was clear that the fish were up in the water, enjoying the warmer weather. I played around with different depths and bait colours for nearly four hours before I had my first bite, on a 9 ft zig. I landed a carp safely, but it was the only bite I managed on zigs, which was unusual, as you can usually rack up a good number of fish quickly, especially if you spod feed over the top. I've used this tactic on most of the venue's lakes and have enjoyed some amazing results. I had been presenting the zigs at the same distance as my rig with a bottom bait, the larger food items in the sloppy mix reaching the lakebed. I put spinner rigs on all of my rods, and less than an hour later I was into another fish, followed by three more within 45 minutes.

Sleepless again

As darkness came, I heard a few fish in the distance, beyond my spot, and I lay on my bed thinking that it would be only a matter of time before they found my feed.

That was my final thought before I fell fast asleep, but not for long. My first bite of the night came at 1.30am, a low-20, and I could hear more carp activity over my spot when casting my rig and more feed out.

Sleep was out of the question again, another three fish coming my way while I was feeling a little dazed. kite instantly, a characteristic of the bigger residents. Just before it was ready for netting, my middle rod was away. My final few minutes on the lake had become utter carnage.

I set the hook on the middle rod and allowed the carp to take line, before safely landing a gorgeous chestnut mirrror.

I then landed the other fish, which was around 18-20 lb, and slipped it straight back into the lake.

I then got on with the business of dealing with the other fish properly, which pulled the needle of my scales around to 32 lb. What a satisfying way to end another amazing session on Oxlease! After taking a few snaps of the fish, I left the lake having racked up another good hit of quality fish, including three different 30s. It just goes to show that if you can feed a spot regularly and have three rigs on it, the rewards will come.



, ,

I then cast the successful rig back on the spot, followed by another two Spombfuls of feed, feeling confident that the carp were up for feeding.

As it had been a draining day, I drifted off to sleep at about 10pm, but then I was woken by my alarm at just after 11pm. After a screaming bite (a one-toner), I was soon connected to my second 20 of the trip, a carp of just over 25 lb.

The night got even better as it went on. I hardly had any sleep, another four carp bringing my tally to six fish, the best just over 29 lb.

It seemed as if every time I got into my sleeping bag and tried to get some shut-eye, a rod was away. Regular feeding was needed to top up the swim, and my active approach was clearly working, the carp loving the bait.

Every carp was over 20 lb, the biggest 28 lb, so I was back on course for a decent session. The average weight of carp in Oxlease has got to be around 22 lb. I can't grumble at that, especially when you consider that there's a near-50 lb common swimming among them. I began packing up and drank a much-needed cup of strong coffee just before light. Most of my kit was packed up by 7.20am. All I had to do was reel the rigs in by 8am, the time when the fishery gates open.

I sat on a bucket, dreading the thought of leaving a spot that was really rocking. I also had work ahead of me, which was sure to be one of those never-ending days that we all have when we're tired.

Early morning carp carnage

The session was not over yet. I had a bite on my right-hand rod, and this fish began to

A great time for catching big 'uns

The autumn weather is now perfect for targeting big fish, so it's time to get the rods out for a few overnighters on my syndicate lake. Maybe I'll catch one before the final *Angler's Mail* issue.

anglersmail.com 6 OCTOBER | 41

Daytime delights The constant action carried on all the way until nearly midday, another four carp coming my way, including a pukka brace of 30s, a scaly **REPORT YOUR CATCHES TO US!** YOU could appear in print in *Angler's Mail* magazine before we sadly bring you the last issue on Oct. 27. Email recent quality pix and info to: **anglersmail@futurenet.com**

MIKESALSBURY The ace angling coach is here in the Mail for an exclusive series revealing his on-the-bank lessons and views on modern fishing.

Carry on glamping

N terms of the sheer volume of coaching sessions that I've delivered this summer, 2020 has most certainly been my busiest year ever. I've had to bring my wife, Amanda, back on board to assist me, who qualified as a Level 1 coach some years ago.

When schools reopened at the beginning of September, I decided to take a week off to visit family in the North East for a few days, and I also managed to squeeze in a night's fishing at Leazes Park, in Newcastle, where I caught three lovely Geordie carp, as I mentioned a

fortnight ago. Upon my return from Tyneside, Amanda and I had a long weekend to enjoy a short getaway of our own. In previous years, our preferred destinations have been overseas, with Barcelona and Munich being firm favourites of ours. Sadly,

neither of these locations would be an option this year, due to Covid-19. We would have had to have isolated for 14 days upon our return, and we simply couldn't afford to lose two weeks' income, so we decided on a 'busman's holiday' closer to home.





Mike and Amanda's view of the lake from inside the glamping pod, their rods set up on spacious decking.

Mike managed to catch this wonderful zip linear, one of only two carp caught during his stay at Mill Lodge.

I had noticed a fishing venue that had suddenly sprung up on social media, Mill Lodge Retreat. After further investigation, it transpired that it was fairly nearby to us, being located near Brentwood, in Essex. Before anyone lambasts me for taking my wife on a fishing holiday, Mill Lodge Retreat is not your average venue. It has a three-acre lake that is stocked predominantly with carp to just over 40 lb, and every swim features a luxury glamping pod. Each pod is kitted out with beds, electricity, a mini-bar, a flatscreen TV and a PlayStation. There are no muddy banks, as outside each pod is an area of spacious decking. Three of the eight swims on the lake also feature a hot tub, so we opted for one of those. You can also opt to have all of your meals freshly cooked and delivered to your pod. I must say, it was a very strange experience to begin with. As darkness fell on Friday night, we closed the door to our pod and began watching one of our favourite shows on Netflix. My carp rods were outside, rigs in the water, but I had a receiver for my bite alarms inside the pod. A few hours later, my receiver let out a shrill, at which point I flew out of the door and onto the decking. I was soon doing battle with a very angry carp, which soon became stuck in a weedbed. Desperate not to lose it, I kept the rod high and line tight, and the carp was soon free of the weed. I netted the fish, and in the light of my headtorch I could see that it was a real cracker. Although it wasn't a big fish, it was a beautiful linear mirror carp, which is typical of the stock in this lake. After a few quick pictures, I released the fish, and we settled in for the night. The rest of the trip played out uneventfully in terms of the fishing, but it didn't matter, as we enjoyed a very relaxing weekend. As it transpired, I had caught one of only two carp over the weekend, during which time the lake had been fully booked. I counted myself very fortunate to have bagged a fish on my first trip there. I dare say that we will be visiting it again in the future.



main carp lake at Crowsheath is very well stocked, the fish do not give themselves up easily. You really need to up your game in terms of your choice of bait and rig presentation.

Like many UK day ticket waters, Crowsheath gets a lot of angling pressure, and it doesn't take long for the fish to wise up to the tactics being used by anglers. Bait choice is rarely an issue for me, because for the past three years I've been using Bait-Tech Triple-N boilies. I have real confidence in them, as I tend to catch fish wherever I go. As the old saying goes: 'If it ain't broken, don't fix it.' I see no reason to chop and change baits, which is where I think a lot of anglers trip up. There is no such thing as a miracle bait in carp fishing, it's just a case of finding one that works for you on any given venue.

a stealthy one. Have a look at what other anglers are doing. If they're crashing in spods and not catching anything, opt for a subtle approach, perhaps casting small PVA bag rigs or depositing a rig and a few freebies using a bait-boat. The No.1 thing to avoid on pressured venues is tight lines. Nothing arouses the suspicion of fish more than a tight line going through the water. A slack line is far less obtrusive and produces better results than a tight one, as proved at my recent session.

I was fishing in a reed-lined bay, my chosen spots being fairly close in. I got my rigs and bait in with a minimum amount of disturbance, and kept my lines slack. Within an hour I was rewarded, as I landed a plump 24 lb 10 oz common just before dark. At 1.30am the same rod was away again, and this time it resulted in a scale-perfect 28 lb 2 oz common.

Simple, successful

Amanda and I continue to be extremely busy with coaching. The junior sessions that we have been running at Mill Barn, in Essex, are in very high demand, and the participants who attend have enjoyed every minute. Simplicity has been the modus operandi for these sessions, with simple waggler tactics continuing to produce fish of all sizes. From the smallest perch to double-figure carp, maggots and corn under a waggler has done the job. It just goes to show that simplicity can be the key to success.

If temperatures continue to be on the mild side, I think our junior sessions will continue to be in high demand. In these uncertain times, the prospect of having regular work is a comfortable thought. Until next time, stay healthy, and the very best of luck with all of your fishing endeavours.

Your approach on pressured day ticket venues needs to be



Limp line lunkers

No sooner had I returned from our trip than I was off fishing again, albeit for a very short overnight session, as I had work lined up the following day. My choice of venue was one of my favourite day ticket lakes in Essex, Crowsheath Fishery, near Billericay. Although the

Richard Howard's GEAR OF THE WEEK The vastly experienced tackle and haits expert seeks out the latest most interesting products giving his

The vastly experienced tackle and baits expert seeks out the latest, most interesting products, giving his verdict on each of them, to help you make the right choice. Email: **richard.howard@futurenet.com**

RidgeMonkey Aqua Shoe Price: £19.99 (sizes 7-12).

Description: light footwear for bivvy anglers. Specifications: quick-drying; easy to put on and take off; comfortable; can be worn in water; non-slip; breathable. My verdict: a zip and a tassel make it a doodle to slip into and out of these Aqua Shoes, which can be worn in the margins when netting a fish. You could even sleep while wearing them, doing away with the need to put on other types of footwear or a pair of waders when you get a run. Their non-slip soles are ideal when walking over rocky terrain, and the RidgeMonkey team have told me that they dry quickly if you leave them in sunshine. They also prevent broken glass or other sharp objects penetrating the soles of your feet, and they take up very little room, making them an ideal choice for trips abroad. They can also be worm as slippers, at home or in a bivvy, which I think is a bonus. I think RidgeMonkey will sell quite a few pairs of these, especially when you consider their price.



What's that for?

Richard's refresher course is designed to help you get to grips with today's fishing kit.

COMPACT ROD

Rods of 6-10 ft have grown in popularity in recent years, especially for carping.

A key feature is that they can be packed down to a small length, thanks to having a retractable butt section. Some companies have 6 ft models that retract to 29 in., 8 ft to 30 in., 9 ft to 44 in. and 10 ft to 50 in.

Easy to transport, in the boot of a car or on public transport, models with 2-4.5 lb test curves are popular for stalking big carp, but are also used for other disciplines, including sea fishing and targeting catfish.

They'll flick a bait under bankside cover with ease, helping you to set margin traps, but will also punch out a PVA bag.

Shorter lengths provide better casting accuracy, especially when aiming for tight spots.

