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Crafty Carper

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48 HOURS ON OLD BURY HILL

WITH ANDY THOMAS AND DAVE BENTON

Angler Profile

Andy Thomas

Age: 35

Hometown: Aldershot, Hants.

Occupation: Trainee Driving Instructor

UK PB: 43lb 6oz

Angler Profile

Dave Benton

Age: 40

Hometown: Aldershot, Hants.

Occupation: Carer

UK PB: 35lb 8oz

This month our new 48 Hours pairing take a visit to one of the country's most famous and prolific venues in the heart of Surrey.

This month we find ourselves on a beautiful old estate lake set in the Surrey hills. Located off the A25 near Dorking, the Old Lake at Old Bury Hill Fisheries is a 12-acre lake surrounded by mature trees and stunning scenery. There is a fantastic head of carp in the Old Lake with stock numbering in excess of 800, ranging from low-doubles to over 30lb, with numerous 20lb+ specimens to be caught. All swims have been purpose-built with platforms giving good disabled access, so the use of a rod pod is essential. Also on site are a very well stocked tackle shop and a café. Old Bury Hill offers something different to your average day ticket fishery, as you can hire a punt to set sail around the lake to fish for the carp.

> "All swims have been purpose-built with platforms giving good disabled access, so the use of a rod pod is essential"

HOW TO TIE... DAVE'S QUICK-CHANGE BLOWBACK RIG

1

Above are all the components required to tie Dave's rig.

2

Start by carefully cutting yourself a 10ins length of Stiff Silt.

3

Now strip away 3ins of stiff outer coating to reveal the supple braid.

4

Tie two rig rings on the braid section, about the width of a grain of corn.

5

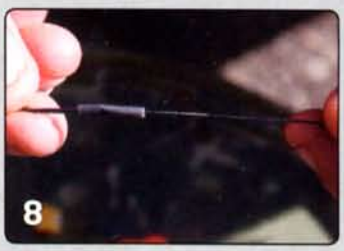
Thread the point of the hook through the first rig ring, as shown above.

6

With the ring in position attach the hook to the Stiff Silt via a Knotless Knot.

7

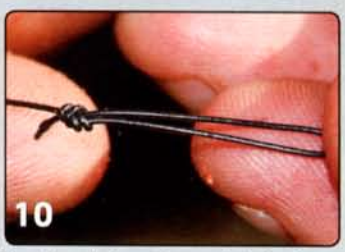
Take a pair of sharp scissors and cut a ¾ins length of shrink tube.


8

Slide the tubing down the hooklength and over the eye of the hook.

9

Hold the shrink tube over a steaming kettle and create a curve in it.


10

Tie a loop in the other end of the rig, this allows PVA sticks to be threaded on.

11

You can now tie your chosen hookbaits to the other rig ring to complete the rig.

12

Dave fished his Blowback Rig with a PVA stick of boilie crumb.

DAY ONE

1000 Dave: On our arrival we make our way into the tackle shop and speak to the bailiff, who informs us that the lake has been fishing a little patchy of late. The lake was frozen last week and he tells us that our best chance of a few runs would be to head for the bay just on the edge of a snaggy area known as The Jungle as the carp tend to hold up here all year round. After making our way to the bay we both look at the corner swim which has some snags going out about 20 yards into the lake. There are channels for carp to cruise in and out, so out comes the dreaded coin, which Andy flicks into the air. I call 'tails', only for me to lose once again – from now on it's going to be snakes and ladders for me. Andy picks the swim that controls the snags, leaving me to slot in a couple of swims down to fish the open water and island. So, out with the marker rod, and after a good plumb around I find an area of slightly harder silt at 70 yards' range and opt to bait this spot with a selection of different-sized Red Indian boilies and some hemp. I will fish the island later on once all the boat users have gone home, and then it will be out with the bait boat. I am going to start with some simple rigs consisting of a Size 8 Gardner Long Shank Incizor attached to an 8ins length of Sufix Stiff Silt, with the hookbait being a Snowman consisting of two Red Indian boilies, one bottom bait and one pop-up. I will fish the rigs in conjunction with a PVA stick made of finely crumbed matching boilies.

