



# Talking Carp

Issue 99  
May 2024

*Inside -*  
*Scott Grant The winter that was pt2*  
*What's in Mark Carpers shorts*  
*Catherine Bunn Our Journey Continues*





[www.castaway-pva.co.uk](http://www.castaway-pva.co.uk)



# Hello and welcome

**AND HERE WE ARE.. ISSUE 99.. THE LAST OF THE DOUBLE DIGITS ISSUES...**

**It has been an epic journey so far, and we are loving it! In this issue we have more from our captain.. Mr Scott Grant... as he continues his amazing run of form on waters across his county.**

**Also this month we have more from Catherine Bunn...**

**was that an amazing story we had from her last month? It certainly made an impression on some out there.. and this month we welcome Catherine and Paul back for more...**

**As always we have the catch reports and reviews for you. Keep those emails coming in... we look forward to each and every one!**

**Have a great month and see you next month for the real big issue....**

*Team Talking Carp*

**Email us at any of the below emails**

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# The Winter That was



*Part 2*  
*by Scott Geezer Grant*



A couple of weeks after my last hit I was back over the lake. I was fishing a social with my old mukka Chris along the road bank, the weather forecast was not great it was going to be -2 at night and there is a good chance the lake could freeze over. We both got set up and with the rods out we decided to have a big fry up. I do miss the social side of fishing as a lot of fishing I do is on my own. Me and Chris have been mates for over 20 years, we have done a lot of fishing together and know each other inside out. We always have a good laugh no matter what the weather or fish are doing. Well needless to say that night the lake did freeze over and come the next morning all my rods were frozen in. I had to get bricks to smash the ice so I could wind my rods in, we both packed up and headed for home.

The following week I was back over but this time I was fishing alone; I walked round to the Ramp and dropped a bucket in there then went back to my van. I unloaded the van and my old mukka Chris kindly took all my gear round in the trailer, which makes such a massive difference. I went into a swim I had been trickling bait in over the past 4 weeks.

The only other angler fishing was Chris who was in the bailiff's swim, so I practically had the lake to myself. With the trailer unloaded I wasted no time in getting the bivvy up and my gear sorted. An hour later everything was in place and the only thing left to do was get the rods out on their spots. My boat is my weapon of choice and used in conjunction with the fisheye camera is a deadly combo. I sent the boat out to the spots as I wanted to check if there was any bait left. There was no bait left on any of the spots, and the spots looked cleaner, where the fish have polished off the bait.

This was good news as I knew they liked the bait and that the fish





## The winter that was pt2

8



would come back to the feeding spots to feed again. I decided to have a change of hook bait as the water temperature had dropped

and my choice of colour is always white. So, I fished a white Skunz pop up on the left and middle rod, but kept a powder coated nuts pop up on the right rod. I boated the rods out one by one and they all had crushed Nuts boilie, whole nuts boilies, chillie hemp and a handful of maggots, I always use dissolving foam nuggets on all my rods this ensures that I get the perfect presentation every time, again this is a confidence thing and if your confidence is high, you stand a better chance of catching. This combination has done me well so far so there is no need to change it. With the rods out it was time to get the kettle on and watch the water. I checked the weather app which I seem to constantly do throughout the day when I am fishing. There was another storm arriving tomorrow this time it was storm "Jocalin" great another session of me getting battered!!! The wind currently is South Westerly and the pressure is 1015 and creeping up over the next few days. As long as the wind stays South Westerly or even goes Westerly that will be okay, if it goes Southernly I am in big trouble as it will be coming straight at me.

Later in the afternoon just after 5pm I got a screaming take on the left-hand rod, I lifted into the fish and felt it only for a few seconds before it sought sanctuary in a huge weed bed. I put the rod back in the rest and like always the fish takes a bit of





time before swimming out. An hour later and with no movement whatsoever, it was clear that the fish had spat the hook. I pointed the rod directly to where it was snagged and applied some pressure after a few seconds the line gave and I reeled my rig in. Everything was intact the hook was still mega sharp so I was left scratching my head. Maybe the hook only nicked the fishes lip who knows and I will never know. I rebaited the rod and sent it back out to the spot with another boat load of bait.



It was a quiet night and I woke up Tuesday morning early like I always do, put the kettle on for my first morning coffee. I checked my phone and it was saying that the storm is due to hit us this afternoon. I must admit I am not looking forward to it. I sat watching the water for any signs of carp but I did not see anything. Come the afternoon and the wind got right up, the waves had white tips on them and my bivvy was rocking to the point where I thought it was going to take off!!! It was like this for the rest of the day.