Popular, affordable designs include Nash Dwarf and Sonik Xtractor. More expensive are Nash Scope and Sonik Insurgent Recon rods, as they have better quality blanks.

Drennan In-Line Shallow Crystals Price: £2.25.

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Description: tough, tangle-free pole floats.

Specifications: available in 0.2, 0.3, 0.4 and 0.5 g sizes; in-line, tangle-free design; see-through body; tough construction; fibreglass stem.

My verdict: the weight of a big carp in the net can break foam or balsa pole floats, but these models look a lot tougher.

The line passes through their fluorescent tip and body, reducing tangles, especially when slapping a rig on the surface to attract fish.

As they are less obtrusive than painted floats, you'll be able to lower a bait into a shallow margin peg, tight to far bank cover or in open water, without disturbing feeding fish. They're available in a range of colours, and are ideal with pellet, caster and corn hook baits for species such as carp.



Korum **Speed Fit** Adaptor

Prices: £6.99; Spare Inserts £2.99 (pair).

Description: quick-change adaptor for bank sticks. Specifications: standard thread for attaching accessories and sticks; quick-lock mechanism. My verdict: these adaptors are ideal if you want to swap a rod rest head for another one or a bite alarm quickly. Simply attach a Speed Fit Insert to the thread of an accessory, drop it into the recess of a Speed Fit Adaptor screwed onto a bank stick, and then turn the collar to lock it in position. You're now in business. They can be useful on storm poles, too. Korum advise that they are not designed for use on landing net heads. The Adaptor comes with one insert; spare inserts are available separately.



Mainline High Impact **Boilies** Prices: £11.25 (1 kg); £29.50 (3 kg).

Description: two new flavours in an already established boilie range. Specifications: Choc-O and Fruity Tuna flavours; complete food source; made from a high-quality base mix; shelf-life; 15 and 20 mm sizes; resealable



42 in. Fox Explorer Landing Net

Price: £79.99.

Description: a compact landing net for carp. Specifications: two-part, telescopic 6 ft handle; collapses down to 108 cm; Power Pole for added stiffness; machined aluminium spreader block; high-modulus carbon arms; Fox Camo print mesh; corners reinforced with extra fabric. My verdict: a useful net for stalking or floater fishing sessions when you're carrying everything in a sling. The drop of the net looks ideal for resting fish in the margins. I find telescopic handles more user-friendly than other designs, as they simply collapse or extend with minimal effort. The aluminium spreader block should be strong, and the reinforced corners of the net should prevent the arms from tearing and then poking through the mesh.



bags.

My verdict: whether you want to keep a couple of bags in a rucksack or the boot of a car, or stock up for a French trip, these new Mainline boilie flavours can be added to your armoury without requiring any space in a freezer.

Choclolate and Fruity Tuna flavours are known carp catchers.

They come in resealable bags, so you can dip in and out of them over several sessions.

They complement the



AM's unrivalled regional experts bring you the best venue reports with insight and tips.





autumn carp

TODBER MANOR FISHERIES, MANOR FARM, TODBER, STURMINSTER NEWTON, DORSET.

DESCRIPTION: this

extensive carp and coarse complex boasts 11 lakes that span 28 acres, all on a picturesque 125-acre site in Dorset countryside.

Several of the lakes offer a very good chance of a 20 lb-plus carp. Eight-acre **Big Hayes Specimen Lake** boasts at least 250 20 lb-plus fish and around 80 of over 30 lb.

bottom baits, pop-ups and wafters can all catch fish. Sticky Baits The Krill and Northern Specials have also produced some nice fish.

Fishing a wafter or pellet-shaped hook bait over pellets is also worth a try, at least until it cools down. Fishing for one fish at a time will come into its own when the cold does arrive, catapulting half a dozen freebies around your hook bait, perhaps with a few baits on a PVA stringer for added attraction.

It's always worth casting to a fish if you do see one on

and a ten-wrap limit on Little Hayes. It's worth fishing a spot a couple Go to the tackle shop on arrival of wraps and ask about the current short of the form. It's also worth monitoring maximum range, as it will enable you to follow the fish if they move a bit further out. Island margins are also worth a look.

Todber Manor

TOP

the catch reports on

the venue's website.

Multiple catches are pretty common, including plenty of 20s and doubles, though there's always a chance of hooking something even bigger.

Six-acre Little Hayes Specimen Lake has around 700 carp, weighing from doubles to over 33 lb. Three-acre Willow Bank was stocked with around 240 carp, from low doubles to 34 lb, but 50 of them are now probably over 24 lb. Willow is pegged on one bank, anglers tending to cast across to the far bank.

Top tactics include legered CC Moore Pacific Tuna or Live System hook baits over crushed and whole baits and some house pellets and particles. Well presented

the surface, as is using a lead to 'feel' the clay bottom, a smooth, hard spot an indication that carp have been feeding in the area. There's a 12-wrap limit fishing range on Big Hayes

TICKETS: £15 a day; £25 for 24 hours, enquire about longer stays. It's advisable to book a peg before you visit, as these lakes are very popular. Tel: 01258 820384. todbermanor.co.uk SWIMS TO TRY: at the moment, fish can be found at either end of Big Hayes and Little Hayes, regardless of the weather. As it cools, open water between the islands tends to produce more bites. **NEAREST TACKLE SHOP:** large tackle shop on site. **HOW TO GET THERE:** from Sturminster Newton, take the B3092, heading north to Todber.

Ladywood Lakes Fishery, West Yorkshire. Location: Sands Lane, Mirfield, WF14 8HH. **Description:** a two-lake fishery, the biggest being the ten-acre Carp Lake, which contains over 40 20 lb-plus carp, a number of 30s and at least one known 40-pounder, a common, last out at 43 lb 10 oz. The smaller two-acre lake is a 'runs water' regularly producing multiple catches of double-figure fish, but it also contains at least ten specimens of over 20 lb. Simple leger rigs with bottom baits or pop-ups will be the most consistent method in autumn. If the fish are feeding well, you can afford to give them plenty of pellets and broken boilies. The advice here is to feel your way into a session, kicking off with just a PVA bag or a single bait until you work out how hungry they are. **Tickets:** Carp Lake £24 for 24 hours; Small Lake £19 for 24 hours. Sessions must be



then turn right and continue towards Stour Row and Shaftesbury. After half a mile, the fishery entrance is on your left. SAT NAV: DT10 1JB.



The Mail's carp columnist Colin **Davidson is a fan of Todber Manor.** He's seen here about to land a specimen from Little Hayes.

pre-booked. Tel: 07792 731170. ladywoodlakes.co.uk

The All gillion to a self

WASH

Menards Carp Fishery, 3 West Sussex. Location: Home Farm, Hammerpond Road, Mannings Heath, Horsham, RH13 6PG. **Description:** a six-acre mature lake and stock pond set in tranquil countryside. Gravel paths and 12 woodchipped swims ensure you have lots of space. Stocks include a lot of 20 lb-plus carp and numerous 30s to over 35 lb, with islands, lily pads, bays, bars and plateaus great areas to target them. Urban Bait, Nash and Sticky Baits boilies all catch fish here. On-site facilities include a toilet, shower, tackle

£65; and £75 respectively. £300 for winter membership (November 1-February 28), dates must be booked in advance. Tel: 01403 243213. menardscarpfishery.co.uk

Near Gatten Fishery, 4 Shropshire.

Location: Ratlinghope, Shrewsbury, SY5 OSN. **Description:** spring-fed, the water quality of this three-acre lake is excellent. Most of the carp are 30s, though there are a few mid-doubles and a good chance of a 40-pounder. Depths are typically 5-6 ft, the deeper end dropping to 14 ft. Fishing is from one bank only, with an 80-yard cast required to reach the far bank. Regular top-ups of feed after initial spodding is required to keep the fish interested. Boilies are the main bait choice, but maggots with hemp and pellets will come into play from November. The fish are clued-up, so be quiet and spend time casting a marker,

looking for sunken bars and the sides of islands. **Tickets:** £30 for 24 hours; £50 for 48 hours (both two rods). Tel: 07930 188888. neargattenfishery.co.uk

Gawsworth Fisheries, Cheshire.

Location: Gawsworth, Macclesfield, SK11 9RQ. **Description:** Wood Pool is the lake to target on this six-lake venue for the best chance of a 20 lb carp. There are more 15-17 lb fish, but there's always a good chance of a 20, the biggest being 31 lb. Conditions dictate the number of fish caught, but two or three in half a day is typical. Boilie hook baits presented over a mix of whole and chopped baits and pellets is a good ploy. Despite the shallow water, zig rigs work very well, especially when fished towards the island or lily pads. **Tickets:** £8 for one rod; £10 for two rods; £12 for three rods; £20 for 24 hours, by arrangement.

Tel: 01260 223442. gawsworth-fisheries.co.uk

Fenland Fisheries 6 Cambridgeshire. **Location:** Earith, PE28 3SA. **Description:** Vermuyden Lake has a deserved reputation as a 'runs' water. Spanning three acres, it holds over 200 double-figure carp, including fish to 35 lb and at least 20 20s. Some big-but-seldomcaught grass carp are also present. Bottom baits, pop-ups and zig rigs can all score, and floaters are worth trying in swims with reeded margins. Swims on the peninsula between the main lake and the back arm are always reliable, as are the first three swims to

and bait shop, microwave, charging points, and takeaway deliveries to the fishery gate. **Tickets:** £50 membership entitles anglers to reduced rates: £25 from 6am-6pm (Monday-Thursday); £35 for 24 hours; £55 for 36 hours; £65 for 48 hours. Non-members £30; £40;

the left of the car park. **Tickets:** £15 from 6.30am-8.30pm until the end of October; 24 hours £25 (both two rods); Online payment via fenlandfisheries.com No braid main line, leadcore or nut baits. Minimum unhooking mat size 36 x 24 in. Tel: 01487 841858 or 07950 666058.

WHERE TO FISH SOUTHWEST

Brian Gay

Somerset matchman turned specimen angler, loves to unearth hotspots across the region. Tel: 07768 612872 Email: Brian62@mac.com

Long live angling!

Many lapsed anglers returned to angling when venues reopened after the initial lockdown, and we also saw the emergence of new novices in the sport.

Many fisheries have never had so much demand, as angling proved its worth as a viable and healthy distraction to the coronavirus threat. In this day and age there are threats to all kinds of established ways of life, so it is great that angling has proved so popular, and I sincerely hope that the returnees and newcomers remain regular participants and bolster the wider angling community. The future of any sport lies in the hands of those who govern it and those who take part in it. We can all do our bit to help sustain a healthy future for our sport. Not least, we can encourage and welcome newcomers, help them to catch fish and guide them in the subtleties.



