

The Carp Girls return

By Elaine Taylor

September 2013



The year started off far from perfect, an unexpected major operation was on the cards and future unknown. So now more than ever (if that's possible) I have fishing as my aim and we Carp Girls grab on to the opportunity with both hands and never let go!

We hit the bank with big plans and big goals for the future, life is for living and carp are for seeking. After spending our first session back on the bank; 3 days on our new syndicate, we came back refreshed and revitalised. Our hunger and passion had not diminished during our absence from the bank, never thought for one second it would have. We arrived at our chosen lake and decided to walk round first to have a chat to others fishing and see where best to head for.....the weather was scorching and it looked tricky to get a bite in an already hard lake.



We saw plenty of large lumps cruising on the surface but no signs of feeding and having spoken with the others on the lake, it seemed it was going to be hard, but none the less we were glad to be bank-side!

We choose a double swim away from most of the other anglers on the opposite bank it was a long walk round but our Powawalker Trolleys made light work of getting all the gear to the swim. Setting up was humorous, well at the time tempers were fraught but looking back we can laugh now.



Then after she had got her bivvy problem sorted I heard round two of cursing again. This time she had set up her carp cradle upside down, biting my lip trying to not laugh in her face, I went to see if she was ok.

But second thoughts, I thought it best just leave her to it. Once we had got the rods out we sat back and settled down, sleep was disturbed by single beeps from the crays playing with our hook baits L

We listened to advice from others on the lake and tried various rigs to combat the crays but alas they seemed up for eating anything on our session. It makes you wonder whether the fish get a look in; do crayfish beat the fish to your bait? Would the fish push them off? Time will hopefully answer these questions for us the more time we can spend on the bank and learn to combat these little pests.

I was quiet happy passing the time away by watching their habits in the margins. Debbie's margin was much 'cleaner' no stones or weed just clear clay banks and a handful of crays, whereas my margin was far more 'cluttered' sunken bark chippings, weed, pebbles, and plenty of crays. I worked out that they seemed to favour the margin with more camouflage. Could this be the same out there in the lake? I think it could be the way to approach it.



Experimenting across my rods with different rigs and locations, I found that the fishing in clearer spots could be a better approach but wrapping your bait or using plastic looked to best protection and to give the fish a chance to move in if they decided to get their heads down.

We had cooked the best carpy looking particle bait possible, it was almost good enough to eat. But it wasn't meant to be, the weather was just too hot, and even fishing with zigs didn't pick anything up.

Debbie discovered after reeling in, her 5ft rig wasn't cray proof. They had also had a go at the foam popping it up. I guess they pulled or walked it down.



Alas the 3 days passed without a sniff of a carp, but plenty learnt and more pieces of the jigsaw were coming to together ready for next time.

The first couple of days and nights were very uneventful, as they were for all on the lake... I was getting hammered by crayfish. So all 3 were going to be cast out and I would make a bar of bait to draw a carp in. Debbie stuck with her spots as she hadn't really suffered cray trouble but just hadn't had a take yet either.

The carp were cruising with their back out the water just under our rod tips patrolling up and down towards the island.



Time was running out but the night before last Debbie managed a 34lb 12oz mirror off her island rod, a hardened hook bait worked while baiting in a fairly tight pattern.



Debbie managed a 34lb 12oz mirror off her island rod,

Getting frustrated I went for a wander and saw a couple of large carp in a channel between the near bank and island... chucking a few dog biscuits out to see how they responded, with the idea of getting a rod if they start taking. But ducks and tetchy swans had other ideas.

I watched the carp circle a few times eyeing up the floating biscuits, they spooked as soon as a swan got near. Even the coots were having paddies, I watched them standing on the backs of carp and pounding their feet up and down while protecting their young.

It was clear that I had no hope of contending with a family of tetchy swans and coots beating the fish away. So back to my swim to think of an avenue I had yet to try.

There were only 3-4 fish out that week, and all but one came from a very small belt of water across the lake from the island to the far bank. My thoughts swayed to the idea the fish were holding down deep unless they were cruising



Heavy rain made life difficult

The weather was hot and even after an amazing storm and flash rain the bites didn't follow from the fish. The storm was a real tropical belter we don't normally get here in the UK. It stayed over head for hours and the lightening show was breath taking!! I'm disappointed I didn't get a few photos.

I may not have been lucky enough to land a carp but capturing magical moments in a photo of nature is a close second and brings almost as much of a reward. I took these moonlight shots on two consecutive nights; right swim, right time, right conditions.... something of a motto for carp anglers.



To find out more about The Carp Girls go to: www.carpgirls.co.uk