

## Dilemma over hungry carp for matchmen

TWO ANGLERS fishing an open match at Acorn Carp Fishery were left scratching their heads after they both hooked the same fish at the same time.

Andy Guard and Dave Bacon were fishing either side of a footbridge on the Bristol-based venue's Paddock Match Lake when they both hooked into the 2lb carp right at the end of the match.

Speaking after the match, tackle dealer Dave said: "The baits must have been lying next to each other beneath the bridge and the fish picked up both without registering a bite on any of our floats. "Because we couldn't decide whose fish it was, we discounted it and returned the fish to the water safely."

## Match star for club meeting

ONE OF the UK's top match stars is set to share his expertise with members of a popular club during a specially-arranged evening.

Preston Innovations' Lee Kerry will be present at the Grimsby club's headquarters on June 5 for a question and answer session to help improve the ability of those attending.

For more details on the event call 01472 355370.

## Anglers' joy at top accolade

MEMBERS of a club from Berkshire are celebrating after being awarded a national accreditation.

Brackley & District AC were awarded the Sport England-backed Clubmark award for angling – one of only a handful of fishing clubs in Britain to have achieved the feat – after signing up to both Angling Trust Child Protection and Sports Equity policies.

The club also showed a commitment to developing juniors through its eight fully qualified, CRB-checked coaches to help gain the award – encouraging more youngsters to enter the sport through the group's coaching and taster days.

**DES TAYLOR – STRIPEYS GO MAD FOR SOFT PLASTIC PAGE 46**

**T**HE EIGHTH and final round of the Wye Winter League was always going to be difficult. The river had been over the banks just a few days before.

However, a steady drop throughout the week saw the level gauge outside the rowing club HQ reading just under 5ft. I think a foot less is a perfect level, but the colour wasn't anywhere near as bad as I'd expected it to be.

The main issue being discussed before the draw was who was going to win. The Shakespeare Superteam was one point in front of favourites Woodys and, as often seems to happen in situations like this, the two teams drew next to each other.

My own DH Angling team had a bad start to the campaign, and despite a few good results mid-series we were never in contention, so we went into the last match fishing for pride and individual success.

I was dreading being on A section again, not because the fishing can be difficult up there, but because just getting to the pegs has been a nightmare for months due to floods. The track that goes up to the top end has turned into something usually only tackled in Army assault courses!

Additional bonuses are two of what I'm told are called 'kissing gates' – the ones with curly bits on that you can't get a barrow through! I've had more than my fair share of draws up there this season, so surely I wouldn't be there again?

Guess where I drew? Yes, that's right, A section, peg 16, one of the worst ones up there. I could see the look of relief on the faces of the other lads as they all realised they'd been spared the hazardous walk!

Arriving at my peg I quickly decided on a game plan. Overhanging branches downstream meant I couldn't see very far down the swim, and even if I could have I really didn't fancy it for a float attack. It would have to be done with feeder gear.

I set up two 13ft Daiwa Connoisseur 1113P rods and TDR 3012 reels loaded with 8lb line. Large 50g Kamasan Blackcap feeders were fitted with additional 20z leads giving me around 3.75oz, just heavy enough to hold bottom in the fast flow.

To complete the rigs I used 4ft of 6lb hooklength tied to size 12 Kamasan Animal spade hooks. It's no use fishing much lighter than this here as there's always a chance of hooking a double-figure barbel or a chub over 6lb.

The water temperature was very low, so I decided to go all out with a maggot assault. I had with me six pints of bronze with a few reds. With no cover at all on the far bank, I decided to fish just this side of middle, and by keeping the rod high and putting a big bow in the line I could anchor the feeder directly in front of me to fish for drop-backs.

# The late, late show

## THREE LAST-GASP CHUB HELP ME TO A GOOD RESULT, BUT IT'S SHAKESPEARE'S DAY ON THE WYE



## Dave Harrell

BRITAIN'S BEST RIVER ANGLER TELLS ALL – ONLY IN **AnglingTimes**

The rods I use combine plenty of casting power with a good fish-playing action, vitally important when you're using heavy feeders. Most blanks have one or other of these qualities, but rarely both.

I kept the feeder going in every four to five minutes for the first hour with four maggots on the hook, but no bites came. During the second hour I began to leave it in a little longer, up to 10 minutes sometimes, and with nearly two hours gone I had my first bite. A rattle on the tip saw me pick up into what I expected to be a small chub or big dace, but I was dismayed when a non-counting trout surfaced!

I considered casting to a different part of the swim midway through, but there was no point, as there wasn't really anything to cast to in terms of features. Bank walkers informed me that most people were struggling, although odd chub were being caught on the feeder.