Safety in numbers is not just a saying, it's a reality, and the more anglers we have in this country, the stronger we stand against any future threat.

Please don't underestimate the risk posed by the likes of PETA and the League Against Cruel Sports. If we take our eye off the ball, it will be too easy for anti-angling groups to infiltrate the minds of the young and turn them against angling.

It is vital that we all stand together, match, pleasure or

specimen, young, old or in-between. As anglers we must unite and collectively protect and procure the safe well-being of the future of our sport. I salute those clubs and organisations that promote strong junior angling sections,

RIVERS Bristol Avon

12 months from joining. Tel: 01202 480009. offer good bream, and the lower reaches also hold good barbel.

STILLWATERS Amalwhidden Farm

Where? Pondfields and Barton Farm, Pound Lane, Bradford-On-Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1LF. Members only. Airsprung AA membership £30. Tel: 01225 766219.

What's being caught? Bream on the feed at Barton Farm, 5-10 fish a good return. There are roach and small chub to be had on many pegs, with bags of 5-10 lb. Some specimen chub showing at the Staverton end. **Tactics?** The bream tend to fall to a classic crumb feeder and worms and casters, or three big red maggots. Otherwise, pole and worms or maggots over balled-in crumb and casters can score. Float fished casters or maggots over loosefeed brings bites from the smaller silver fish. On the chub pegs, waggler and maggots shallow should put you in with a good chance of hooking a few decent 'rubber dubs'.

What's being caught?

Specimen chub and barbel are on the feed right now, several fish possible when you locate them. Upper Winkton also throws up some superb specimen roach, and now is a good time to start to target them, though we could do with a bit more rain, because they love a tinge of colour.

Tactics? Legered pellets is a proven tactic for the river's barbel and chub, and is a good base for any campaign. Boilies also tend to select the larger barbel and chub. Legered flake is a great way to target the roach, and trotting is also good when there's a tinge of colour in the river. Float fished casters or maggots will produce plenty of smaller silver fish bites, as well as occasional larger specimens. **Tactics?** Trotting maggots or casters using a light stick float or waggler in the main flow is a good way to build a bag of fish. To select the biggest fish, cast a straight leger rig baited with a lobworm, a lump of cheesepaste or a bit of bread flake towards any bankside feature.

CANAL Kennet and Avon Canal Where? Rechive

Where? Beehive,

Bradford-On-Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1UA. Members only. Airsprung AA membership £30. Tel: 01225 766219.

What's being caught?

Skimmers, roach and perch are the mainstay of catches along the Airsprung and Beehive sections. Up to double-figure weights are the typical better catches. Some quality bream, roach and perch showing among smaller silver fish. **Tactics?** Bread punch when the cut has good clarity. Pole with pinkies or maggots down the track also produces fish, while casters to the far shelf is another good approach. Chopped worm will tempt any bigger fish in the swim.

Where? Towednack, St Ives, Cornwall, TR26 3AR. Day tickets £7. Tel: 01736 796961 or 07842 089760.

What's being caught? Fir Tree Pond is superb for silver fish action, a big head of obliging roach and skimmers on the feed. Aim for double-figure weights, better bags around 30 lb. Heron Lake carp action is pretty reliable, many swims producing 50-100 lb bags on better days.

Tactics? Pole with pellets and corn is the main tactic for the carp on Heron. For the Fir Tree silver fish, pole with expander pellets over micro pellets is still producing well, but good alternatives are maggots, casters and chopped worm.

Chad Lakes

Hampshire Avon

Where? Winkton, Stony Lane, Burton, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 7LA. Members only. Christchurch AC membership £170 plus a £20 joining fee, for

River Marden

Where? Calne, Wiltshire. SN11
9LJ. Day tickets £5. Calne AA membership £24.
Tel: 01249 812003.
What's being caught? Mixed bag fishing is the norm in most swims, roach, dace, chub and perch featuring. Some swims

Where? Stow Road, Bledington, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 6XL. Currently taking only 24-hour bookings, at £20, arranged and paid in advance. Tel: 01451 831470.
What's being caught? Four or five decent double-figure carp capped by low-20s is a realistic prospect at this pretty





Bob's. Pole and pellets or corn is consistently good for the smaller carp, tench and silver fish on the other lakes.

Jennetts Reservoir

Where? Near Bideford, Devon, EX39 5JH. South West Lakes Trust day tickets £10. Tel: 01288 321262.

What's being caught? A carp runs water holding quality fish to upper-teens and low-20s but possibly up to 30 lb. There are a few big tench of 5-8 lb showing from time to time, along with some big bream and perch. For busy, fun fishing, the roach and skimmers often provide a bite a cast. **Tactics?** Boilies and zigs working well for the carp. A few tench and big bream do pick up baits intended for the carp, but can be targeted with crumb feeder, corn or worms. The silver fish often respond well to a whip to-hand or waggler and maggots on the drop.

good doubles the norm. A few decent carp in a session is on the cards. For mixed bag action, the Main Lake offers some sizeable carp among plenty of singles and lots of roach and skimmers. **Tactics?** On the Specimen Lake, the margins are still producing fish, boilies being the number one for the bigger ones. On the Main Lake, a flatbed pellet feeder cast to the island margins scores with the carp, while a pole and expander

Lee Crowley took his ten-year-old son, Logan, for his first ever trip this summer, and he caught his first fish, bagging two carp by himself. Emerald Pool, near Highbridge, in Somerset, is a great place to introduce novices to the sport, as it is packed with fish. Logan offered a multi rig and a 15 mm Mainline Banoffee boilie with a PVA bag of crushed boilies and micro pellets.

because youngsters are the long-term future of recreational angling.

It's not just clubs that can help. Mums, dads, uncles, aunts, sisters and brothers, if you have a young relative, offer to take them fishing and introduce them to the sport. Not all of them will take to it, but a significant number will surely experience that same young fascination that many of us felt when we were first taken fishing and caught our first fish. Long live angling!

little venue. Night-time action is good, but the first and last few hours of daylight are also producing very well. **Tactics?** The near bank and island bank margins are regular hotspots. Offer a pop-up over a PVA bag of pellets, crushed boilies or a few boilies to attract some attention.

Lane, Hordle, Hampshire, SO41 OGA. Day tickets for all lakes except Bob's £12; 24 hours £24. Weekend tickets on Bob's £60 single swim; £120 double swim; weekdays, 9am-9am, £27. Tel: 07734 415101. What's being caught? Bags of carp, tench and silver fish on all of the lakes. Bob's Lake continues to produce a number of specimen carp, upper doubles and 20 lb-plus fish matted daily. Some big perch starting to show on all lakes. Tactics? Pop-ups with solid PVA bags and pellets or boilie crush are very reliable for the carp on

Plantations Lakes Fishery

Where? Middle Lane Farm, Middle Lane, Kingston Seymour, Clevedon, Somerset, BS21 6XW. Day tickets £8; £2 an extra rod. Tel: 01934 832325 or 07990 543600.

What's being caught? The carp are still feeding well on the specimen lake, big singles and

pellets over micro pellets will catch plenty of silver fish.

The Islands Carp Fishery

Where? Cunnage Lane, Barrow Street, Mere, Wiltshire, BA12 6AA. Day tickets £15 for 12 hours, advance booking only; £25 for 24 hours. Tel: 07909 436285.

What's being caught? This summer has been good for several 20s, upper 20s and a few 30 lb fish, several anglers experiencing multiple fish in 24-48 hour sessions. The autumn period looks set to continue in the same vein, and don't be surprised if a few new 30s are added to the records. **Tactics?** Boilies over freebies and pellets cast accurately near to the numerous features, including the islands and

Flaxlands Fishery

Where? Flaxlands Lane, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 8DZ. Day tickets from £8. Tel: 07707 789272. What's being caught?

Consistently good for carp, from singles to 20 lb-plus, ton-up hauls not uncommon. Look out for some big chub, too, these stunning fish averaging over 4 lb, while plenty of bites can also be had from skimmers, bream and roach. **Tactics?** Pellet waggler continues to work for the carp on warmer afternoons. Otherwise, fish are coming to flatbed pellet feeder or straight lead and wafter hook baits. A lot of fish can be caught by casting to the island.

Hunstrete Fishery, Somerset, BS39 4NT. Tony Irwin has been enjoying success on Withy Pool at this Bathampton AA water, landing several doubles. The

channels between swims.



Hordle Lakes Where? Golden Hill, Ashley three-acre lake has two islands and 40 platformed swims, and contains carp to over 20 lb, sizeable bream, roach and perch. It is fishable on a £5 day ticket once you have joined the club. Venue latest: 07720 882368.



WHERE TO FISH SOUTH EAST

Duncan Charman

Specimen angler with an incredible list of personal bests to his name.

Tel: 07928 617006 Email: duncancharman@me.com

Going with the flow

FEW weeks back, features editor Richard Howard asked me for some information regarding the tidal Thames around Richmond.

I try to keep my ear to the ground as much as I can, and told him that a 20 lb bag of silver fish was possible. Since our conversation, I've been back on numerous occasions and every time it hasn't disappointed, a bite a chuck being standard. I've had enough of the busy stillwater circuit lakes. Hopefully this colder weather will quieten things down for the locals, but it's rivers all the way for me from now on.

customers who returned to Johnsons after a guiding day and bagged himself six big crucians in a single day session, including a brace at 4 lb 2 oz and 4 lb 3 oz. Well done, Alan. Awesome! I also have to take my hat off to Mr Deeks, a Thames angler through and through, and one well into his 80s. Once a customer but now a dear friend, only last week he thanked me and said how privileged he was to still be fishing this fantastic river and still catching some great fish. You're welcome, mate. Let there be lots more, but stop catching the big ones! If you want any help on the River Thames, or anywhere else, you can reach me at the contacts at the top of the page.



However, I did get a really nice email from one of my

RIVERS **River Beult**

Where? Monk Lakes, Staplehurst Road, Marden, Kent, TN12 9BS. Day tickets £10 one rod. Tel: 01622 833332. What's being caught? Pike to

can produce quality mixed bags, if minnows allow. You need to keep on the move, find the fish, and move on when bites dry up.

River Bourne

Where? Chertsey Meads, Surrey, KT16 8LN. Free fishing. Tel: Apollo Angling on 019932 355100.

lobworms and livebaits for the perch, deadbaits for the pike, cheesepaste for the chub, and maggots accounting for quite a few big barbel.

Tidal Thames

Thatcham Angling and the Pet Shop, Hungerford. Tel: 07764 836314. What's being caught? Silver fish beginning to shoal up, especially the skimmers. Find them and a good bag can be had. There's also roach and plenty of perch to be caught, with a few rogue carp. Tactics? Pole best, with either maggots or chopped worm and casters over groundbait.

over 20 lb landed most winters, individual fish approaching 30 lb possible. There's also chub, bream, perch and a few carp.