The rods were left in place as there was no way I could get them back out in this weather, and I knew they were all presented anyway. After a very scary sleepless night I woke up early doors, the storm had passed and the lake looked somewhat a lot calmer. I sat watching the water drinking a coffee, I saw a fish show over the middle rod and as this was the first fish I had seen it filled me with confidence. At 0900 o'clock I got a screaming take I lifted the rod and felt the fish for a second or two then nothing! I reeled the rod in



and just as it got to the bank, I could see line hanging off my lead, I gingerly swung my lead towards me and grabbed the line, it was in fact braid and I started to pull it in and there must have been 80 odd yards with a zig attached. All I can think of is that the fish are swimming into the zig and getting it caught up in my line giving me a false take. Anyway, with this now removed, cut up and put in the bin I decided to reel my other rods in and go for a shower and have a social with Chris.

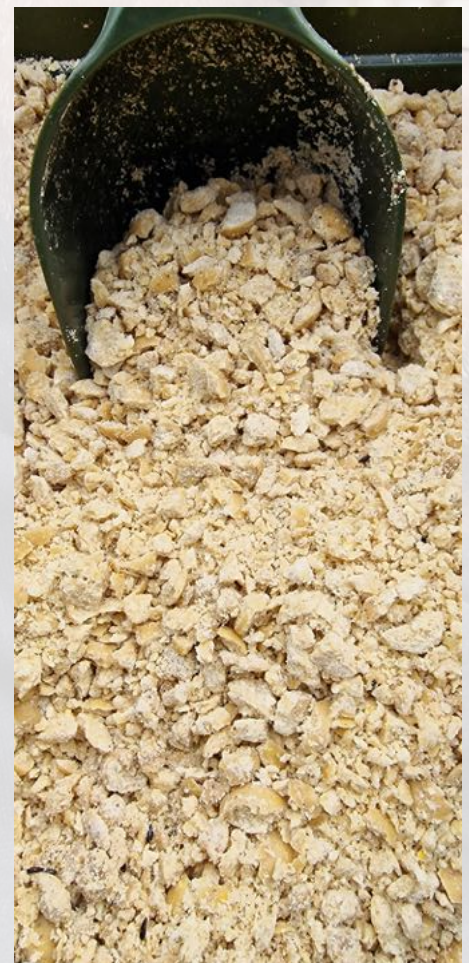


Later in the afternoon I returned to my swim and went about getting the rods out. Just as I put the last rod out another angler turned up and went into a swim opposite me, anglers seem to like that bank as you can park behind your swim and literally fish out your van. He proceeded to get his

rods out whilst I sat there drinking tea watching the water. This particular angler does like to jump on other angler's hard graft so you have to have your wits about you when he is on the lake. He will watch where you are baiting and as soon as you have left the lake, he jumps straight in your swim.



As I was doing a Winter campaign, I was hoping to keep all my catches under







wrap as I did not want anyone knowing what I was catching until I had finished. It's not an easy feat but I will try my best.

As the sun set the temperature dropped, and I made myself comfortable in the bivvy, the heating went on and after 10 minutes it felt like being at home. It was another quiet night and I actually got a much-needed good night's sleep. I even overslept somewhat I missed first light by 15 minutes, which is not like me at all. As I do every morning I sat watching the water with a coffee in hand. Jake called me just before 0900 o'clock to see how I was getting on we chatted for a few minutes and just as I ended the call the left-hand rod burst into life, this fish was not mucking about I lifted the rod and the fish was well and truly on, I kept the rod high and the pressure on

and for once this fish did not weed me up and after a proper battle it was finally in the net. It turned out to be a lovely







plump mirror of 28lb 3oz. Happy days I took a few self takes before treating and returning the fish. The fella opposite called me to say he had caught a low 20lber and saw me playing the fish and what was it. I had to tell him but left it at that, (there is a lake what's app group). I got the rod rebaited and back out on the spot with a generous

helping of bait. I checked the weather app and tonight is a full moon. They say that on a full moon big commons make an appearance and the only common left for me to catch in here is a beautiful fish called the "Woodcarving" now I would dearly love to add this fish to my portfolio but we can all dream.