1330 Andy: I got my rods out and into position at around 11.30 a.m. There are three main areas within the swim that I'm going to concentrate on. My left-hand rod is baited with fake corn and positioned down the margin to some submerged trees; this looks like a banker spot that I'm sure will be visited regularly by the resident carp. I am using in-line leads that will come off the leader on the take to reduce the chances of a hooked carp becoming snagged in the underwater obstacles. The swim in which I'm situated is just inside the mouth of a narrowish bay that's approximately 90yds across. There's another set of snags on the far bank, which I might put a bait to later, as it looks very carpy. The other area I fancy is a spot in open water. I had a plumb around earlier and found a silty spot in 6½ft of water at around 65yds. I baited this with mixed sized whole and chopped boilies, from 12 to 24mm in size and in various flavours. I have cast two rods to the open water, which are baited with 18mm boilies. I began to receive liners almost straight away on the open water rods, then out of the blue the rod on the snags was away with a vengeance! After a brief tussle, disaster struck and the hookhold failed. I'm a bit gutted but not flustered – all's fair in love and fishing!

Fishery File

Old Bury Hill, Old Lake, Surrey

Venue size: 12 acres

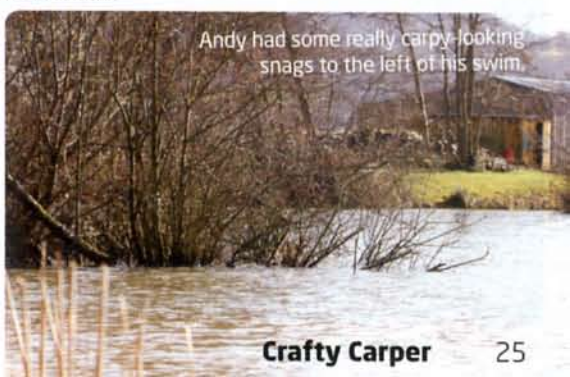
Fish stock: Over 800 carp to upper 30s

Facilities: Toilets, café, showers, tackle shop, secure parking

Contact: 01306 883621

Website address: www.buryhillfisheries.co.uk

Additional information: Punts are available for hire from the venue.

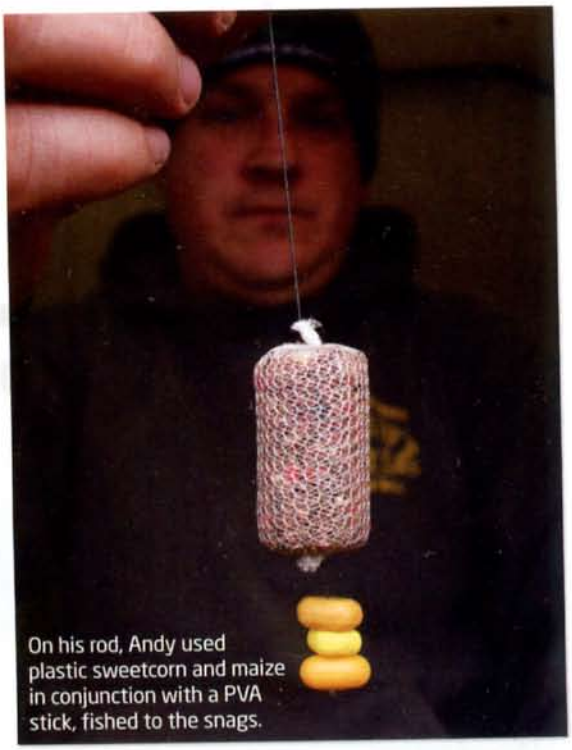

Andy had some really carpy-looking snags to the left of his swim.