Tactics? Deadbaits such as sardines, smelt and mackerel best, but keep an eye on the river, as coloured water is not good. If possible, arrive when it's fining down. Chub on light leger with bread flake.

River Blackwater

Where? Beats 1, 2 and 3, Shepherds Meadow, College Town, Sandhurst, Surrey, GU47 OFL. Day tickets £6. Hartley Wintney AS membership now £45 from Oct 1 to Mar 31, plus a £20 joining fee, from Yateley Angling Centre. Tel: 01252 861955.

What's being caught? This is a really good winter silver fish river venue, especially when it's fining down. Find the roach and 20 lb bags can be had, with individual fish to well over 1 lb, chub to 5 lb, decent perch and dace the major species. Jack pike can be a problem. **Tactics?** Punch can be devastating here, but maggots

What's being caught? Catch this river as it's fining down and some cracking roach can be had, along with chub, dace and a few barbel. Small pike can be a problem.

Tactics? Punch on a stick float while feeding liquidised bread is great for the roach, which go to well over 1 lb here, along with a few chub and dace. Pike fall to lures. A few barbel after dark.

River Lea

Where? Kings Weir Fishery, Wormley, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire, EN10 6HD. Day tickets £12 for two rods, 8am-10pm, must be booked in advance. Membership £85 allows fishing from 4am. Tel: 01992 468394. What's being caught? There are some serious specimens of a number of species caught here, including pike to over 20 lb, barbel to 15 lb, massive chub, huge perch and doublefigure bream, but it's certainly not easy. **Tactics?** Drop shotting,

Where? Water Lane,

Twickenham Embankment, Middlesex, TW1 3DU. Free fishing. Tel: Surbiton Angling on 0207 0182134.

What's being caught? The river is full of silver fish, 20 lb bags possible, including dace to 8 oz and roach over 1 lb with lots of small perch and a few small chub and skimmers. You never know what to expect, as big bream can show, or perhaps a carp or barbel, even a sea trout. **Tactics?** Stick float and maggots will bring plenty of bites on a dropping tide, as will holding back on a pole at low tide. Bream on groundbait feeder and bigger roach after dark on pellets. An overnight frost can kill sport, and check the tide times, as it's best to arrive an hour after high tide and follow it down. Always have a predator rod with you.

Regent's Canal

Where? Hackney to Limehouse, East London. Canal & River Trust Waterway Wanderers tickets £22; Angling Trust members £12. Tel: John Harding on 01829 732748.

What's being caught? Urban fishing at its best, with plenty of quality perch. Skimmers, bream, perch and roach in good mixed bags, along with a few big carp. **Tactics?** The perfect venue for drop shotting and jigging. Pole with maggots, casters and chopped worm for the silver fish.

CANALS Kennet and Avon Canal Where? Marsh Lock, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 OQN. Day tickets £5. Hungerford Canal AA membership £25, both from

STILLWATERS Barton Court Lake

Where? East Lodge, Kintbury, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 9SA. Day tickets £6 one rod; £10 two rods; £15 three rods. Tel: Bob Bailey on 01488 658905 or 07860 252717. What's being caught? Bags of



 Mr Deeks

 you just have

 o admire his

 enthusiasm,

 knowledge

 and skills.





silver fish, including roach, rudd, perch and skimmers, along with occasional better bream. A few pike here for predator anglers, and some carp to 20 lb still being reported.

Tactics? Pole, feeder or waggler for the silver fish, with maggots for numbers of fish. Casters and corn picking out the better specimens. match weights often exceed 100 lb. Expect carp, bream, tench, roach, rudd and a few big perch.

Tactics? This venue really lends itself to pole, but bomb and bread punch will come into its own now that the weather is cooling, and a prawn or lobworm down the edge is worth a try for the perch. Surrey, RH1 3DG. Day tickets £15 plus a £5 returnable deposit for a landing net. Tel: 07774 101783 or 07944 723636.

What's being caught?

Spring Lake for good mixed bags, including small barbel and plenty of carp in Ash. All four lakes, including Long and Dream, are well stocked with a variety of different species, Dream having a good head of carp to 25 lb. **Tactics?** A mixed fishery that lends itself to float, feeder or pole, and the fish seem to love maggots, but don't forget corn, meat and pellets. **Redbridge Lakes,** Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 8LY. Twelve-year-old Reece

Butler was on only his sixth ever fishing trip and hoping for a 2 lb bream when this 13 lb 5 oz common carp picked up his legered small cube of luncheon meat at these two lakes, situated on a ten-acre nature conservation project site that offers youngsters a chance to get into fishing with lessons. **Venue latest: 0208 551 5663.**

Horam Manor Fishery

Where? Horam Manor, Horam, East Sussex, TN21 OJB. Day tickets £5 per rod; 24 hours £20; members £10, by prior arrangement. Annual two-rod membership £120. Tel: 01323 840889.

What's being caught? With

11 lakes on this complex, it will suit most styles of angling and is always a big hit with youngsters. Stalking on the Lagoon can be rewarding, with carp to 20 lb, and there are also some big perch on this complex. **Tactics?** Placing a boilie and PVA bag in the margins or float

The Willows Angling Centre

Where? Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 9BU. Day tickets: Pan and Farm Lakes 12 hours from 7am £10 two rods; 24 hours £20; Langleys Specimen Lake £15 three rods; 24 hours £30. Tel: 01795 520887.

What's being caught? This four-lake complex offers specimen carp fishing on Langleys, with a good head of 20s topping out at around 30 lb. Pan is where numbers of carp can be caught in a session, to over 20 lb, and Farm and The Stream are mixed fisheries great for youngsters and beginners or those wanting to get a bend in their rod. Tactics? PVA bags and hair-rigged boilies as well as particles for the carp on Langleys and Pan, or float or feeder with meat, corn and maggots on Stream and Farm.



fishing meat, prawns or paste can be very productive.

Lake John Fishery

Where? Aimes Green, Galley Hill, Waltham Abbey, Essex, EN9 2BJ. Day tickets £10 one rod; £20 two rods.
Tel: 07958 938153.
What's being caught? The Top Lake always fishes well, and

Warwick Wold Waters Where? Merstham, Redhill,



WHERE TO FISH MIDLANDS

Steve Lockett

The travelling angler with Midlands roots enjoys finding new venues. Tel:07968 185681. Email: stevenlockett63@gmail.com

RIVERS River Severn

Where? Atcham and Wroxeter, near Shrewsbury, Shropshire, from SY5 6QJ to SY5 6PH. Lymm AC membership £54.50 for combined rivers (Severn and Vyrnwy) and canals. Tel: 07523 424285 (club details) or 07811285421 (venue bailiff). What's being caught? These stretches have been used for the club's annual barbel fish-in. Numbers of fish are down a little on previous years, with some 3-4 lb fish and the best around 9 lb. Chub are in greater numbers, especially between 4 oz and 2 lb, with a few reports of a 4 lb fish. Some roach in the lower lengths, a few touching 2 lb. **Tactics?** Barbel tactics are changing a little, 6 mm pellets proving better as hook baits for feeder fishing, with pellets or groundbait. Bomb and lobworms or meat is bringing surprise fish from swims that have been flogged on feeder. Chub on waggler and maggots, as many are small. Casters and some hemp in the feed on a stick float close in for the roach.

Don't be a towpath tyrant

WEARE living through strange times, with some people becoming extremely risk-averse and others totally cavalier about dangers.

As active users of the countryside, we should all be aware of potential problems, as they can be costly in terms of health, perception of the sport and damage to the pocket. Given the precarious nature of match fishing under Covid-19 restrictions, it makes sense for all competitors to be careful about interactions with the public on venues such as canals. Luckily, the organisers of the growing number of large team and individual matches are being strict about drawing, allowing only one team member to be present, and

ensuring that everyone follows a strict code for weighing-in.

On the bank, shipping poles across the towpath has always been a recipe for disaster. A broken butt section caused by a cyclist or jogger may cost hundreds of pounds. A situation where other towpath users are in dispute with an angler can easily lead to angry exchanges. Similarly, firing bait at boats or shouting at dog walkers could all prove provocative. It does nobody any favours to cause or inflame such disputes, and the only loser is our sport. We need to take extra care while we are still allowed to go fishing, at a time when many others are not able to spend their leisure hours as they wish.

Shipping a pole across a towpath could be costly, may cause a dispute, and could even bring unwanted attention to one of the few popular pastimes allowed to continue under Covid-19 restrictions.

River Sow

Where? Great Bridgeford, near Stafford, ST18 9SH (parking in Whitegreave Lane only. Do not obstruct access). Stoke-on-Trent AS membership £65. Tel: 07766 880718.



AA membership £53, from Matchman Supplies, West Bridgeford. Tel: 01159 813834 (tickets) or 07976 153093 (club). What's being caught? Mainly roach and skimmers, nets close to double-figure weights quite common. Big perch are the matchwinners, the latest bag coming from the 'joker stream' at the Beeston end. Chub from a few spots, some nudging 4 lb, but most 1 lb 8 oz to 2 lb. **Tactics?** Fishing long pole across to features is the prime tactic, with back-up fish from the centre track. Feed chopped worm and casters for bonus fish, including perch, chub and big skimmers. Punch is starting to come into play in the deeper water, but pinkies over groundbait are also worth a try.

but fish to upper doubles are present. Bream to 4 lb with skimmers, roach and hybrids for consistent double-figure nets, sometimes 20 lb on prolific days. Perch to 2 lb roam throughout and usually come out of the blue. **Tactics?** Two 8 mm pieces of bread punch on a running bomb is the best way to nail a carp. Cast to the mooring boards opposite, or alongside boats, no feed required. For silver fish nets, target 9 m on a pole, with groundbait, chopped worm and casters, just edging up out of the track. It isn't deep here, 4 ft in the centre track and 2 ft elsewhere. Punch on a shorter line, with casters for a bonus, is also worth trying. Soft shads along the nearside margins and into the track will give the best chance of a big perch, though many come on casters.

members report seeing fish much bigger cruising when the sun is out. Plenty of small roach and perch to target if the mood is for action rather than waiting for a biggie. **Tactics?** Feeding a mix of groundbait, hemp, pellets and dead maggots will pull fish of all sizes and allow changes of hook bait to suit the mood of those fish. Many of the tench come to double dead maggot, on the deck on float tackle. Smaller fish on live maggots, bream on soft pellets. Carp can be caught on pellet waggler when cruising, or popped-up boilies fished towards the islands with a PVA bag of pellets for feed.

