

Free coaching for youngsters at new fishery

A NEW fishery in Warwickshire is offering free coaching for kids when it opens its doors this spring.

Jersey Wood Fishery, on the outskirts of Nuneaton, consists of five lakes, including one containing specimen carp, and a catfish pool.

The venue, which opens on April 1, will be the new home for the Chay Jackson Academy of Angling, a well-established scheme that has coached more than 2,000 children and adults since its opening in 2009.

The fishery will offer both day tickets and full memberships. Kids aged between eight and 15 who come through the angling academy will receive free fishing until they are 18.

For more info call the fishery on 07581 406849.

Special treat for pike fans

PIKE anglers in East Anglia are being invited to a presentation evening being hosted by top pike angler and acclaimed angling author Stephen Harper.

Stephen, who has banked numerous pike over the 30lb barrier and written many popular books including *The Pike of Broadland* and *Dream Pike*, will give a wide-ranging talk covering predator fishing on the Norfolk Broads.

The event takes place at the William Burt Centre Village Hall, in West Winch, King's Lynn, tomorrow, January 30. Doors open at 7.30 pm and admission is just £3.

New tackle shop opens in Cornwall

IN AN age where local tackle shops seem to be closing down on an almost weekly basis, one Cornish family has bucked the trend by opening up its own fishing outlet.

Calvin Harrison has fulfilled a lifelong dream by setting up 'Anglers Den' in Hayle, near St Ives, with the help of his sons Tim, Kyle and Joel.

It's open every day except Tuesdays and is located on Hayle Terrace at the rear of Central Garage.

For more information call Calvin on 07733 272524.

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Focus on chub – but go easy on the bait

THE RECENT big freeze saw water temperatures plummet, and fish have been hard to come by on many venues in the past week or two.

However, one species that always seems to feed at some point during the day is the chub, which is why I'm going to be focusing my attentions on these fish for now.

Chub are greedy at times, but now that the temperature is down you need to go gently on feed and work hard to tempt them on to the hook.

That doesn't mean feeding nothing - far from it, in fact - but you need to feed on a little-and-often basis, either by loosefeeding for a float attack or by introducing bait accurately through a feeder.

When the rivers are clear it's best to fish as far out from the bank as you can comfortably feed, and one of the best ways to catch them on faster-flowing rivers is by using a big float and a piece of breadflake on the hook. Chub are suckers for this

MAKING YOUR HOOKBAITS STAND OUT



The purists should not dictate what most of us want.



approach, and quite often you don't even need to feed anything. You can just keep striking the bait off at the end of every run through.

Tackle needs to be fairly robust for this approach and I normally use 8g or 10g DH Angling Alloy Avons or Barbel Missiles in the same sizes.

These are shotted with a bulk comprising a big Drennan olivette locked 18ins to 2ft above the hook and usually no dropper shot, as the hookbait is pinched on to a size 8 or 6 hook and is big enough to not need them.

For floatfishing with maggots it's worth experimenting with how many maggots you put on the hook. A big bunch of four or five often

works better than just one or two in fast-flowing water. On the flip side, you'll often need to fish with a single bait in slow-moving water as the clarity will mean that the chub get more time to check things out.

In fast, shallow water I use either a Spec Wagglers or a Truncheon Wagglers. These give me all the buoyancy I need to drag my hookbait along the riverbed. Usually, the rig is set at dead depth, but sometimes you will catch many more fish by setting the float 2ft or even 3ft overdepth.

For chub fishing at distance in slow-moving water, it's peacock wagglers for me every

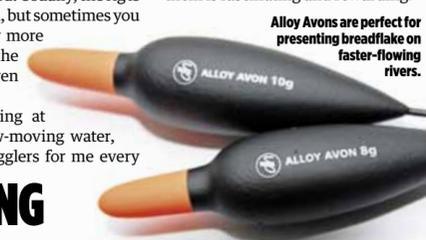
time, either straight or with hollow plastic inserts.

For feeder fishing I prefer to use a blockend design at this time of the year, and after introducing bait every five to 10 minutes for up to two hours, I'll then leave the feeder in for anything up to 20 minutes.

The length of tail is critical here too, as you will often be able to get bites from big chub on tails 4ft or 5ft long when you can't get a sniff with it set at 2ft.

So, until the rivers warm up, forget about barbel, roach and other species and concentrate your energies on chub.

They're a really exciting fish to catch, and finding ways to tempt them is fascinating and rewarding!



Alloy Avons are perfect for presenting breadflake on faster-flowing rivers.

IS THE KEY TO CATCHING

Big response to my closed-season comments

MY RECENT comments and ideas about the river closed season, as I expected, have seen a lot of messages heading my way.

