

Close Encounters on Stoneacres June-July 2010

By Myles Gibson

In my last piece I wrote I covered the captures of a 23lb mirror and a lovely looking mirror of 28lb that I had caught the week after the fish had stopped thrashing around showing any sign of spawning. In this piece I would like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date with what's been happening for me on the big pond since!!!!

As normal I was south bound on the M6 late the following Sunday night, arriving at the lake in the early hours of Monday morning. Once through the gate with the boat loaded in the van I made my way round the lake to the swim I had caught from the previous week. I had introduced a few kilos of mixed sized N-gage boilies over the spots I had caught from the week before and was keen to see if the fish were still using the area of the lake and had cleaned the baited spots. As is always the case I pulled up at the swim only to find that another angler was in there. Oh well, well that was that plan out the widow; back to the drawing board!

I had a couple of hours before first light so I pulled the van up, made a flask of coffee and made my way round the pond in the hope of hearing a fish or two flop out in the darkness or something else to go on. I stopped off for a brew and a 'ciggie' in a swim known as Crows Point and, a short while later, heard one clear the water. What was so surprising was that it was only forty or so yards from the bank. I

sat there until first light and in that time I heard another two or three fish show, all around the same sort of range. I left my flask in the swim as a marker and made my way back round the pond to where I had parked my van. A fast walk had soon turned in to a slow jog as I was buzzing to get round there and formulate a plan of attack!

Once in the swim I spent most of the morning just watching the water and getting all my gear sorted. A few showed a little further out as the morning went on, and, as I knew of a spot in front of the swim at around ninety yards so two rods were fished to that. I

decided to go quite heavy with the bait, applying around five kilos, as there seemed to be a few fish in the area. The other two rods were fished at around forty yards just over a hand full of bait in the hope they would drift back in during the night. After a quiet night I woke feeling like yet again they had done the off on me.

It wasn't till late that afternoon a few started showing again but this time they were showing well to my left. I left the rods in position in the hope they would move in front, as I had previously learnt the hard way how much they wouldn't stand for leads been cast at them.

They were only showing ten yards or so off the bank as the evening went on with the odd one showing right in the back of a bay between the swim I was in and the one next door. Luckily there was no one in that swim so I wound one of the rods in off the ninety yard spot, changed the five oz lead to a small 1oz version and attached a long balanced snowman hook link of around eighteen inches I as I was unsure of the lake bed and didn't want more than one cast at them.



I attached five PVA nuggets around the hook as with such a small lead no matter what the rig landed in or on, it would be fishing. I waded down the margin as far as I dared, as they were very close to the bank, and cringed with every step as the gravel crunched under my feet! I was standing there twenty or so yards down the margin with the rod in my hand trying to work out the angle in which the fish had showed when a mirror came half out the water and flopped back in.

There was just enough light left to make out a few scales on its flank and so with that the little lead was under armed into the rings left by the fish that showed. I was more than happy when the lead hit the lake bed with a 'DONK' and scattered twenty or so N Gage baits in the area; the trap was set!

I sat up till around two in the morning listening to the odd fish show right over the rod I had waded down the edge but couldn't believe I hadn't reserved a take yet, they were right over it. Around half an hour before first light I was woken by a slow take; it was the margin rod. The fish had kited through a weed bed so there wasn't much of a fight, just a case of pumping the weeded fish towards the net.

All went smoothly and a short while later I was staring at a chunk of a mirror lay in the bottom of my net.



On the scales it went 35lb 2oz. I was more than buzzing as not only was it my biggest of the season from the lake it was all so one hell of a stunning fish, as are most of these Oxford carp. Nothing else happened for me the rest of that session despite a couple of shows in the same area the following night but I was more than happy with what I had caught and made my way home a very happy man!

Over the next two three night sessions I managed a further six takes landing five and unfortunately losing one due to a hook pull, and they were all caught within ten yards of the bank; it was a nice change to find them close in and not spending a lot of their time out at range.

One of the most memorable sessions was a three nighter the week before the CC MOORE open day at Horseshoe. As normal I had got down in the early hours of Monday morning and, on this occasion, heard a few fish showing close in on the south bank, I set up in a swim know as left gravelly and over the three night session I managed five takes. All the takes came to the same method and that was two bits of plastic corn fished blow back style with long fluorocarbon leaders and drop off four ounce inline leads. I had been baiting a couple of spots close in along the south bank as I had occasionally seen them there the year



before on a warm southerly. I knew it was only light onion weed along and down the marginal shelf so I made sure that if no one was fishing in the area I would throw a hand full of hemp and pellet and twenty or so baits over a few spots in a bid to make the spots clearer.

It was from two of these spots one to my left and one to my right that I received all the takes. The first take came at four o'clock on the second morning on the spot fished to my left.

A steady take resulted in a fish known as the 'Bearded Lady' at a spawned out weight of 28lb 8oz and the second take was from the spot to my right.



I received the take a half ten in the evening that resulted in a really scaly mirror of 26lb.

Happily, the same rod was away again half one in the morning this time a mirror just short of 22lb had made the mistake, and again at around three in the morning. This time it turned out to be a long lean common of 27lb 2oz.



Unbelievably the rod fished down to the left ripped off just after 4am the same morning but I was only in contact for a few minutes before the hook slipped and all fell slack! All these takes had come over a hand full of hemp, a hand full of mini ultra mix, twenty or so small N-Gage baits and a few grains of corn, just enough for a bite!

It's very rare sessions like that but when your luck's in it's in I suppose! Since that session I haven't really found them close in but that's not to say that they aren't or won't get in the edge. In all honesty I hope they do as I can't think of a better way of fishing for our quarry!!!!

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