What's being caught? This

small venue comes into its own as the weather cools. There are plenty of chub and roach to be caught before the weed dies back, but the fishing is more technical. Expect a few pike of 10-15 lb and some big perch of 2-3 lb. Bream to 4 lb have been showing in the wider spots. **Tactics?** Floating crust has been picking off the chub, with punch or flake better for the roach on trotting tackle. Bream show from the deeper spots on the back of bends or on the pools. They will also come to bread or corn on a small open-ended feeder rig. Perch on lobworms from some of the smaller holes in the weed. Pike

Shropshire Union Canal

Where? Market Drayton, Shropshire, from TF9 2PB (Tyrley Castle Bridge 61) to TF9 4BH (Victoria Bridge 65).
Members only. Hodnet AC membership £40 plus a £5 joining fee. No nights.
Tel: 07970 181824.
What's being caught? From the beginning of October, carp become a target, as fishing is allowed through the big marina (between Bridges 63 and 64, not the small marina). There aren't huge numbers of carp,

STILLWATERS Ashpole Spinney

Where? Cosby, Leicestershire, LE9 1SE. Greenhill AC membership £70, online. Tel: 07723 479245.
What's being caught? Tench are still showing well here, fish of 2-4 lb on average and bream to 5 lb. Some of the better carp are also showing, low-doubles on the cards. 12 lb 9 oz is the best I've heard of, though

Beehive Woodland Lakes

Where? Rosliston, near Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE12 8HZ. Day tickets £6 one rod; £10 two rods, on the bank with the correct change. Tel: 01283 763981. What's being caught? This three-lake complex is firmly aimed at pleasure anglers who appreciate decent fish in beautiful surroundings. Perch to 4 lb 8 oz have been weighed recently and are one of the main draws. For those who need to hook a carp, most fish are 5-12 lb, with a few into mid-doubles. Tench are still showing on Botany Bay, and silver fish sport has been hectic

on wobbled deadbaits wherever there are shoals of roach.

CANALS Nottingham and Beeston Canal

Where? Nottingham, from NG7 2TA (River Leen) to NG9 1NL (Beeston). Day tickets £5, on the bank. Nottingham





on all three lakes. **Tactics?** Float fished prawns is successful for the perch, fished alongside the reedfringed margins. Carp will also come to this tactic, so gear up accordingly. Most of the larger carp are falling to Peperami on a simple running leger rig. Corn on a free-running Method feeder is another great ploy. Long pole, around 7-9 m, with maggots over cupped-in groundbait will bring bites all day, or swap to pieces of worm or corn for better quality fish. Whip and steady loosefeed with maggots is keeping the kids happy.

tickets £9; Oak Lake £12; Stations Specimen Lake £15, all online in advance. Tel: 01676 530299.

What's being caught? Newly converted to a silver fish pool, Brook has been de-silted and islands added. It has produced weights of up to 30 lb in recent matches. Along with the roach and skimmers, there have been a few bream to 5 lb. Ben's

consistent run of fish from Station Lake for Josh Webster. Since June, he has banked numerous 20s, often having up to seven or eight fish in a session.

Tactics? Long pole to the islands is best on Brook, though shorter lines can also score. Loosefed maggots or casters, or corn for the better fish, is all that is required. Fish banded pellets on a bomb, waggler or

again. The same approach will pay off on Oak.

Wilden Pool

Where? Wilden, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire, DY13 9LR. Day tickets £8; £20 for 24 hours, on the bank.

Lavender Hall Fishery

Where? Berkswell, Coventry, Warwickshire, CV7 7BN. Day

Blythe Waters, Knowle, near Solihull, B92 OJA. Five-year-old Holly Marriott has become an expert at catching perch from the **Birmingham and Fazeley** Canal, fishing from her grandad's garden, and she was soon landing a bream when she visited this two-lake Canal & River Trust fishery for bigger fish. Venue latest: 01675 443306.



Tel: 07973 167820.

What's being caught? Carp to 28 lb 8 oz are the current highlight, with plenty of doubles and high singles, along with a few low-20s. Skimmers are featuring in pleasure nets of close to 50 lb, also including quality roach and rudd. Perch to 3 lb and bream to 5 lb are bonus fish that can pop up from anywhere. Tactics? Sweet pop-ups are the top hook bait for the large carp, on chod rigs to avoid leaves and silt on the lakebed. Particles, mixed pellets and crumbled boilies are the best feed, in PVA bags or thrown or cupped in when fishing the margins. Meat or corn over loosefed pellets is the choice for pleasure anglers. Method or pellet feeder to the island, or pellet waggler at 8 mm-pellet catapult range, will bring average carp for match anglers. Pole long with cupped-in groundbait and banded hard pellets on the hook for big silver fish nets. Swap to casters for the roach, or try a worm for the quality perch.



WHERE TO FISH EAST

Tom Legge Angling coach who is always

Angling coach who is always fully informed with the news. Tel: 07801 627465 Email: tomlegge@yahoo.com

Vintage rods and Mitchell musings

HREE weeks ago I wrote about a pal who has become a vintage tackle devotee, using cane rods and centrepin reels at every opportunity while his full array of modern kit stays mothballed in the shed.

Despite my appreciation for vintage gear as collectable antiques, I expressed doubts about how effective it can be if



you opt to fish with it.

Cambridge angler Russ Smith was quick to respond, making the case for golden oldie gear in persuasive style.

"Apart from the cost of some of it, I'd say there are few risks and lots on benefits in using vintage tackle. After all, it has never stopped Chris Yates from consistently catching big fish," said Russ. "In July, I caught a personal best 6 lb 12 oz tench from a very weedy part of Norfolk's Rockland Mere using my split-cane 12 ft Floyd of Lewisham 'Swift' rod, a centrepin and a porcupine quill float. You get better 'feel' on such tackle, which gives you a small edge when battling larger fish. "Ten of my dozen rods are cane or quality glass-fibre. My newest fixed-spool reels are Mitchell 300s, and I have six centrepins, all of which are used regularly. I'm catching plenty. The fish have no idea what tackle you are using," added Russ, who landed a 4 lb 3 oz eel last year during a match on the River Cam, using a '70s vintage Hardy swingtip rod and Mitchell 300 reel.

However, Russ admits to also owning a 15 ft Drennan Acolyte Plus, my personal favourite float rod, which he uses when extra length is required. Another Mitchell reel fanatic is Beccles, Suffolk, all-rounder lan Asplen, but his interest lies in renovating rather than using the iconic '70s 'crankers'. Earlier this year I sent lan two old Mitchells, one of which was deemed beyond salvation. But his superb refurbishment of the other, a 410 model, wouldn't look out of place on the BBC TV's The Repair Shop show.



ABOVE: Russ Smith's 6 lb 12 oz 6 lb 12 oz Rocklands Mere tench, caught on a vintage rod, reel and float in July, and Russ with a 4 lb 3 oz Cam eel.



RIVERS Old West River

Where? Stretham,

Cambridgeshire, CB6 3LF. Day tickets £7 on the bank; £6 in advance from local tackle shops. Cambridge FPAS membership £45. Tel: Graham Tweed on 01223 234616.

What's being caught? Despite low flows and clear water, plenty of perch to 1 lb and roach to 6 oz are showing from the early pegs between the bridge and pumping station. Occasional tench and bream to 5 lb from the deeper pegs below the pump. Jack pike active around the bridge, with a chance of larger fish between the cattle drink and the downstream end peg, especially if further rain adds colour and flow. **Tactics?** Perch on worm or double red maggot on a pole. With the river still very weedy, fly tactics are better than lures

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for roving predator anglers. The meadow is ideal for fly fishing, with no trees or bushes behind. Pole, whip or light insert waggler with casters, hemp and tares, maggots, pinkies or bread punch for the roach. Buoyant sea deadbaits or trotted coarse deads for the pike.

River Thurne

Where? Martham to Coldharbour, Norfolk, NR29 5JE. Some areas are free fishing, Norwich DAA membership required on others. NDAA winter membership now £20, Oct 1-Mar 14. Tel: Lathams Tackle on 01692 670080 or Tony Gibbons on 01603 400973. What's being caught? Roach are the main target species, but skimmers and bream should return to prominence together with increasing numbers of perch and pike in the weeks ahead. Best recent roach sport



upstream peg near Candle Dyke. **Tactics?** Short pole to-hand is best for the roach. Bob Nudd used a 5 m whip, feeding casters and hemp and using a single caster hook bait for his matchwinning bag. He also cupped in groundbait on 5 and 8 m lines to keep the shoal in the swim. Crumb feeder with worms and maggots for the skimmers. Trotted livebaits or legered deads for the pike.

River Welland

Where? Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 2QY. Free fishing on the town sections. Deeping St James AC day tickets £5 on downstream stretches, membership £30.
Tel: 07901 990445.
What's being caught? Despite low, clear and weedy conditions, roving anglers have enjoyed brisk sport with perch averaging 3-4 oz but to over 1 lb in early

Bob Nudd with his winning catch in the Norwich DAA teams-of-four league, on the Thurne at Martham. is centred at Martham, where evergreen match star Bob Nudd won a recent 60-entry contest with 283 redfins for 27 lb 5 oz, from a peg on the Ronds section. Colin Urry bagged 24 lb 6 oz for second, from an







300 pegs, 184 acres, 13 Lakes, 1 fantastic angling holiday

Stu Redman is seen here lying on the bank with his winning 68 lb-plus Serpentine match catch of whip-tempted rudd and roach.

morning or late afternoon on the town waters. Occasional chub to 3 lb-plus have also been banked. Car parking is free on Sundays. Swims near the footbridge towards the A1 road bridge offer quality roach. Tactics? Lobworms or dendrobaenas on a light bomb or link leger rig for the perch. Cast two or three times per swim, catch one, then move on. Chub also like a worm, but bread flake is also worth trying in noted swims. Light waggler gear with maggots or pinkies for the roach and dace.

STILLWATERS Bromeswell Lakes

of tench of 3-5 lb. Graham Jakeman had four from 4 lb 1 oz to 4 lb 9 oz in a morning on the memorial bank, backed by plenty of small rudd and roach. He also saw pike activity, and predator anglers will be gearing up to target the fish, which go to mid-doubles. Match ace Stu Redman won the venue's final summer Open with a 900-fish haul for 68 lb 10 oz, comprising roach and rudd to 6 oz. **Tactics?** Pole or waggler with worms, maggots, casters or corn for the tench. Groundbait can help to kick-start a swim, but don't put too much in. Stu's mega haul fell to 2 m whip with red maggot hook baits and



Where? Melton, Suffolk, IP12 2PX. Day tickets £7. Season tickets available. Tel: 07792 939869.