Dan turned up and went into the Island swim next door to my right, so it all of a sudden it seemed very busy. We chatted for what seemed like ages before he went and got the rest of his gear and started to set up. Around 1pm as I was standing talking to Dan my receiver let out two bleeps, I checked and it was the left hand rod again, I walked back to my swim and once there I looked down at the rods and the bobbin was shaking, the line twitched so I lifted the rod and the fish was on, I knew straight away this was a much better fish and it fought hard trying in vain to weed me up at every chance, I kept the rod high and the pressure on and after an epic battle and I mean a proper







battle a huge common surfaced out in front, I knew it was a good fish and after a further few minutes Dan slid the net under it. I was knackered but so happy, I looked inside the net and I knew straight away it was the common, I so dearly wanted to catch the "Woodcarving". Danny could not believe it nor could I, but I gathered myself together got everything ready, zeroed the digitals then it was time to weigh and photograph this magnificent fish. On the scales she went 41lb 7oz which is a good weight for her. Dan obliged with the camera and took great photos as he always does. I then treated her and watched her swim off back into the depths of the Dell. I had to sit down and take it all in, this fish was my second 40lber and its Winter!!! I have never had a winters fishing like this in all the years I have been carp fishing.

Sometime later I did manage to get the rod back out on the spot, with another boatload of bait. I could not believe my eyes as my boat got to the spot the bloke opposite, walked







along the bank trying to line up where my boat was and the spot, I was fishing!!! This angler is so desperate I could not comprehend it, but what I did do was send my boat up and down just to let him

know I knew what he was up to. It is a sad situation when you cannot get a swim going yourself and you choose to jump on somebody else's hard work.

I sat down and just could not stop smiling, I always strive to catch one winter 40lber but to actually catch two is beyond my wildest dreams. They are loving the bait; the terminal tackle is spot on and never lets me down. Can this winter get any better for me, well only time will tell if I keep putting the effort in then surely, I will be rewarded. That night I went to sleep and I was actually content, I slept like a baby and when I woke on my final morning the wind had eased even more. A few anglers starting to turn up so come midday I was all packed up and off home. The word must have got around that I had banked another 40lber as the bloke who was opposite me text me asking why I had lied to him when he asked if I had caught anything else!!!! Seriously you could not make it up.

Going back to the full moon scenario is there something in it? I really do not know to be honest but one thing I do know is that last year on a full moon I caught the big common out of my other syndicate water, so there is definitely something about a full moon and big commons.

If you want to give Halo baits a try, I have a discount code which gives you 15% off at the check-out. The code is GEEZER, please note this will not apply to any special offer bundles.



I would like to thank the following companies for their products of which I use in my fishing.

[www.halobaits.co.uk](http://www.halobaits.co.uk)

[www.deceptionangling.co.uk](http://www.deceptionangling.co.uk)

[www.katran.co.uk](http://www.katran.co.uk)

In the Margin Particles (Facebook)

[www.castaway-pva.co.uk](http://www.castaway-pva.co.uk)

[www.fisheycamerakits.co.uk](http://www.fisheycamerakits.co.uk)

If you would like more information on becoming a member of The Dell contact Michael Prior on 07768-124462 he will be more than happy to help.









*Whats in  
Mark Carpers  
shorts ???  
May '24*





## Mark Carpers Shorts...!

This month in my Shorts we have....

- **MCF 'BOOT SLIP'**
- **Wader Bag / Cover - Bespoke Angling Supplies**
- **The 'GOM' from LCA Tackle**
- **Heated Gas Cannister Cover from RidgeMonkey**
- **Gurza - Coated Braid from KATRAN**

### Boot Slip by MCF Carp Fishing

I can't be the only one that finds stepping in to my Waders a pain in the backside..?!!

You know the scenario, you get a take and then comes the sheer frustration of struggling to put your feet into your waders as you point your toes like a Ballerina and nearly dislocate your ankle whilst trying not to fall over or worse.. lose that fish..!!!

Well, the MCF – BOOT SLIP eradicates all of the above..!





Designed and Manufactured here in the UK for those anglers who use Waders or even Wellies whilst fishing

A unique design, the Boot Slip enables you to place your foot into your chosen footwear with ease and without any hassle whatsoever

Well-made and extremely durable, the 'Boot Slip' is a must have....



Available to buy singly (£19.99) or as a pair (£29.99) - <http://www.mcfcarpfishing.co.uk/page22.html>

## Wader Bag/Cover – Bespoke Angling Supplies

Simplicity itself, but the key is that the Bag-come-Cover is totally Water Resistant and will keep your Waders dry even in the harshest of downpours

Spacious and well-constructed it allows you to store and carry your Waders with two 'Clasps' to secure to top of the bag and two strong carry handles

...the clever bit is when you take your Waders "out of the Bag" and roll





them down ready for action...