Another trout followed in the third hour of what had become a very dull match, and things stayed like that until 50 minutes from the end when the rod tip suddenly

sprang back and I picked up into a good fish – a 3lb chub. I was very pleased to see it!

With six minutes left a vicious drop-back saw me into another chub and, amazingly, the very last cast of the match resulted in another one! The three fish weighed 10lb, putting me fourth in the section of 12, a result I was well pleased with.

As I was packing away I began to wonder about what had just happened in that last hour. Were the fish there all the time and only switched on late? I don't think so – it's more likely they had travelled upstream from down below in search of food.

That begged a different question. Could I have made things happen by feeding more bait sooner? We'd all got long swims up there, and if the river had been low and clear I'd have been floatfishing down the middle and using a lot more feed.

Should I have used a much bigger feeder maybe? Or introduced some heavy balls of groundbait packed with feed at the start for the fish to move over at some point during the match? I'll never know, of course, as match fishing is all about

making the right decisions on the day, and by doing either of the things that I've just suggested I could easily have ended with a dry net. Definitely some food for thought for the future, though.

Individual top spot went to Andy Burt's 35-8-0 of quality perch from form peg 75. He used an 8g flat float with a section of lobworm on a size 10 hook and bait-droppered his feed with chopped lobworms and casters.

On the team front we'd got four catchers and two dry nets, so there was no chance of a late rally and we ended up fifth overall.

All eyes were now on Shakespeare and Woodys. Both teams had six catchers. Further scrutiny of the weigh boards revealed the two teams had beaten each other three times, so it was now down to totals. Wizards took top spot on the day with 54 points, ahead of Woodys with 47 and Shakespeare third on 45. The overall result was now both teams level on 80 points. League rules then took it to the number of match wins, and so Shakespeare took the title with two wins to one.

My sincere congratulations go to Shakespeare. It's been good to see how well newcomers Brian Rigby and Tom Lane, grandson of the late great Billy, have fitted into a very experienced squad. Both have proved to be very good additions.

On behalf of all the teams that took part, a big thank you to league organiser Tony Birt who once again has done a fantastic job for us. We appreciate it.

### 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](http://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](mailto:info@daveharrellangling.com)  
You can also follow Dave's daily and weekly exploits on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/DaveHarrellAngling](http://www.facebook.com/DaveHarrellAngling) and on Twitter at: [www.twitter.com/dave\\_harrell](http://www.twitter.com/dave_harrell)

These three late chub put me fourth in my section.



The victorious Shakespeare Superteam.



A study in concentration on peg A16!

## Dave's River Fishing Clinic

Do you have a question for our resident river expert? If so, just send it in on an email to: [info@daveharrellangling.com](mailto:info@daveharrellangling.com) and Dave will sort you out. In addition to having your question answered, there's a set of DH Angling floats up for grabs for the best question used.

### HOW LONG SHOULD MY FEEDER HOOKLENGTH BE?

**Q**I get very confused about how long my hooklength should be when feeder fishing for barbel and chub on rivers. What length should I be using? **Mike Rawlings**

**A** There are no hard and fast rules about this. Over the years I've caught barbel and chub with hooklengths as short as three inches and as long as six feet, so you can imagine all the in-between options.

I usually tend to start off with a hooklength of around three feet in the summer months and three to four feet in the winter.

If there are a lot of fish present and I'm getting bites quickly, I will keep shortening the hooklength down as the fish are coming straight to the feeder as

it lands, but such days are rare. I would recommend the longer hooklength. I've caught far more fish this way in recent seasons.



It pays to experiment with length of hooklengths.



### WHAT SIZE SHOT FOR THE STICK?

**Q**I recently read on your website about using a No4 shot per foot of depth for stick float fishing. Should I always be using No4s, or can I use smaller shots to do the same job? **Peter Johnson**

**A** A lot of anglers prefer to use a long string of smaller shot, so there is no reason why you can't use No8 shot. For very big sticks, a lot of anglers group No8 shot together in pairs.

Bear in mind, you'll just need a lot of them for big sticks, but if you store them carefully on a winder before and after fishing you should get plenty of use out of them.

Smaller sticks can work better with spread No8 shot.



### ARE LINE SPRAYS WORTHWHILE?

**Q**I've never used line spray for floatfishing but have been told that they improve bait presentation. Is this true? **Geoff Peters**

**A** I've used floating line spray for many years and I never go fishing without it. Always spray the spool liberally with it before you thread the line through the rings

and you will find that the silicone coating helps to keep the line floating.

This, in turn, helps you to lift the line off the water in order to keep it behind the float as it travels down the swim and improves bait presentation dramatically. I'd urge anyone who float fishes on rivers to always use it.

Floating line spray is a must on rivers.