I recast the rod back to the snags just in time to hit a twitchy take on the middle rod. Unfortunately it's a bream! I decide to change that rod immediately to two 18mm bottom baits hoping it'll prevent another slimy pick-up. The snag rod is away again but this time the hook holds and it's first blood to me with a low-double common. We're off and running and I'm sure it won't be long before Dave gets some action.

> **"The wind started to blow into the bay a while ago and everything was looking good for tonight, when out of the blue my bait boated rod to the island signals a positive take!"**

1730 Andy: I have moved one of the open water rods to the snags to my left as I feel that this is where the carp are. I catapult sweetcorn and carp pellets out as loose feed along the trees to draw out the carp. Two bites in quick succession produce a pretty-looking low-double mirror and a hard-fighting upper-double common. We're cooking on gas now!

1930 Dave: The baited area has been producing a few bream and plenty of liners so I'm sure it won't be long before the carp move in. The wind started to blow into the bay a while ago and everything was looking good for tonight, when out of the blue my bait boated rod to the island signals a positive take! After a short tussle a double-figure common is in the net and I'm off the mark at last. I've reloaded the boat with a good handful of 18mm boilies and some hemp and sail her back out to the island.



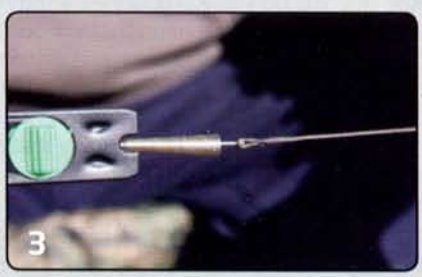
On his rod, Andy used plastic sweetcorn and maize in conjunction with a PVA stick, fished to the snags.

OLD BURY HILL LAKE

HOW TO MAKE... ANDY'S QUICK-EJECT LEAD ARRANGEMENT

To make Andy's lead ejection system you will require the above components.

Attach a length of leadcore to a swivel via a loop in the leadcore, as shown.



The next step is to thread a tail rubber onto the length of leadcore, like so.

Now pop the swivel into the insert of an in-line lead, as illustrated above.

Slide the tail rubber over the plastic tail of the in-line lead so that it looks like this.

Once a carp is hooked the tension will cause the lead to eject from the leader.

The snags were in close so Andy could bait them with pellets and sweetcorn, using a catapult.

> "It was a quiet night but I've just had another mid-double common from the island spot"

Another Old Lake carp falls foul of Andy's plastic baits.

DAVE'S TIP

When fishing a Snowman, the pop-up topper may be too buoyant. Simply trim away a little bit of the pop-up until the hookbait just sinks and is critically-balanced.

2130 Dave: The island rod is away again. This time a very angry carp is taking line from the clutch whenever it feels like it, on slow powerful runs. Slowly I start to gain line on what has got to be one of the good 'uns. As it starts to go on another line-stripping run, kiting off to my right, I have to walk up to the next swim. Then disaster strikes as the hook pulls with the carp only 30yds out. I am gutted!

DAY TWO

0700 Dave: It was a quiet night but I've just had another mid-double common from the island spot. This seems to be the only productive area for me; so far the two rods on my main area are just picking up occasional bream but no carp. I will keep plugging away at it though, topping up every few hours with a couple of boatloads of hemp and a scattering of boilies. Unfortunately my island rod will have

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to be moved soon as the predator anglers will be out on the punts, and this is one of the first places they will head for.

1130 Andy: I had another low-double common from the snags during the night but the open-water rod only produced bream. It has been a busy morning for me and since it got light I have landed a double-figure common and two double-figure mirrors, one of which was a real scaly stunner! All bites this morning have come from the snags on balanced stack rigs of plastic corn. The wind is really getting strong and it is getting uncomfortable sitting outside.

A simple underarm chuck was all that was needed to place his hookbaits near the snags.