... you turn the Bag 'Upside Down', place it over the top of your Waders and you then have a '**Wader Cover**'

You can then rest assured that no water is getting inside the Waders no matter what the weather..!!

Overall, a very useful, practical, and well-made product that is designed to do a specific job, which it does extremely well

It is easy to use so doesn't become a pain and it gives excellent protection to the Waders both as a Bag and a Cover

The cost, direct from Bespoke Angling Supplies is around £35.00 inc. UK delivery

You can contact them via their Facebook Page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bespokeanglingsupplies/>

**The Gom - from LCA Tackle**



This little Blue Block, measuring 5cm x 2cm x 1cm, claims to 'sharpen' your hook point without the need for a Vice, Files, Stones or even a Magnifying Glass and for just £10...

..and using it is so simple... insert the Hook Point into the block of 'Sand Crystals' us a Left & Right 'turning motion', not an 'Up & Down' motion, the point gets a full 360° 'sharpen', with no flat spots



Micro-Barbed & Beaked Points too.. you just go as deep as the start of the 'Barb' or for 'Beaked Points' you place the hook in the block following the curve of the point..

Ten to Fifteen seconds of back and forth and you are done and it improves the hook point of even the cheapest hooks

You can also 'drag' the hook along the block length, like dragging it along a file but with the block being very fine, the amount of material removed from the hook is minimal but it does give a slightly better and sharper finish to the point...

On the LCA Tackle website, you will find a couple of instructional videos of how to get the best from The Gom <https://lcatackle.com/product/hakenslijper-the-gom/>



And if you head to GCT Angling you can purchase The Gom from the UK...

<https://gctangling.co.uk/product/the-gom/>

## Heated Gas Cannister Cover – from RidgeMonkey

The Gas Cannister Cover is designed to fit the 440-500 size Butane/Propane mix Gas Cannisters, which are the most common used for Camping Stoves



This USB Powered cover has a 'Heating Coil' that will gently warm the Gas Bottle for efficient use of the Gas by the Stove.

Powered from any USB output 'Power Bank' and with the convenience of the 'In-Line' Power Switch, it is simple to use and very effective...

My 26800mAh Power Pack ran the Heater over a week-long session being used up to six-times per day to boil water and cook food

I simply turned the heater on as I was prepping and it made the use of the Gas Bottle very efficient and also prevented 'Flare-Ups' too...

... it doesn't need to be cold weather temperatures to use it either... just using the gas will cause the cannister to chill down and this little 'Blanket' prevented it from getting cold enough to affect the Gas Flow..!



## GURZA Coated Braid – From KATRAN

The 'Stiff' Outer Coating on GURZA can be stripped easily to reveal a "Very Soft" Inner Braid

...and although fast-sinking, this Hook Link is well suited to Waters with Low Lying Weed...

... Not just because of the Green Colour, but because the Stiffness of the Coating allows it to settle 'on the weed' rather than into it...



When fishing in weed, GURZA is best used as a 'Longer' Hook Link of between 30cm to 45cm to allow it to settle and present itself in the best possible situation...

...the Outer Coating is easy to remove and does not split when knotted...

... and GURZA makes a superb 'Hinged' Rig too..!

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# Our Journey Continues



by Catherine Bunn



*First*, we would like to thank everyone for their support and response after our last article, it was amazing. We would also like to say a massive **THANK YOU** for the surprise gifts that we received... we cannot thank you enough. This is really going to be a game changer going forward getting me on the bank.

This week we travelled to **Trent View fisheries** in Nottingham for my first ever 72 hours social. I was nervous and excited at the same time.

We arrived on the Sunday and the weather was awful, it was raining heavy, and it hadn't stopped for days. Trying to find a peg suitable for me was difficult as a lot of the pegs was very muddy and bogged out and with me being disabled it was not ideal at all. We even watched some of our friends slipping and sliding in it while they were trying to set up. After driving back and forth looking at all the pegs we decided peg 22 was the safest and most accessible for me and not a mud pit. On a good day I would say most of the pegs are accessible and it also has 1 disabled toilet by the cabin.

Day 1 was a complete wash out, we sat in the car most of the day waiting for the rain to ease up trying to figure out how Paul was going to get the bivvy etc set up on his own. The bivvy is a pain in the butt on a sunny day so I could already see it was going to be stressful for him. Finally, the rain eased and Paul with a little help from his friend managed to get the bivvy up and finally late afternoon got the rods out. It had been a miserable day so we got our heads down early hoping the next





day would be better.

