

NEW FOREST WATER PARK by Dave Beckett

PART 1

Hello to you all; spring is finally upon us and the bobbins are starting to move once again. It won't be long and the cold winter nights will be nothing more than just a memory.

I'd like to share my story and journey with you on the New Forest Water Park in Ringwood, Dorset. The lake itself is a 12 acre gravel pit with tall oak trees lining the banks, being a former gravel pit the water is gin clear, fairly weedy and, as you can imagine, has lots of fish-attracting features including gravel bars.



The stock well.....anything between 250 and 300 but don't let that create any false impressions as, being easy, I can assure you it's not!

The stocking was made with some of the most beautiful carp I have ever had chance of catching. As it stands the lake record is 38lb and fortunately I'm currently the holder with a big grey slate mirror known as Pablo.

I first started to fish this water some 4 years ago after seeing some of its jewels in the carp magazines. The particular fish I remember seeing at the time was of a fish called H.N.D and what a beauty she was. Since then I have been doing a lot of time on the water - with some very good results to boot. The average fish getting caught these days is between 22 and 26lb which isn't bad, but it gets better when I tell you that there is a one in 5 chance of a 30!!!! With the lake containing upper 30lb mirrors and commons in my opinion it's one of the best venues in our area of the country!!

As far as my approach towards my fishing I have always tried to keep it as simple and straightforward as possible, fishing 2 rods even though 3 are allowed, and 99% of the time fishing both on hinged stiff-link pop up rigs over beds of boilies and a little particle.

My chosen bait was Meteor from CC Moore coupled with Particle mix + aniseed with which I found I could pick up fish on a regularly basis.

I spent quite a lot of my time in a swim called 'The Comfy' as here you had a good view of the lake and could always pick up fish that were moving through even if there weren't any signs of movement that would lead you to fish anywhere else.

With bars at 40 and 65 yards it has plenty of spots to offer the angler, with the furthest bar having 8ft depth on the top shelving off down to 14ft making a large deep hole in the middle of the lake. The fish seem to patrol the top 3ft of the slope and it's here I always present my baits. Looking back at my records I have caught 13 x 30's from this slope; all of which were different individual fish, both commons and mirrors.

It was here that on April 8th 2010 I was lucky enough to bank my new PB and lake record of 38lb in the shape of Pablo. I had never caught this fish before but had seen and photographed it for friends in the past at a much lower weight. Before catching Pablo the biggest I had managed was a fish named Single Scale at a weight of 36lb 4oz from the 'Armchair' swim which is situated on the car park side of the lake.

I had arrived on a Thursday for a 5 day session as it was just getting dark; luckily there were only 3 other members on the lake., As I walked past this swim heading towards the wooded end of the lake into which the wind was pushing, I heard a tell-tale 'boshing' sound which made me take a look. On entering the swim I heard it again and again so sat there watching for no more than 5 minutes as I saw a good 20 or more 'shows', some coming out 3 at a time. It was clear that they were in front of this swim and having it large.

I ran back to the car and grabbed my gear, but by this time it was nearly dark and getting hard to see. However, the fish were still jumping so you could make out the ripples reaching all the way back into the bank created from where it seemed like cows were falling in every 10 minutes. I had fished the swim a fair bit in the previous summer and, not wanting to spook the fish off with a marker rod or spodding out, decided that the best method was to flick out 2 stiff hinged pop rigs fished in a helicopter style with 2oz leads.

I knew where the spots were so catapulted out a pouch full of boilies to my first chosen spot in the hope that if there were any fish in this area they would spook off, but they would be spooking from

bait and not a lead. Once this was carried out I then cast my cork ball pop which was a 14mm Meteor to the spot followed by a further pouch of 14/18mm Meteor bottom baits. This I repeated on the right hand rod so the rods were soon on the Delkims waiting for the bobbins to dance.



I began setting up the Titan when I had a belting take on the left hand rod; it was one of those runs that you were more aware of the spinning clutch than the alarm. I bent into the fish to feel a heavy plodding sensation on the other end; created by what could only be an angry carp fighting back. After what seemed like an age she was eventually hitting the spreader block. Up to this point my head torch was still sat on top of my bait bucket from where I'd first baited up so I quickly grabbed it and shone it into the net, only to see the large un-mistakable single scale on the wrist of the tail. I knew the fish was a lump but wasn't to find out for sure how big she was until I tried lifting her out of the water. She went up onto the scale and spun the needle round to 36lb 4oz; at the time was a lake record although I didn't know it at the time!!!! (Bad I know) but what the hell, that didn't matter as at the time it was a new PB for me. I slipped her into a sack and safely tied her up as my good buddy Cliff Allen was on his way down to join me on the 5 day session. I thought it would be better to leave it and not ring him about my result so I could surprise him when he turned up!

I recast the rod and no sooner had I put the rod on the rest the right hand rod was away, this time stripping me of a good 40yards of line on the first run. However, after this it was just a case of

pumping it back in and when it was around 20 yards out Cliff walked into the swim followed by ' Oi Oi your into one then'. With Cliff's help we soon had a 29b common in the net before he suddenly asked why the unhooking mat was already wet. Not being able to keep quiet for any longer I told him the good news, to which he thought I was taking the p..s!!!!

We took the photos of the 29 and soon slipped her back. Even up to this point Cliff still thought I was winding him up and it wasn't until I lifted the sack out of the water that he realized that I was telling the truth!!! We weighed her again so that there was a witness to the weight and took the photos of her.



Even without this capture this session was to turn out to be a good session taking 17 fish in five days all from the two spots, with no marker rod needed!! All I did was walked out my rods on the bank, clipped up the spod rod to the same marks and spodded up accurately that way.

I hope you enjoyed part one of this article. I'll soon follow it up with part 2.

Until then, be lucky.

Dave Beckett