

TACTICS | I CONDUCT A COACHING SESSION ON A SUPERB STRETCH OF THE WYE. IT'S CHUB AND BARBEL ALLEY



Wagglers (left) and Avons worked well.

SYMONDS YAT IS A RIVER ANGLER'S PARADISE

MORE INFO
 Dave Harrell is recognised as one of the country's best ever river anglers and has devoted his life to learning different skills on running water. He has fished for England at World and European level and now owns his own tackle company, Dave Harrell Angling. For details of the product range go to: www.daveharrellangling.com. He is also available for one-to-one and group coaching sessions on the River Wye throughout the river season. For more details contact Dave at: info@daveharrellangling.com

DAVE HARRELL
 UK'S NOT RIVER ANGLER

One of the better things about my life these days is that I get the opportunity to fish more than I ever did before.

This often takes me in a new direction, to places I've never been to before, and a couple of weeks ago I had a call from the owners of the Forest View Guest House in Symonds Yat East in Herefordshire, asking me if I fancied sampling the fishing that was on offer there on the River Wye.

I didn't need asking twice, and as I drove into the Forest View car park I quickly scanned the flat calm surface of the river to see a few big circles appear up and downstream. They were most likely chub or possibly very big roach, as a few friends had told me about the big shoals of redfins that gather right in front of where I was staying.

With the light fading fast, I checked in at the guesthouse to be met by owners John and Gill.

John is a keen angler himself and was clearly already in his element with tales

of big barbel landed and lost. I'd got a coaching day booked with Richard Koziol a few days after my arrival, so I rang to offer him the opportunity to join me. The previous three sessions with Richard have all improved his fishing no end and he has developed into a very good angler. He's even entered this year's Wye Championship, and it was with this in mind that he wanted another session with me to learn how to use pellets in conjunction with float gear.

I'd found the perfect swim to do it, and on the day he arrived the river, although running very clear, was at a good level with a decent pace. The swim was about six feet deep and I told Richard that I fancied it for a few barbel as well as chub.

WAGGLERS AND AVONS

Tactics for the day would be mainly floatfishing with big wagglers and Avon floats, with open or blockend feeder gear as back-up. We set up two 13ft Daiwa Matchwinner 13P float rods with TDR reels, 6lb line and size 12 and 14 Kamasan Animal Spade hooks.

We also set up his 1113P feeder rod at 13ft with 10lb mainline and an 8lb hooklength. This was a peg where big

fish were almost guaranteed, so there would be no point fishing lighter and losing fish before stepping up. Personally I'd much rather do it the other way and scale down if I need it in order to get bites.

To avoid tangles when floatfishing with pellets, you need to use a big float that will comfortably cast the pellet out to the distance it needs to go. Bear in mind, too, that you can fish much farther out than you can with maggots as you can feed the loose offerings much further with a catapult.

We set up one of my 5SSG Thick Speci Wagglers with most of the shot locking the float on and just three No4 shot down. As a general guide I've found one No4 drop shot per two feet of depth is about right. These are spread equally along the line, with the bottom shot about 18 inches from the hook.

On Richard's second rod we set up an 8g Alloy Avon, which is perfect for use



My favoured pellets are Bait-Tech Fishmeal in 6mm and 8mm sizes.

at distance with big baits in swims like the one we were on and also in deep winter swims for all species where there is a lot of pace.

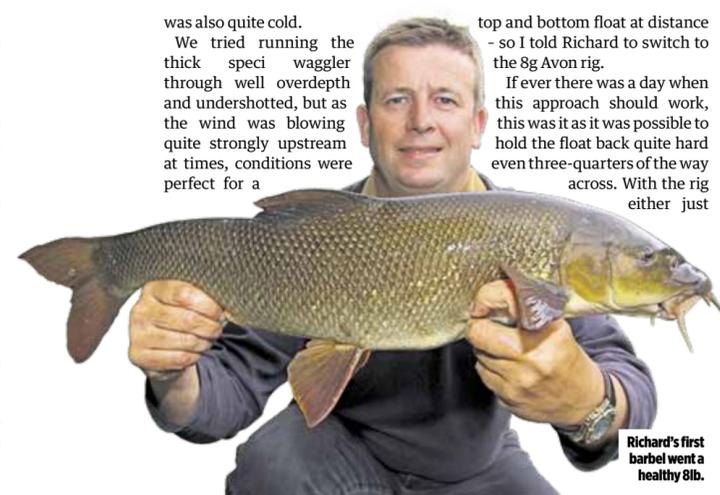
The shottng on this rig was simply an 8g Drennan olivette locked on to the line with a few No4 shot either side, set 18 inches from the hook. No drop shots are required as the hookbait is heavy

enough on its own.

For feed we introduced a mix of 6mm and 8mm pellets - not too much to start with as you never quite know what the response will be when the rivers are clear. It's much better to build the swim up gradually than fill it in from the start and risk killing it before it's even got started. Six to 10 pellets every few minutes is about right and it's important to feed them in different parts of the swim rather than all in the same place. This helps to attract more fish and keeps them moving around.

CHUB FOR STARTERS

It didn't take Richard long to get the fish coming, as a 4lb chub took a liking to his pellet hookbait after just 15 minutes. Several more chub between 3lb and 4lb followed, and a few nudging 5lb. Surprisingly, though, no barbel showed and I suspected this might be down to the pace of the water, which



Richard's first barbel went a healthy 8lb.

was also quite cold.

We tried running the thick speci waggler through well overdepth and undershotted, but as the wind was blowing quite strongly upstream at times, conditions were perfect for a

top and bottom float at distance - so I told Richard to switch to the 8g Avon rig.

If ever there was a day when this approach should work, this was it as it was possible to hold the float back quite hard even three-quarters of the way across. With the rig either just

off bottom or a few inches overdepth, two more chub followed before Richard hooked into his first barbel, a hard-fighting 8lb fish!

Three more slightly smaller barbel completed a memorable afternoon on one of the nicest-looking swims I have ever been on.

It was a very good workout for Richard, who is now up to speed with floatfishing with pellets on the river, and if he gets a decent draw on the Wye Champs next month he will do well I am sure. Can he win it? I see no reason why not as he now knows how to handle swims with plenty of barbel and chub in them.

For my part, I have discovered a real gem of a place to add to my portfolio of coaching day venues. I'm looking forward to the roach fishing there when the weather cools down and we've had some extra water through the river. Bring it on!



Chub to 5lb on the float are a joy to catch.

A quality chub to Richard, just one of many.

STAY AND FISH

FOREST VIEW GUEST HOUSE
 To book an accommodation stay with fishing on the Wye included in your package, call 01600 890210 or 07881 247068. Bookings can also be made through the website at: www.forestviewguesthouse.co.uk