After a restless night due to the struggles, day 2 was a new day, we had some breakfast and came up with a plan of action for the day. I made up a few *Castaway pva* bags with the help of Paul and we decided that was going to be on my rod 2 rod lengths out in the margins to the right. We decided Pauls rods would go out at 10 wraps on 14mm prostim yellow wafter and 15 wraps on a 20mm manilla boilie over the



house pellet. The set ups were simple, using 400mm tungsten tubing on a non-fixed lead clip from Deception Angling, with both rods set up the same with a multi rig. Due to the wind being bad and directly smack bang in our faces we knew spodding as far as he wanted to be wasn't an option and we had seen fish showing in them areas. Being away from the rest of the social we went with, Paul decided that evening he was going to set the new barrow up and take me to see everyone else. Everyone from the social was cheering when they saw me coming saying how much better it was for me to get around on the bank. Sat there watching the lake and watching Paul as he pushed me, we both had smiles on our face which was priceless. I asked him was it better he said so much easier no lifting and pushing less strain on his shoulders and no pain just out of breath. On the way back to our peg other anglers smiling saying hello and one even said that's one way of getting around the lake.... we are so very grateful.

That evening we sat in the bivvy talking about our next plan of action for the last day and I shared





rods. While I was putting my harness on Paul hit the rod... Fish on! The adrenaline was pumping, we slotted the rod on my harness and reeled in as the fish got to the net Paul lit it up with his head torch there it was....

how I would love to try and cast one handed and would it even be possible for me to practice with the spod rod with just a lead. He grabbed two of my hair ties and wrapped them around my arm sliding the spod rod inside them to hold it in place. He said he will think of a way to do it but couldn't do it that day due to the wind being bad but will figure out a way to try the next day.

That night I couldn't sleep thinking of different ways I could try but nothing came to mind. It was around 2:30am and I was just starting to drift off to sleep when the receiver screamed off and it was my rod. Paul got me up grabbed my harness and got me to the

I had caught a bream, probably about 6/7lb We both looked at each other and just started laughing. To most carp anglers they would not class that as a catch but for me it's different, anything goes. I need all the practice and experience I can. From Paul getting me up, getting me to the rods to me playing a fish, every small thing to someone else is a huge step for me so it was a win win for me. Paul got me back to bed and I fell asleep knowing my rig works perfectly.

The last day we woke up bright and early, the sun beaming on to our bivvy. A new day, a new plan. We found out there was a gravel bar 18



wraps out so we decided both rods with bright single baits should go out and hope for the best and we left mine in margins as that's where I caught from.

After lunch Paul said he had come up with an idea to help aid me cast. he said to put a finger stall on me to stop me from cutting myself, and as the other rods was out on the spots it was time to have a go. My first attempt wasn't great, it looped up into the air and landed in the water only a couple of rod lengths out. Second attempt was much further about 6 wraps and I was happy, but it didn't feel secure and I told Paul this.

Dave from Castaway pva and Paul stood talking about some other ideas and thought a buckle strap would be better and we gave it a try, it felt much tighter and secure and I managed to hit 8 wraps, it was brilliant so Paul unclipped to see if i could hit the next one. I just kept casting and Paul kept reeling it in for me over and over. Dave came up with some words of advice to try and lift my arm as high as I could. I raised my arm to the highest and boom !!! I just hit the 13 wrap clip. I was ecstatic! I had tears of joy

in my eyes as did Paul! Lee from Deception Angling, who has been a massive support network for me, was sat in his car watching me and witnessed me hit that 13 wraps and came straight over to me... he saw the tears in my eyes and he excused himself by saying "Well done! and how proud he was of me" he had to go as he was getting emotional and didn't want to cry in front of us.





Not only did I never think I would fish again but to start learning to cast one handed is a massive achievement. The buckle strap is a start until we can find a better solution but for people out there that think they can't do it, please give it a try you might surprise yourself like I did. I'm not saying it's going to be easy because it isn't, far from it but with the help and support from the right people you will get there. This is just the beginning for me and I'm learning new things every day and I hope I'm inspiring other disabled anglers to do the same.

There is still a lot of struggles for me to get on the bank but slowly working through them together. No carp for us on this trip but I'm happy I pushed past my limits and was able to do a 72-hour. Don't get me wrong, it came with some pain but the outcome was brilliant, and would definitely like to go back to catch a carp.