What's being caught? Willow and Horseshoe lakes for carp to doubles, bream and tench to over 4 lb and roach and rudd to over 1 lb. A recent Gipping APS midweek contest fished by 14 anglers on Horseshoe brought seven 20 lb-plus weights, led by Barry Goode with 55 lb 4 oz at peg 4, followed by Robin Leach with 42 lb 10 oz at peg 12. Carp of 2-5 lb formed the bulk of their weights.

Tactics? Pole with corn, pellets or double maggot over groundbait or micro pellets is reliable. Method feeder and pellets can tempt the larger carp. Chopped worm and casters for the tench and bream. constant feeding of Sensas Surface and Fine Brown Crumb groundbait. Lures or sink-anddraw deadbaits for the pike.

Shepherds Port Lakes

Where? Snettisham, Norfolk, PE317PS. Four-lake complex on the King's Lynn AA silver membership option, at £66. Tel: Ashley Brown on 01553 679412 or 07876 491748. What's being caught? Carp to over 20 lb, bream to over 8 lb, roach, rudd, perch and occasional tench are on the cards. KLAA secretary Ashley Brown tempted common carp of 21 lb 8 oz and 17 lb, plus an 18 lb 8 oz mirror, during a recent afternoon visit. The larger carp are found in Shepherds and Bear Lakes. Queens Lake holds a few big carp, together with some hefty bream. **Tactics?** Method feeder with pellets, boilies, pop-ups or corn for the carp. Pole or waggler and maggots, casters or bread for the silver fish. Groundbait feeder with chopped worm, maggots and casters, or Method feeder with micros and banded 6 mm pellets for the bream.

With some of the best stocked lakes in the country, White Acres Holiday Park near Newquay in Cornwall has match, pleasure and specimen anglers hooked.

(Parkdean)Resorts

Serpentine Lake

Where? Hampton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE7 8BE. Hampton AA membership £10 for local residents (under-16s free); £35 non-residents. Tel: Nathan Minter on 07394 245786. What's being caught? Plenty

Visit whiteacres.co.uk or

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WHERE TO FISH NORTH EAST

Alain Urruty

Knowledgeable Yorkshireman who loves fishing all types of venues. Tel: 07808 367519 Email: preston-a@sky.com

Things are picking up

INALLY some good news to report from my latest attempt at carp fishing with the club whose matches I've been attending.

Not a win, but a third place and my first pick-up of the season, which is a milestone. We were on Kingfisher Lake at Woodhouse Grange Fisheries, and I must admit I had a good draw, an end peg. Local advice was to fish pellets on a top kit plus one, and corn or dead maggots over groundbait in the margins, which is a nice and

simple approach.

After an early carp and an F1 on a scoop feeder, I struggled for a couple of hours and couldn't make my short pole line work at all.

I then saw a swirl over my groundbait and spent the rest of the match fishing down the edge. Due to the weed and rushes, I couldn't get into the really shallow water that I wanted to fish, and was limited to 2.5 ft of water tight to the reeds.

for 45 lb, just behind 48 lb for second.

The winner, club organiser Clive, had a huge 120 lb bag of margin-caught carp, and after the match he told me that all of his fish came an inch from the bank in 1 ft of water. He said that he couldn't get a bite 2 in. from the bank. I'm not sure how true that statement was, but it does show how close to the bank and in how shallow water carp will feed.



I did manage another seven carp and an F1 on Method feeder and a standard float rig,

I've got just one more match to go before the club takes its winter break.



Club organiser Clive with part of his matchwinning 120 lb catch of margin carp.

Kingfisher Lake at Woodhouse Grange.



RIVERS **River Don**

Where? Sprotbrough, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN5 7NB. Day tickets £4. Rotherham & District UAF £25. Tel: 01709 583452.

What's being caught? Plenty

of roach, skimmers, perch and hybrids feeding when river levels are low. With a bit fish. Groundbait feeder with chopped worm and casters, using maggots or worms on the hook, best for the bream.

River Swale

Where? Morton Bridge, A684 road bridge, Morton-on-Swale, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 9QS (village). Day tickets £5, from the Royal George pub or Spring House Farm shop and café. Northallerton & District AC membership £45. Tel: 01609 771117.

feed above them, to try to encourage the fish to come out of the snags to feed. Also roach, dace and occasional barbel.

Tactics? Stick float or waggler with plenty of loosefed casters or maggots and hemp is best to target the chub when the river is low. Feeder with bread or steak and mince also produces plenty. Legered pellets, boilies or meat to target the barbel, early and late sessions best unless there is some colour in the water.

£12 Teesside Clubs fee. Tel: 01642 786444. What's being caught?

Skimmers and perch making up the bulk of weights, along with roach, dace and chub. Match weights have been over 30 lb in the past month, but are dropping to high doubles as the weather is cooling. Tactics? Open-end feeder with groundbait, chopped worm and casters, using worms or maggots on the hook, has been the most consistent approach. Long pole with the same baits is also catching plenty of fish.

of colour and flow, the bream have been feeding, another new match record of 87 lb of bream to more than 5 lb recorded. Peg 1 has had the best of the bream action.

Tactics? Long pole, whip, stick float and Bolo' with loosefed bronze maggots all work well for mixed bags of smaller

What being caught? As the cooler weather arrives, the chub will become the main target, some great catches to be had if you can find them. Look for features and try to

River Tees

Where? Yarm, Stockton-on-Tees, Durham, TS15 9AN. Yarm Angling Ltd membership £55 plus a joining fee of £36 and a

CANALS Aire and Calder Canal Where? Beevers Bridge, East



Cowick, East Yorkshire, DN14 9AD. Day tickets £3, from the Costcutter store in the village. Boothferry Aire and Calder Joint Canal Committee water. Tel: Stainforth Angling Centre on 01302 846623.

What's being caught?

Some good catches of small skimmers, roach and perch, as well as a few bigger bream. **Tactics?** Pole at 6 and 13 m with maggots and pinkies over groundbait producing good bags of small fish. Groundbait feeder with chopped worm and casters to try to get among the better bream and skimmers. Hemp to target the roach.

River Rother, Rotherham, South Yorkshire.

In just four hours, Martyn **Uttley** landed just over 42 lb of bream to 7 lb and a roach of over 1 lb, accompanied by his five-year-old son **Connor**. This local tributary of the River Don is £3 a day, controlled by Catcliffe, Brinsworth and Treeton AA, with tickets on the bank. Feeder with casters, hemp and worms cast to mid-river accounted for the catch. The two-mile stretch of platformed swims also holds carp, barbel, dace, chub and perch, along with a lot of grayling and trout further upstream. Venue latest: 07774 884946.



Calder and Hebble Canal

Where? Dewsbury Town Centre, West Yorkshire, WF12 OAW (nearby). Day tickets £3.50. Thornhill AC membership half price from Oct 1, at £18. Tel: 07739 843312.

What's being caught? Roach, skimmers, perch and hybrids making up the bulk of catches, bags of 5-10 lb on the cards as the weather cools.

Tactics? Pole with squatts, pinkies and maggots at the bottom of the shelves on the near and far sides to get bites. Casters to the far bank best to target the better fish. or loosefed maggots short to target the silver fish and smaller carp.

Kiveton Waters

Where? Hard Lane, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S26 6RP. Day tickets £7. Tel: 07538 180414. What's being caught? Some good bags of quality carp reported, but the cold spell has slowed sport. Within a week the winning weights dropped from 143 lb to just 77 lb. Good backing weights all round. Plenty of silver fish to be had if targeted. **Tactics?** Method or pellet feeder cast tight to the far bank with brightly coloured wafters, mini boilies or dead maggots producing the best catches. Pole with pellets also accounting for plenty of carp. For the silver fish, try pole with maggots or casters.

with soft pellets or worms and casters for the best catches of

DL6 2EA. Day tickets £7. Tel: 07714 253662. What's being caught? Plenty of carp feeding, pleasure anglers reporting multiple fish to 8 lb. Also good catches of roach, rudd and chub by those targeting them. **Tactics?** Pole with pellets and meat is accounting for the best carp catches. Method feeder is also producing good bags, with pellets, corn, and dead maggots the best baits. Casters or maggots with plenty of loosefeed to target good bags of silver fish.

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STILLWATERS Ferryboat Farm Fishery

Where? Ferryboat Lane, Old Denaby, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN12 4 LB. Day tickets £6. Tel: 01709 588088. What's being caught? On

the Top Lake there have been a number of 100 lb-plus bags over the summer, but now that the water is cooling the weights are starting to drop. A recent match was won with 60 lb, with good backing weights. Carp and F1s are dominating, but plenty of crucians, skimmers, ide and roach are also being caught. The Bottom Lake has produced a best carp of 22 lb, along with a number of double-figure fish.

Tactics? Method or pellet feeder to the far bank for the bigger carp on both lakes, with loosefed pellets over the top to make some noise and attract the carp. On the Top Lake, long pole with pellets at full depth over cupped-in micros is producing well as the fish move into deeper water as it cools. Chopped worm and casters over groundbait on a long pole,

Lakeside Fishery

Where? Ranskill, Retford, North Nottinghamshire, DN22 8LW. Day tickets £6 on the Match Lake; £20 for 24 hours on the Carp Lake. You must book first for the Carp Lake. Tel: 01777 818524.

What's being caught? The Match Lake has been excellent for carp, a match won with 196 lb, with three other 100 lb-plus bags. Also great sport with the skimmers and bream, bags to 70 lb reported. The Carp Lake produced 30 carp in a weekend, the best 29 lb 10 oz. skimmers and bream. Legered boilies producing the biggest carp on the Carp Lake.

Redwood Park

Where? Tollerton Road, Huby, York, YO611JE. Day tickets £8. Tel: 01347 811561 or 07909 956532.

What's being caught? Carp to doubles, F1s, chub, ide and barbel dominating. New Lagoon Lake produced a new best of 87 lb, a mixed bag of all species. Redwood and The Arc Lakes have given winning match weights of 80-100 lb. Pleasure anglers are also reporting good sport on all lakes.

Tactics? Long pole with banded pellets at full depth with cupped-in loosefeed producing the best sport for carp on all lakes. In milder spells, the fish can still be caught up in the water, so it's worth having a shallow rig set up. Pole with maggots or casters and regular loosefeed to target the silver fish.

Woodhouse Grange Fisheries

Where? A614, Hatfield Woodhouse, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN7 6DU. Day tickets £7. Tel: 07936 647588. What's being caught? Good sport with F1s and carp on all lakes, match bags over 100 lb. **Tactics?** Long and short pole and margins all producing fish, pellets and corn the best baits. Some fish are still being caught shallow, but full depth fishing is starting to produce more. Some good fish coming in the margins to corn and dead maggots over groundbait.

Tactics? Pole, bomb or waggler with pellets on the Match Lake. Top kit and one or two sections

Renny Lake Where? East Harlsey, Northallerton, North Yorkshire,

WHERE TO FISH NORTH WEST

Gray weather ahead

With the weather turning colder, the thoughts of many anglers turn to grayling, and where would be a good place to catch some, perhaps for the first time.

