

FROM THE BEGINNING

By Scott Lloyd



My fishing all started as long as I can remember. It wasn't until I reached age 10 that I knew carp fishing was the way I was going to go; starting out float fishing for them as I think we all did and then getting to the way we all tend to do it these days. Living in Crewe, a small town in the North West wasn't the best place to catch huge carp, but what they lacked in size they certainly made up for in beauty.

Fishing my local park lake was when I first knew I was hooked on the sport. Fishing there before school started, when school ended and sometimes even on my dinner hour. Surely these were the signs of a dedicated young carp angler.



After wading my way through most of my local lakes and farm ponds in my childhood I knew it was time to move on and explore a little. It wasn't long until I was looking for a new challenge, something a bit further away from home. After a lot of talks and listening to stories over the years with some of my fellow anglers, I had a good idea of what sort of challenge I was after and where it was going to be. I knew wherever I chose to fish it wasn't going to be easy. I also knew I would have to adapt slightly but wondered if I would have to change my style of fishing? With all this in mind I thought it would be a good idea to start out on a day ticket water rather than dive in at the deep end with a tricky syndicate. That was it, my mind was made up - Linear Fisheries here I come.

I'd heard lots of great stories about the complex and the fish it held. One lake in particular stood out to me - "St John's". It wasn't too big and wasn't short of stock either, it also boasted some of the biggest fish on the complex.

I did a bit of homework and I was soon on my way down there. On arrival I was gobsmacked by the place, it looked so well run and tidy with some boards which displayed lots of pictures and info about the lakes. It was totally different from anything I had seen before. I took a walk around my chosen lake and straight away noticed the water clarity was clearer than anything I had been used to.



It got me thinking I may struggle, but I didn't let it affect my confidence. I spent 3 long days down there and found out that my approach was totally wrong and needed to be adjusted before my next session.

To be honest I did struggle for a couple of sessions after that but I knew it was a big learning curve for me and I would get it right soon. I found the fish were very clued up rig-wise and weren't going to fall for anything too blatant. I whittled my end tackle down so it wasn't so visual and played about with a few rigs. I felt myself tuning into the carp's behaviour and became more on the ball and mobile. This



definitely played a big part in my success on there in the end as I often found the fish would move away from the angling pressure. I did around 30 nights in total and had some magnificent results also meeting some great lads along the way. I was lucky enough to land the lakes largest resident "the big plated" a Pb weight for me and complex record at 44lb 10oz. (left).

This was definitely the highlight of my success on St John's and, without doubt, one I won't forget!

A couple of weeks after this capture it was early November; the cold was more than creeping in and things really started to slow down fish-wise. Whilst fishing on the complex I'd heard many stories about the nearby syndicate "Linch hill", many of which had come from my mate and fellow angler Danny who used to fish there some years back when it was a day ticket itself. Often the talk from the syndicate was packed full of great results and awesome fish. Danny showed me pictures of his captures and I felt myself getting more and more eager to take a walk around the place.

So after a session on St John's we took a trip down there. When I arrived I was greeted by some 50 acres of Oxfordshire Stillwater "Stoneacres". Danny had told me a few bits about it and some of the old warriors it held. I knew Stoneacres would be too big a step up from what I was used to, so I decided to focus my attention on one of the smaller lakes Danny told me about on the complex; "Christchurch". This is where all the great stories had come from. As I passed the big lake to make my way over to Christchurch I was pulled up by a man on a bike, it turned out to be the fishery manager, "ideal". We had a brief chat and I thought it would be a good idea to give him my details to put on the syndicate waiting list. I carried on my journey and when I saw the lake I knew this was more suited to me. Somewhat smaller to the lake I'd just passed, 10 acres to be exact which also held a larger stock than Stoneacres. This is where I would begin if my ticket turned up trumps.

I tried not to think about the Christchurch too much after that in order to keep my attention focused on St John's. I managed a couple of short sessions over the winter which didn't pay off at all, I put this down to the lake freezing over most weeks when the weather being at its worst. I did get one stroke of luck

come January though, but not with a fish in my net.

This was a phone call from Linch hill saying I had a ticket for April 1st if I wanted it, "oh yes"!

Time definitely dragged after that but I continued to fish St John's through March and even managed to tempt a few stunners before my time on there came to an end.(right)



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