Our next adventure is going to be at Chester lakes next week as I won a 48 hour fishing session. This one I'm really looking forward to, it has disabled pegs and disabled toilets and we are really hoping to

catch some nice carp. We will be going live daily on Tik Tok on Pauls account which is Bunnylad so we can show people around and show how accessible it is.

Keep your fingers crossed for us... and maybe a new pb coming our way.

Tight lines everyone.

*Catherine and Paul.*







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**My "Weed Rig" using GURZA Coated Braid  
from KATRAN – Mark Carper**



KATRAN

**GURZA**

**COATED HOOK LINK  
sinking**

**20 M  
25 Lb**

**Green**



*We* all know that weed offers the Carp shelter and it also contains numerous food items too but we often shy-away from fishing in it as it can be tricky to present an effective rig and science tells us that during the daytime, weed produces Oxygen and at night, it gives off Carbon Dioxide, so fishing in or on weed during the day presents a real opportunity to get a take...

When I find myself fishing a spot that has a covering of 'low lying' weed of around 10 to 35cm in height, (I usually determine this by using a Sonar either Boat Mounted or by casting a Deeper) and if I really do not want to be casting around for ages, disturbing the swim to find a clear spot, or, if the sonar shows me there is no clear spot to be found...

... I often opt for a 'Chod Rig' as it is a fairly safe bet that the hook will find a way to present itself above the weed... but... I have found that a quicker and just as effective setup is to sling-out a 'Long' Multi-Rig or my preferred "German Rig" using GURZA and allow it to find its' own "settling point"...

...When I say "long", and in this case I feel that "size does matter..!", I am talking about anything from 30cm to 45cm, depending on the density and height of the weed, (not just the height of the weed)... the denser weed, the longer the rig..!

My friend that fishes a lot in Europe favours longer Hook Links no matter what the rig or bottom and over the past forty years has had plenty of success, but I just can't commit to longer rigs for all my fishing.

I use GURZA over other options after 'testing' (viewing) the rig in clear water over weedy areas on







numerous occasions and the fact I have caught Carp on it too, as I feel that the 'Stiff' Outer Coating allows it to settle 'on the weed' rather than into it, even though it is a sinking hook link...

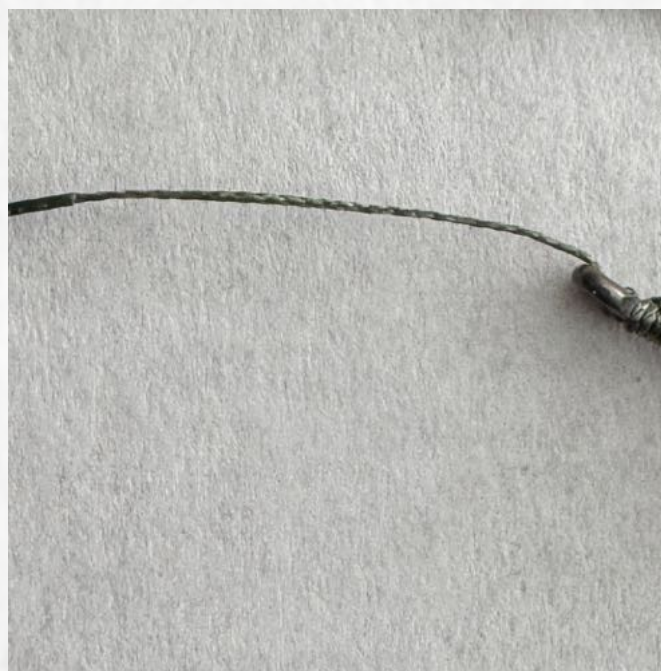
Although the outer coating is defined as stiff, it does have a some give but it is stiff enough to allow the hook to kick away from the lead should the rig be picked up and ejected or disturbed by fish swimming over it.

The coating, as with all KATRAN Coated Hook Links, can be stripped easily and in the case of GURZA once stripped, it reveals a very soft Inner Braid...

...which is perfect to create a 'supple' section above the hook, to allow for a faster movement of the hook and bait, should a carp become interested. I prefer to use a stripped section of around 2.5cm...!

This supple section allows a similar presentation to a 'Combi-Rig' and matched with a Wafter, the bait can move as naturally as possible. The reason I do not use a Combi-Rig in the weed is due to the fact the 'Stiff Boom' section can end up "upright" in the weed and the presentation of the rig is then compromised...much better to use a Stiff Coated Braid... and GURZA is the perfect choice...!!!