The grayling season on one of the region's most picturesque locations begins on October 7, and to be able to fish it from this week through till the end of January will set you back just £20, while juniors fish for free. Lamington & District Angling Improvement Association leases a nine-mile stretch of the River Clyde, in the Scottish borders, with easy access and parking areas, and while the main summer season is reserved for trout fly fishing, bait



What's being caught? Lots of action on the Canals from carp to mid-doubles and F1s. Pleasure anglers are catching large numbers of ide, roach and skimmers.

Tactics? On the Canals, pole and 4 mm soft pellets over loosefed micro pellets. On the lakes, maggots or casters for the silver fish, or corn, pellets or paste for the better-sized carp. Method feeder also works well.

Budworth Mere

fishing is allowed now for grayling. Trotting the crystalclear water with short chubberstyle floats and maggots and worms on a size 16 hook is the best approach, and fish to over 2 lb have been caught The rules include barbless hooks, single rod only and no fishing on Sundays. For more details see the club's website. Tel: 07747 650060.

RIVERS River Calder

Where? Abbey length, Whalley, Lancashire, BB7 9SS. Members only. Hyndburn & Blackburn AA membership £50. Tel: 01254 829558.

What's being caught? Capable of producing bumper hauls of dace to 6 oz in the right conditions, up to 20 lb. Also chub to 3 lb and a few decent grayling to 1 lb. Tactics? Feed plenty of maggots and hemp to hold a shoal, a whip being great for catching the dace swiftly, though stick float also works well. The chub like lobworms, bread flake or meat. The swims near to the Abbey are very good. membership £50 and no joining fee. Tel: 07570 976539. **What's being caught?** Bream to 3 lb, skimmers, roach, perch and some decent pike to low-doubles, 30 lb possible. **Tactics?** Groundbait feeder with worms and red maggots just beyond the middle. Just above the overflow, where the

maggots, or long pole. Some anglers like to introduce a few Jaffa orange-sized balls of groundbait at the start, but be led by the temperature.

STILLWATERS

Appleton Reservoir

Where? Park Lane, Warrington, Cheshire, WA4 5LG. Members

Where? Warrington Road, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 6HA. Northwich AA membership £50 and no joining fee. Tel: 07738 657088. What's being caught? A great roach water in autumn. It is also fishing well for bream to 4 lb and double-figure pike. Expect a bit of a walk to the swims. Tactics? Pre-baiting will improve the fishing. Feeder works well, especially if it's windy, but on a calm day you can fish a waggler, red maggots being the best bait. The pike fall to deadbaits popped-up off the bottom, or sink and draw a sea fish, smelt in particular.

Croft Fisheries

Where? Huyton Road, Adlington, Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 4HJ. Day tickets £6. Tel: 01257 483147. What's being caught? Lots of small carp to 4 lb from Huyton 1 and 2, catches to over 50 lb in a session. Croft Lodge offers the chance of crucians, a few chub, roach, tench and lots of skimmers. **Tactics?** Start on a pole with soft 6 mm pellets, a banded hard pellet or corn. A shallow pellet waggler with a banded pellet is also work a try. Pole with casters works well on Croft Lodge, and bread punch when the first frosts arrive.

River Dane

Where? Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 5EU. Day tickets £5, in advance from local tackle shops. Northwich AA membership £50 and no joining fee. Tel: 07570 976539.

What's being caught? The town lengths should start to produce some decent catches now, as the water is deeper.
Chub to 2 lb, roach to 10 oz and dace to 4 oz in weights to low-doubles.
Tactics? A light stick float or maggot feeder with a long tail, using maggots and casters.

old river is diverted, is popular.

CANALS Bridgewater Canal

Where? Pickering's Bridge, Thelwall, Cheshire, WA4 2GW. Members only. Warrington AA membership £50 plus a £50 joining fee. Tel: 01928 716238. What's being caught? Bream to 3 lb and some quality roach. Make an early start to avoid boat traffic.

Tactics? Bread punch for the bream and small roach, on pole or waggler, or casters for bigger fish. Worms working for the bigger bream.

Lancaster Canal

Where? Salwick Basin, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 ORN. Day tickets £5 per day, in advance. Non-pike fishing £20 for a year from date of issue. Pike fishing £25 Pike Anglers' Club membership plus £15 annual permit. Tel: 01132 298789.
What's being caught? Bream to 4 lb, some roach to over 1 lb, perch to 1 lb 8 oz and a few decent pike. only. Warrington AA

membership £50 plus a £50 joining fee. Tel: 01928 716238. **What's being caught?** Brilliant roach sport possible here, with plenty around 1 lb and weights of over 20 lb. A few carp to mid-doubles also present. **Tactics?** Boilies, corn and meat

for the carp, often down the edge. Waggler for the roach at 20 m, or feeder if it's windy. Red maggots or corn will sort out the better redfins.

Blundell's Farm

Where? Moss Side Farm, Prospect Lane, Rixton, Cheshire, WA3 6EJ. Day tickets £6. Tel: 0161 775 2124.

What's being caught? Plenty of action still to be had with carp to 10 lb.

Tactics? Pole and banded

Meadow View Fisheries

Where? Whitbarrow Road, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 9BA. Day tickets £8 one rod; £12 two rods. Tel: 01925 757985. What's being caught? Very

worthwhile sessions to be had
on both pools. Lots of goodsized carp to upper-doubles
on specimen Lark, along with
stacks of bream and skimmers,
ide and chub on Linnet. Catches
to around 50 lb possible. **Tactics?** Pole with corn, worms
and casters brings lots of action.
A good approach for a big carp
is to leave it late to try a bait

River Weaver

Where? Runcorn Road, Barnton, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 4EL. Northwich AA

Tactics? Groundbait feeder to the middle with worms and red

pellets with light loosefeeding, or a Method feeder with pellets and fishmeal groundbait and banded pellets.

Bradshaw Hall Fisheries Where? Slack Lane, Bolton, Gt Manchester, BL2 4JW. Day tickets from £9. Tel: 01204 307197.



down the edge, keeping back from the edge and waiting for something to take an interest.

Old Hough Coarse Fishery

Where? Forge Mill Lane, Warmingham, Middlewich, Cheshire, CW10 0HQ. Day tickets £6 one rod midweek; £2 extra rod; £7 one rod weekends; £3 extra rod. Tel: 07765 000857. What's being caught? The West Sooty catfish still get caught in October, along with 20 lb carp. Pellet waggler works well on Big Max, while on Lower Benbo it's groundbait and worms. Barbel are a prospect on Woody End, and Lucky Dip responds well to worms. Lots of small carp and F1s on Boulders. Tactics? Methods feeder, in particular down the margins using dead maggots over groundbait, or hard pellets on top of the bar. Best bait for the big F1s is maggots.

What's being caught? Still

producing good catches of fish to 4 lb on the Canals, along with ide to 2 lb, skimmers, tench and roach.

Tactics? The big carp on The Lake will fall to boilies or big pellets if you are patient, while fishing a pole not far out is still productive at this time of year, using a grain of corn or a soft 6 mm pellet over pots of micro pellets.

Whitmore Fisheries

WALES

Keith Williams

The angling newshound is a former fishery inspector with the EA. Tel: 0752 650 3862 (before 9pm) Email: kewill23@sky.com

Large-scale lockdown

A the time of writing, increased isolation measures to control a strong rise in coronavirus cases have been felt most in the South Wales valleys. Anglers are now restricted to within their own county council boundaries, and not allowed to travel unless for work purposes or in the event of an emergency. Fisheries are remaining open, but journeys across the border to other venues such as the Wye have been stopped. We can only hope that this ban on travel will be short term, until effective isolation and self distancing reduces the transmission. We will keep anglers informed of the situation as changes emerge.

Roach Bridge Reservoir

Where? Roach Road, Preston, Lancashire, PR5 OUA. Withnell AC membership £63 plus a £20 joining fee. Tel: 01254 830947. What's being caught? Mixed catches of roach, bream, carp, eels, tench, perch, crucian carp and pike. The carp go to over 20 lb, but expect smaller fish. It's mainly bream, skimmers and roach in catches to 20 lb on a good day at this time of year. **Tactics?** Try a light feeder, though if the frosts hold off, pole should still work well. Small balls of groundbait laced with pinkies and casters will bring the fish around, using double red pinkie, red maggots and worms.

Where? Bradshaw Lane, Greenhalgh, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 3HQ. Day tickets £8. Tel: 01253 836224. What's being caught? Chub to 4 lb and ide to over 3 lb, lots of carp to 8 lb, and a few barbel to 7 lb from prolific East Lake. Carp feeding well on all of the pools and the Canals, along with lots of skimmers and smaller ide, well over 50 lb per visit. **Tactics?** Pole accounts for most of the fish, but feeder or rod and line float fishing also work well. Bunches of maggots or casters or a big pellet in a band for a specimen. Well worth a visit.

Winterley Pool

Where? Winterley Pool Farm, Crewe Road, Winterley, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 5TR. Day tickets: Specimen Pool £10, dawn till

RIVER River Dee

Where? Chester to Eccleston, Cheshire. All waters are free fishing on the left bank upstream of the weir to Eccleston Ferry car park, CH3 6PU, controlled by Chester City Council and Eaton Estates. Tel: The Tackle Store, CH1 4QL, on 01244 377472 or Chester Tackle Locker, CH3 5EE, on 01244 345069.

What's being caught? Shoals of roach of 3-12 oz and a few to 1 lb at Eccleston village, Church

of common and mirror carp of 5-15 lb.

Tactics? Ronnie or chod rigs with Pineapple pop-ups. Margins fishing well with particle baits fed close in and sweetcorn hook bait. Float fished meat or sachet cat food for some nice tench. White or pink pop-ups working well soaked in Goo. CC Moore and krill boilies working well, as are K9 pop-ups with PVA mesh bags.

Lower Pen y clawdd Farm Where? Dingestow, Monmouth, NP25 4BQ. Day tickets £7, from the farm. Before accessing the fishery, contact Avril Bayliss. Tel: 01600 740223.

The Cunneries

Where? Parr Lane, Eccleston, Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 5JR. Day tickets £7. Tel: 01257 451461.

dusk; 24 hours £25. Tel: 07761 069360.

What's being caught? Carp to doubles on the Specimen Lake and the Old Match Lake, along with some perch to 1 lb, roach to 12 oz and bream to 4 lb on the Specimen Lake.

Tactics? Boilies bring the big carp on the Specimen Lake, but meat, worms and big pellets are worth a try to gain an edge. Maggots, casters and hemp on pole or feeder for the perch, roach and bream.

