

# My Winter rig for the Northern Specials

by Sam Bascombe.

As we're now firmly into autumn and winter is fast approaching I've once again started using my faithful balanced pop up rig that has served me so well in previous years. This rig really is a real killer from this time of year onwards in particular and will often out fish any other rig.



Like most effective methods, it is a very simple but highly effective rig which allows you to fish a pop up very close to the bottom but still stands proud enough to give off that vital 'eat me' signal .

I've been using this rig for about four years now during which I have caught fish to over 40lbs and have literally destroyed a little syndicate I fished last winter taking 28 fish in 3 weeks between January and February.

Whilst location and bait application certainly play a part, I put this down to this rig. I've found that combining this rig with a hi viz pop is a real winner.

It also allows you to use a big hook as its lead is on the bottom and completely out of the way. I've been tying it with 25lb suffix black silt hook link with a size 6 Mugger hook knotless knotted with a small piece of tubing on the shank. Not only does this hold the hair in place but by moving the tubing up or down you can adjust the height of the pop as an when you need to with out having to tie a new rig. Also by placing a shot on the hair just below the pop up you are able to balance the bait perfectly.



I've been fishing this with a trimmed down 16mm Northern Special pop up in white over various combinations of pellets and boilies. I think this rig is so successful because it just sits off the bottom not standing out as much as a normal pop up but just enough to catch the carp's attention as they come across it hovering off the bottom. The hook holds are also very good as the rig just flies back into the mouth and, combined with the big sharp 'Mugger' hook, there's no getting away. In fact when thinking about it now I can only recall ever losing 3 fish on this rig in the 4 years I've been using it.



The other advantage with this rig is that it sinks very slowly so is effectively fishing no matter what bottom your fishing over. From my experience with this rig it seems to be light weed or silt where it's really at its best. Fishing this rig with a little stringer or small bag of pellets seems to work well for me and often trips those more 'riggy' or rarely caught fish.



Have a go with this rig this autumn and winter and I'm sure it will catch you a few more fish.

*Good luck,  
Sam Bascombe*