To counter any potential of a tangle on the cast, I use a couple of PVA





Nuggets (Castaway PVA of course) on the Hook and tend to 'feather the line' as it hits the water... although if I am fishing to a specific distance, hitting the clip will also send the Hook Link forward and away from the lead etc.

...the stiffness of the GURZA is enough to stop the Hook Link "crumpling" on itself when the lead hits the bottom and allow it to straighten out and settle on or just into the weed.

Fishing in weed can be a bit daunting, but give it a go and you may be surprised by the results, just remember that you may need to up your Main Line game too with something with a larger diameter and more abrasion resistance and fortunately, KATRAN have plenty of options for that too... I would recommend Synapse 'Wild Carp' 20.5lb with a diameter of .365mm... it is perfect for weedy and snaggy waters...!







# Embrace The Outdoors

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APEarel Dropback Winter Clothing Range  
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*Pete Atherton*  
*'The Return to Carping'*





Hi all, I'm Pete Atherton- 47 years old. September 2023, my fishing partner (& brother-in-law Pete Davies -68) and I embarked on our final trip of the year to Elsons Lake on Stanwick Lakes complex, for three nights - It was a rush booking as I was to have an operation to remove my Prostate as cancer had been detected. We have been fishing Elsons lake regularly since 2015/16 ( I say regularly, we only get out maybe 4 or 5 times a year due to work and family commitment) it seemed logical to concentrate on one lake with the



limited fishing time we had, I had talked Pete into joining me on the complex back then as he was more a canal/river coarse fisherman, he happily fished the carpark lake on the complex (tench, roach, bream and smaller carp), then would bivvy up with me overnight and would go again the carpark lake and fish in the day. It wasn't long before he asked to fish along with me (he had started to get the bug and buzz of the potential of a big Nene valley carp from Elsons lake). Elsons is a tricky water, quite weedy and gin clear steeped in history, these carp have seen every trick in the book, the saying is 'if you have one every other session then you have done well'.

I'd fished Elsons previously and if memory serves me correctly it had taken collectively about 10 nights for me to land my first prize. It took Pete a bit longer, Elsons is the first lake he cut his carp teeth on, and I kept saying 'mate you're learning the art of carp fishing on one of the hardest day ticket waters, don't get despondent it will come together'. I remember having a go on Mallard Lake on the complex where Pete landed a 20 plus and a 16 on that trip, which gave him the buzz to persevere to snare an elusive





Elsons carp.

Both of us had had cancer treatment last year (2023)- Pete had nodules removed from his lungs and had been given all clear. I had been diagnosed with Prostate Cancer, and as I said previous, when I found out the date for the op we booked one final hurrah at getting a proper one for Pete, as he had only managed a couple of mid-teens from there, but was aching

to get a 20 plus, I too would have loved to see one over the net cord before I embarked on the unknown post op recovery. We booked two nights mid-September. If I am honest, I just wanted to get away and settle my mind, having stayed strong for my family, wife Nik and kids Sofia (12) and Evan (3) at the time. The past two and half months had been a blur, I met a mate who I had not seen for a few years and he had had his prostate out, told me to go and get a finger up your Jacksy given your age- I'd had a blood test for yearly cholesterol check the week previous, and when the call came the following week to see the doctor (routine) I asked for a prostate exam, I explained that I had had no symptoms but I had met a friend who had had prostate cancer and was booked in. On the day I visited the doctor, he asked the same (had I had any symptoms etc) and I explained I had just met a friend and I just wanted checking. An uncomfortable couple of seconds that seemed like a lot longer and the doctor said it felt fine and we proceeded to talk about the blood test result. During that he noticed my PSA level was a bit high for my age but not worry as I had no symptoms but did book me in for an MRI scan in the July, the scan



showed something up and although the consultant was unsure, he arranged a biopsy in the August which confirmed it was cancer. Looking back, I am so glad that I asked to have the check, so glad the doctor sent me for an MRI, the consultant said it was nothing short of a miracle regarding the situation leading up to it and (meeting my friend and acting on his advice when I didn't need to).