Chester Lakes, Dodleston, Cheshire, CH4 9LQ. Eleven-year-old Morgan Maxwell asked her parents if she could have a go at fishing, and armed with some tackle



Lane kissing gate.

Tactics? 6-8 m whip to-hand or a 2AAA slim waggler on running line a rod length out. Feed a mix of 30 per cent dark crumb to 70 per cent molehill soil with a handful of pinkies to hold the roach. Early mornings best.

STILLWATERS Canon Bridge Fishing Pools

Where? Madley, Hereford, HR2 9JE. Day tickets 7am-7pm £6; extra rod £1. Nights by arrangement. Tel: Bernard Roberts on 01981 250240. What's being caught? Plenty of carp to 12 lb. Local Dan Roberts landed 21 fish to 11 lb, and Dan Musgrove had 18 to 9 lb. Also numbers of bream, gudgeon and roach being caught.

Tactics? Most boilies working here, on basic running rigs. Pellets and waggler also producing fish in the margins. What's being caught? Mainly carp of 2-11 lb in Wagtail and John's Pools, with barbel to 9 lb, roach and bream in nets to 20 lb.

Tactics? The pools are fishing well, corn, maggots and pellets catching most fish. Pole in the margins and shallow productive, but it's advisable to feed a feature swim, then attack it with waggler.

Trap Pool

Where? Buckley, Flintshire, CH7 3JB. Day tickets £8, on the bank or from Deeside Tackle.
Buckley AA membership £40.
Tel: Peter on 07415 614285.
What's being caught? Bream to 5 lb in nets to 27 lb from peg 33. Roach and skimmers to 1 lb.
Carp to 25 lb recently.
Tactics? Fish shallow with casters on a pole for the roach, or feeder for the skimmers and bream with 4 mm pellets. The deep 15 ft pegs producing big bream on pole at dead depth.

and some instruction from YouTube videos she caught this fine 6 lb 8 oz mirror carp on maggots at this popular sevenlake fishery, landing it without any assistance. Venue latest: 01244 661745.

Gowerton Coarse Fishery Where? Victoria Road, Swansea, SA4 3AB. Day tickets £7, from the golf club reception office. Tel: 01792 875188. What's being caught? Plenty

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Anglers YOUR VIEWSthis week E-MAIL YOUR LETTERS TO: amletters@futurenet.com Angler's Mail fans react to our imminent closure

ANGLER'S MAIL magazine fans, including present, past and lapsed readers of our printed pages, have been digesting the very sad news of this title's closure after the issue on sale October 27. The news was shared briefly online, as is almost customary for breaking events in this high-speed digital era. More details are in p.4/5. Below are a few comments from among the thousands that have flooded in so far from all sides of the angling community. We'll share other messages soon. Thank you for all your thoughts, kind words and magic memories. Please keep your personal AM reflections coming via email to: amletters@futurenet.com Remember, we haven't gone yet. We're back next week and for two more brilliant issues after that. Stay with us, and tell your mates to get the mags, too.

That's really rotten news. I have very fond memories of this paper, going back to 'Angela – the Angler's Mail maid' et al, not to mention that full-size centrespread photo of a 6 lb tench caught by Frank Guttfield, when such fish were beyond the imagination of most of us. If anything, and unlike its only real competitor, the *Mail* has got much better lately, with good, hard-hitting commentary from the likes of John Bailey and some lovely writing from Bill Rushmer, Dave Tipping and others in recent months. Not to mention a letters page that isn't afraid to encourage debate on some quite contentious issues. I'll be really sorry to see it go, and can only wish Tim and his team all the very best for the future. Many thanks from all of us for a job well done. Stewart Allum

Yesterday I was happy with my article just published on the chub I caught. Today I feel so bad, that's truly sad news. Thank you for serving the anglers for all those years. Thank you for giving us all chances to be a part of it. Thank you for everything you've done, guys. I wish you all the best. Omar Sriti

ither rod. I also catapult a few fixed rigs, using a lead on a bottom: I always cast a single

The full-time carer from

tempted it on a legered p

Omar explained: Tm a chub gets my bart I new complain. I always ensoy the



Sad day. In a way, we are all to blame, with YouTube, Facebook etc. Same as tackle shops, we are having to travel to the next town just for bait now. What am going to do now when I'm out shopping and waiting outside shops?! Good luck to all. Paul Evans

That is a shame, just as it looks like there is a resurgence in popularity with angling. Adrian Trent

Sad news, but never seemed to be able to find AM in my local WH Smith or Tesco stores. Steven Eagle

Blimey! I have thought for a long time now that AM was a far better publication than the other 'match orientated' weekly rag. I will certainly miss the local venue reports. At least AM knew that there was fishing in Wales!

Shaun Clarke

I'm an old-school angler, and this is sad news and an end of a era. I've been a reader on and off since boyhood. I found it the best read of the angling mags, with some good journalism and articles, sadly lacking in the few remaining monthly mags. Marc Gunby

This is very sad. I've been reading it (and importantly buying it) for 35 years. I much prefer journalism and formal printed media, as it is subject to accountability, skill and laws. Sadly, the only reading most of us do now is social media, which is killing magazines, books and brains (says he on Facebook). Neill Stephen

I was brought up on Angler's Mail magazine. I didn't have any friends or family that went fishing when I was young, and I spent countless hours immersed between the pages. Piles of them littered my bedroom, and I wouldn't be the angling bore that I am now without them. God bless Angler's Mail and all who sailed in her. Jason Myers





Omar Sriti had only just appeared in print in Angler's Mail when he heard the sad news of our future.

AM started my passion for angling, which has lasted for over 47 years and seen me fish all over the world. Thank you. Simon Calvert

That will be a terrible loss to the fishing community. I remember my weekly trips to Asda with my old man. If I was good, he would get me the latest one. Safe to say I was always on my best behaviour. All the best to everyone who's worked at the Mail and to all the anglers over the years who've contributed to an amazing read. Chad Dno

Shocking news to read this. I've just recently revived my interest in fishing and have loved buying this magazine EVERY week since March this year. I remember reading through my dad's copies 25-30 years ago as well. I have also only just submitted a photo of my son with his first bream. Gary Dunn

The sad reality is of changing times in the media, social and otherwise. Instant real-time dissemination of 'news' by anybody and everybody, together with lost advertising revenues, results in the inevitable. Nick Chaffer

Sad news. Our household will miss Angler's Mail greatly. Yes, my son watches videos online, but we still enjoy reading the mag together to discuss the tips, potential venues and impressive catches. How can that be replaced in a concise, easy-to-access way in one place? Mark Egan

Oh dear. How very sad. I look forward to work each week knowing that once I get home the postie will have delivered a little envelope of fishing goodness. I have been an avid AM reader of this wonderful magazine since I could first read. Martin Blackmun

I've looked forward to each week's issue for so many years, and was made-up when I finally got on the cover, back in 1997. Thanks for years of enjoyment. **Bruce Dale**



framed his AM cover. He's

ALL-TIME EPIC CATCHES

Our classic fishing series moves back in time via some of the most interesting catches, and this week we bring you a special look at...

When Welsh wizard blitzed river record with sensational triple-ton chub haul

WELSH match ace Lee Edwards remains the captor of Britain's, and probably the World's, biggest five-hour river competition catch for his sensational 316 lb 4 oz haul of chub to 5 lb, achieved back in October 2007.

His epic feat won him the **River Wye Championship by** a mile, despite a 45-minute quiet spell when people were standing at the top of the bank behind him. Lee, then aged 32, drew at Breinton, near Hereford, had a coffee at the top of the bank while waiting for the start, and decided to fish where he'd spotted two chub in the clear water. He tackled the swim with a 13 ft match rod, 4 lb line and a 2AAA waggler, landing 40 lb of chub in the first half an hour. His run of fish were 1 lb 8 oz to 2 lb 8 oz, with a few of over 4 lb. To keep the chub in a feeding frenzy, Lee fed 11 pints of hemp and casters, fishing double caster on a size 14 hook three quarters of the way across. He told Angler's Mail: "Everyone said it'll never get beaten as a record, but if I'd known what was in there that day I would have set up four identical rods, because fish were rolling on the line in the net and kinking it and I was having to put on new hooks, so I could have saved time.



When we got to the swims I could see loads of chub in his swim, then there was a gap where a peg was overgrown, and then my one that was three foot deep and I could see the bottom all the way 316f across. It didn't look good, but I thought I'd blank or Casts maybe catch one fish, or totally empty it. get ti 'I set up a 13 ft Preston Innovations Sentient rod 'AF WONr matcf It wen had a minut

It's a tough time now in Wales, with a tightened Covid lockdown restricting travel, but here's a look at one of the nation's finest ever anglers, Lee Edwards. The Maver-backed ace from Caerphilly is pictured here bagging River Wye chub, like he famously did under match conditions in 2007. He's still winning on rivers – see p.12/13.

chub were just a foot below the surface in 3 ft of water, and if the bait got down to the bottom then I'd catch only small fish. When the big fish got a bit coy, I went below to get the smaller ones, to put something in the net, until I got a bigger one when I was mending the line and the bait came off the bottom, and then I'd come up shallow again. in their approach. You've got to fish much heavier gear and feed big time. "My phone was red-hot after this catch. From the people I know it was all good, but some people said that I must have been on a load of fish and they could have done it better. Saying that is one thing, but doing it on the day is another. At the end of the day, it's still a record."





"They were in front of me and I was lashing in bait. The biggest "I put in 11 pints. You need that for the Wye. It's a positive man's river. People are often too tentative

In the same season, Lee helped Preston Innovations Thatchers him the first of his two Wye Championship titles.

win the Drennan All-winners Team Final for the second year running, finishing top individual on the day. He also won the individual Bronze medal in the World Championships in Hungary, helping Wales to fourth. Top angling, boyo!



QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

2. Method, Hybrid and pellet 5. (& 1 Down) The Rushmers (4 & 7)
6. Exeter river 7. Dip 8. Slithering Wilshire river 11. Juvenile salmon 13. Alan, Urban Banx 14. Bennett, Fish'O'Mania champ 15. Pope

DOWN

See 5 Across 2. Flatfish 3. Wedge lure
 England's Alan or Sandra 9. Glowing Surrey river
 Far-from-easy Welsh river 11. Bag or stringer
 Beachcaster





Answers to last week's puzzle: ACROSS: 1. Swingtip 6. Len 7. Umbrella 9. Garry 11. Po 12. Overfish 15. Tag 16. Grilse 17. Rod

DOWN: 1. Sturgeon 2. Nar 3. Till 4. Play 5. Inshore 8. Barbel 10. Test 13. Fins 14. Hair

October 13. Don't miss the next issue. Like this one, it'll be a must-read!





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