Dave used his trusty bait boat to get his rigs close to the island.

Another Old Lake carp is weighed.

> **"It has been a busy morning for me and since it got light I have landed a double-figure common and two double-figure mirrors, one of which was a real scaly stunner!"**

Dave managed a number of mid-double commons during the session.

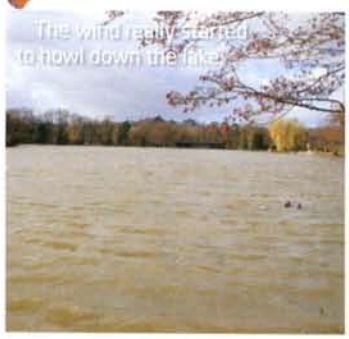
1700 Dave: It has been a quiet day again for me, the carp just don't seem to be in the open water. Earlier I was seriously thinking of a move to the area in front of the tackle shop, as this sits out on the water and is a feature in its own right. Also, as it is heated all year round, the water temperature nearby should be a degree or two higher, so the carp are sure to like it around there. However, two other anglers have turned up and decided to go in there, so that's sorted that one out for me! The lads in the boats are just starting to venture out in them now so I've decided to fish two rods out to the island margin tonight and I'm itching to get them out there as I know that bites are there to be had!

2100 Andy: I have received a steady stream of action throughout the day and have notched up a few more double-figure carp, with the best going 16lb 4oz. The open water spodded area wasn't doing much other than bream and I reckoned it needed changing. The smell of burning rubber signalled that I was having a thought!

Old Bury Hill is home to some really stunning mirror carp!

"Looking back on my session, I would have changed a few things, one being that I should have called heads when Andy tossed the coin!"

16lb of powerful Old Lake mirror carp.


The wind really started to howl down the lake!

ANDY'S TIP

Old Bury Hill has a number of platform-style swims, so it is advisable that you bring a rod pod with you.

A slight change of tack was needed just before dark, so at around 1730 I decided to forget my open water spot and opted to fish across to the far bank snags. I baited to the left and slightly short of the snag on the far margin with about 40 or so 18mm boilies. As it's a long old chuck I decided that the safest bet for avoiding a tangle was the old Chod Rig, which served me so well on last month's 48 Hours. This will also mean that my bait is presented cleanly on top of the silt and I will, hopefully, pick up one of the Old Lake's big girls!

DAY THREE

0200 Andy: Chod's away! After 10 minutes another mid-double common has come my way and in the light of the moon it looks gorgeous. The wind has continued to be strong and nippy, so after a quick picture I head back to the warmth of my bag!

0900 Dave: After a good night's sleep, with very little happening, I have just one more mid-double common to show for my efforts. Looking back on my session, I would have changed a few things, one being that I should have called heads when Andy tossed the coin! The snaggy swim always looked as if it would be the more productive, but that's my bad luck. I think being more mobile when I had the chance could have made a difference. After speaking to the two anglers in front of the shop, I found out they had seven carp up to 26lb between them last night, so that's a lesson I have learned for future features.

1000 Andy: We've had a pukka trip and have enjoyed it immensely; it's great fishing in a beautiful area with a great backdrop. Dave's had a bit of a frustrating session. He wasn't able to get his baits where he wanted during the day; this was mainly down to a couple of predator anglers in a punt. Despite this, Dave still managed to bank a few lovely commons to mid-doubles and, as usual, was great company. I had a bit of a flyer really, but in hindsight the carp are nearly always in or around snags. I think I had what's known as a 'hot peg'. I ended our 48 hours with around 15 takes, with 11 carp landed, which I can't argue with. I wouldn't really change much if I were to fish Bury Hill again, as my tactics for the swim I fished seemed to be effective. Considering that the lake contains such a huge head of 20s, we were a bit unlucky not to have caught a lump or two each, but that's fishing.

We'd both like to say a big thanks to David (the owner), and to his staff for their help and hospitality during our stay. CC