

Tackling The Match Lake Pt 2 by Stephen Newton

Last time we left off I had quiet the start to the season bagging 3 fish in 1 month which by anyone's standards is not bad, with this in mind and still buzzing my next over nighter could not come quick enough. I managed to get away from work a couple of hours early as to get to the lake and be set up well before night fall, I was shocked to see a relatively empty car park but on the other hand very happy to as the chance of the Reeds swim that I had my last capture from would be free. I packed the barrow and as I was crossing the steel bridge I could see over the other side of the lake that it was free so quickened the pace just encase there was another angler on their way round from the other direction.



Don't get me wrong I do normally like to walk the lake and look for fish activity but as I have been putting in the bait and getting takes it makes sense for me to keep at it until the bites dry up. Again the rods were set up with the ever faithful chod's that have done the business for me, they were all cast out one at a time and then wound back until I'd reached the marker knots that I left on from the week before and clipped up. Chod's tied foam on the hooks and they were back out on the spots first time, 50 or so baits around each hook bait and the traps were set for the night.



I sat back happy knowing I could do no more and sat thinking to myself tonight could be the night I would bag my first 30, the fish were on the bait and there was already activity in front of me as well as two shows before falling asleep. I was woken again just before midnight by a very strong liner on the left hand rod which to start with I thought was a run, never the less it had me standing over the rod for the next 5 minutes without any shoes on and getting damp feet as it had rained earlier in the day. I had returned to my bag only to be woken by another liner this continued all night and at one point all three indicators went up tight one after the other (probably the lump I wanted in my net and not swimming below my rod tips) Night passed with very little sleep due to all the liners and in hindsight maybe I should have re-cast all rods into the margins, time to pack up came way to fast for my liking and to top it off my running streak had come to an end.

Telling myself that you cannot win them all I started to bait the swim with 2 kilo of treated XXX along with another as a back up encase this swim was taken next week. On the way back to the car park I was stopped by a bailiff I had not seen before and had a chat about my night, he had said that as the weed starts to grow very thick in the middle of the lake the fish patrol the margins in as little as two feet of water so start to bait the margins now in a couple of different swims as you will catch them from right under the rod tips.



So that the next 7 days did not drag I thought what bait I would use to bait the margins with, I settled on hemp, tigers, xxx of course and the ever-faithful Feedstim XP Marine Amino combination.



Time came for the next session again I arrived to an empty car park three cars to be exact and the reeds swim was empty so I loaded the barrow and made my way over to it. When I got there I was greeted with an abundant of weed, as I only had the night I knew I did not have the time to rake it out and risk spooking any fish so decided on a swim called the split beach which has a good amount of water to fish at, an island just to the left with a mean looking snag plus it would cut any carp off as they swam through into the bay which houses the Reeds swim that I had been fishing and there was a strong SW/westerly wind blowing straight in.

Chods were again already tied so after a couple of practice casts I was happy with the drop I was getting so the reels were clipped up baits tied on and masked with foam as I back up.



With the traps set, right hand rod on the edge of some pads, middle rod in open water and the left just off the snag I started to place some of my xxx but was immediately stopped by the ever growing bird population, so decided to bait up at night fall when there would be less of them.

Night came and apart from the odd knock on the right hand rod there was no other activity, I was woken at 2 am to a screamer on the middle rod, which was in open water, and it felt a decent size fish until it decided to weed me up. Now as I have stated this is the first water I have fished with weed but have heard a lot regarding getting weeded up so kept the pressure on for what felt like 5 minutes or so but unfortunately the hook pulled and the words that came out of my mouth I will not repeat. I then started to reel in half a ton of weed that was now caught on the hook and thought to myself I've blown it, as I was to be leaving in the next 3 hours due to commitments that day. I did

not bother recasting the rod as I had already caused enough disturbances playing the fish so sat back with a lesson learnt and one I will have to deal with, as the weed will undoubtedly get worse.

Time came to pack up but before leaving I had a quick walk of the lake and started to bait some margins in one or two swims that I may fancy on future trips and of course my two main swims with 2 kilo's of xxx.

I was due to miss the next session on the Match Lake as I was meeting up with forum member Gricey for a 2 night social on Hardwick's but unfortunately due to work commitments on his part it was cancelled for another time. With the wife knowing I was going to be away for 2 nights I decided not to waste the extra night and go to Yateley as the extra night might prove worth while giving me more time with a bait in the water.

I arrived very late Wednesday night with dark already setting in I wanted to give the other end of the lake ago as I had not fished it before so I walked the lake with the barrow packed and set up in a swim known as the Party swim. Night had really set in by this point so I set 3 chods up and cast them out but was only able to get the drop on one of the rods, with this in mind I settled on fishing one rod until first light so that I could access the situation and get some shut eye.

First light came at 0400 and when I woke I was greeted by a swim so choked with weed I could have walked on it, I thought to myself what a waste of a night, I decided to walk the lake and saw some activity in the Jungle swim which has been kind to me in the past so I placed the bucket down and ran back to pack up and move.



When I finally settled in the jungle swim there was less weed but I still needed to rake it as I would not have had a good drop nor line lay. I spent the next 2 hrs raking the swim until I was happy and then started preparing my chods on two rods and the other would be armed with the new glugged xxx hook baits and the xxx stick mix. I placed all three rods out at 40

yards with the chods on the left and right and the bottom bait in the middle.



The reason for this was I wanted to try the new hemp, buckwheat and belachan mix with added tigers, black tigers and a liquid combo of Feedstim Xp, MA, Shellfish and Salmon oil over the middle rod and have the chods just off it either side.



With all 3 traps set I started to spod out 10-15 skyliners full of this wonderful spod mix and then about 100 xxx baits over the whole area the day went past uneventful as I have become used to while fishing here, I decided to hit the bag early as the move and weed raking took it out of me. Night came and like most nights the lake came alive with fish crashing all over, I had a couple of liners on the left hand rod put nothing that had me jumping from my bag. At roughly 0330 the middle rod roared off with the Delkim remote screaming in my ear, I jumped out the warmth of my

bag and struck into what felt a nice fish which also felt great especially knowing I would not get weeded up this time.

She put up a good flight taking line when she needed and when she was ready and gave up I went to slide the net under her only to lose her at the net. I felt sick to the stomach as I have this has never happened to me at the net before, I can say she was a common and would guess 20-25lber and taken on the glugged xxx over the particle spot. Although I did not land her it still gave me confidence that she was hooked over the new xxx bait.

Morning passed into the afternoon and it was time to pack up but before I left I did my usual and baited my two favourite swims with 2kg of xxx as well as the left over spod mix knowing they were still taking the bait even though they have been try to spawn now for 2-3 week with the weather changing all the time.

Although I have not banked a fish over the last couple of sessions, I have hooked two so I know they are still on the bait and I am learning more about the lake every time I set foot on the bank, I am getting my bait in every week and soon it will become a food source for them as I will be upping the amount as the weather improves.

But most of all I am still enjoying myself and this is what fishing is all about, we will all have times when we don't catch and sometimes this can go on for months although I hope not, so all we can do is fish to our strengths and the bites will start again.

So until next time, be lucky

Stephen Newton