There is always going to be a big divide on this subject, but it amazes me how many 'experts' we suddenly get when the topic is raised. No-one really knows what effects lifting the closed season would have, which is why I suggested that the Environment Agency selected a number of test bed stretches around the country and allowed fishing to

continue after March 14. A few people have taken my idea a stage further and proposed that it should be implemented, but with keepnets not allowed during the trial period. I hadn't thought of it that way, but it's certainly food for thought.

The arguments to keep the closed season as it is just don't stack up for me, I'm afraid. I keep reading about this big romance with June 16, and some anglers not wanting to fish from March 14 until then. As far as I'm concerned,

that's fine if it's what they want, but why stop the rest of us enjoying what we like doing?

Most stretches of river are owned or controlled by a club or association so, in my opinion, it should be left to them to decide what happens on their waters.

After all, these are the people who know their waters best, and if there are known stretches where fish spawn, like below weirs, for example, just don't allow fishing there for a certain period. It's not exactly rocket science, is it?

MORE INFO
Dave Harrell is one of the country's best 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. Bookings are now being taken for the rest of this season and also for the summer months. For more details contact Dave at: info@daveharrellangling.com. You can also follow Dave's diary and weekly exploits on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/DaveHarrellAngling and on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/dave_harrell

Dave's River Fishing Clinic

DO YOU have a question for our river expert? Send an email to: info@daveharrellangling.com As well as having your question answered, there's a set of DH Angling floats up for grabs for the best one used.

HOW DO I KEEP LINE TWIST AT BAY WHEN REELING IN?

Q I suffer a lot with line twist, especially in my hooklengths. How can I stop it happening?

Nigel Reilly

A Line twist usually happens when you're using a combination of a fine hooklength and double maggot on the hook. It also occurs if you reel in too quickly and have your rod too low while you are doing so.

There are a few ways to overcome the problems. First, when you're running a rig a long way downriver, get into the habit of keeping the rod high when you retrieve and don't reel in too fast. When I'm wagglers fishing I tend to 'bounce' the rig over the surface on the way in as this reduces the 'propeller' effect that you get if



Substituting swivels for dropper shot helps.

you wind in with your rod low. This is actually something that I notice a lot on my coaching days, and it's a big mistake to keep doing it.

Another thing you can try, and this is especially the case with very fine hooklengths, is to incorporate a small swivel between the mainline and the hooklength. You can buy tiny micro swivels for this job, which can also be used as part of the rig, their weight replacing that of dropper shot.

WHAT MAINLINE IS BEST FOR MY RUNNING LINE RIGS?

Q When I'm making running line rigs up at home I get very confused on what lines to use and how many rigs to carry to the bank. Please help. **Mick Stephenson**

A For most of my floatfishing work on rivers I tend to use mainlines from 3lb to 5lb (0.16mm to 0.20mm), so these are the lines I use for my winder rigs.

If you're using big floats you don't need fine lines, so all my Avons and Bolos are made up on 4lb or 5lb line. For stick float fishing it's nearly always 3lb. Bear in mind that you'll always be using a finer diameter hooklength, so it doesn't really matter what line your rig is on as long as you can easily cast and control it. You can even attach it to a finer mainline if distance and control is improved, but the key thing always is to make sure that your hooklength is weaker than both, so you never risk losing a rig if you snag up and need to pull for a break.

Over the course of a season I can fish swims from as little as 4ft to as much as 15ft deep, so I need running-line rigs to cover all eventualities, as you would with pole rigs. I'd advise carrying at least two of each size and maybe three of the most popular sizes that you use regularly. Make up the bulk rigs on just 4ft-5ft of line and the stick rigs a couple of feet under the depths you'll be fishing. So, if the swim is 10ft deep make the rig at 8ft and join loop-to-loop. The nearest shot to the float will then be 2ft away.



DH ANGLING WINNER FLOATS

It's far better to carry too many rigs than too few.

HAVE PELLETS TAKEN OVER FROM OTHER RIVER BAITS?

Q I've just returned to floatfishing on rivers after a 20-year break and can't believe how much it has changed in terms of bait! When I left it the main choices were maggot, caster, hemp and meat! Do these still work? All I seem to read about is pellets. **George Wright**

A The good news is that the baits you once liked to use all those years ago do still work well, especially during the colder months.

In the time that you've been away, though, baits like pellets and boilies have made a significant impact on river fishing. Initially, it was just halibut pellets for barbel, but this season I've caught loads of fish on the float using 8mm carp pellets.



Pellets rule, but traditional baits still work.

The main advantage of using these in the warmer months is that they are too big for small fish to eat, so you only catch quality fish with them.

Pellets are also cheaper than maggots and casters, and you can keep them in your bag for ages as they don't turn or go off.



It's chub for me until the weather improves a lot.