I digress, the trip pre-op-September 2023- Pete needs a proper Elsons carp, I'd be grateful for one but just wanted/needed that bank time for my own head space. We had a look round and set up on toilet bank after head



bailiff and fishery manager Phil Dunne had advised us plenty of fish were down that end and that it had been fishing well that week. We went about setting up and both found our spots with all rods under 10 wraps. While setting up my third rod I saw Pete's line glide across the lake then a few curse words- he'd lost one- he set it felt good too, gutted. Elsons doesn't give its gems up easily- was that the only chance gone? It could easily have been the only chance we would get. Evening soon came it was glorious sunny September evening and whilst we were sat at Pete's bivvy cooking up our tea with a cup of wine, Pete's alarm suddenly burst into life and in the blink of an eye he was over the stove and at





his rods bent into a Elsons carp. I don't know who was more excited, I'd stripped down to my boxers and was in the lake ready to net, and after a merry dance, he'd landed his first Elsons 20- a 22lb mirror. Both of us were ecstatic- Pete was a bit shellshocked and it took a little time for it to sink in, we enjoyed our grub that night and I went to bed so glad that he had finally done it, just because I didn't know when we would get the opportunity to go again after the op. I woke at midnight to a screaming Delkim and as I stood in the lake in my boxers, bare foot, I could feel my heart in my head as I donned battle and remember saying into the rod 'please, please don't come off' and let out a big 'YEESSSS' as it

headed over to cord to the spreader block of my net a 24lb common. The perfect final session pre op! Pete had had his proper one and I had managed to nail one too! this had never happened before, and the journey home was over in what seemed like 5 minutes. We were both buzzing it was brilliant. I'd say I was aiming for May/June to get back bank side again I'd listen to info the consultant had said and done research and that it was going to be a long old road but hoped that, because I'd got age on my side, I'd be good to go May/June. A sore few months passed, recovery went well, with support from family and especially my wife





Nik- I love you so much- she was my angel during those months. I'd had the op at the end of September and returned to work the last week of November (luckily id received full sick pay), after getting December and those first few weeks back at work out the way I started working out in my garage on a weight bench, I had to watch what exercises I carried out and was limited in what I could do- basic dumbbells and bar bell work and started building my strength.

Early march I rang Pete and told him I'd booked us 3 nights early April on Elsons (a month and a half earlier than anticipated) we were buzzing.

## The Return

After a few trips to the tackle shop and an afternoon tying rigs, we were soon on the road heading for Stanwick lakes fishery. That buzz you get on the way!, the anticipation and excitement of what might be was electric and it felt good to pull into the carpark and see the friendly faces of Phil and Ewan,

who gave us some info on the lake and off we went for a look around - we saw- NOTHING ( mainly due to visibility that was 2-3 ft due to the high winds and rain of late). We'd both had the preconception of going in the upper double peg, as it had been good to us the previous years in April, I'd had couple including a mega looking 25lb mirror and Pete had had a couple of mid doubles, but we just didn't fancy it. I took a look round the opposite bank, which is non fishing on that half of the lake and had found a carp cradle in the edge which had been blown in from the high winds at the weekend (I told Phil but no one had reported loosing one so finders keepers) opposite a peg called 'snags' which I'd done well on in previous years including a fish





called 'baby Dave' in 2019 at 36lb 8oz which is still my PB to the this day, and that's all I had to go on. Pete seemed to be magnetised to the point swim and as the previous weeks fish had mainly come from the bowl end of the lake, not a bad choice. We had fished the pegs on previous sessions so were familiar with the spots and quickly went about having a little led around, Pete making sure it was still clear close in around 6 and a half wraps on all 3 rods. I opted for to go long on all 3 of mine (17 wraps) which would put me about 1 and a half rod lengths off the far bank in around 8 ft of water. I had decent drops on

the left and the right-hand spots, but the middle rod went down with a real crack- pretty rare on Elsons! it was down the side of a willow, and I was almost sure I was getting a bite off that.

I fired a marker float out and walked round the other side to scoop in some bait over the left hand and middle rods opting to the leave the right-hand rod as a high vis single. Left hand rod- sticky manilla white pop up over chopped boilies, pellet and manilla glug.

Middle rod- cc more pacific tuna pop up, chopped boilies and pellet and tuna glug.

And threw in around 30 boilies over a dinner table size spread, over the left and middle rods. Then I put three medium spombs over each just to ensure I had bait at that distance.

The right-hand rod went out first cast, brilliant, middle rod took two attempts, excellent, but the 3rd I'd lined up and baited at a tree trunk. That one took 8 casts to get it spot on where I was happy (I'd had good drops to left but wanted it in line with the tree because that it where I had baited).

The evening soon came around as it does on those first days, we had chosen to cook ourselves steak, roast potatoes in a shallot





and mushrooms red wine sauce- it went down a treat, both of us could hardly move after and we called it a day shortly after cleaning up.

I woke around 2:30am to a couple of bleeps, then at just after 3, the left hand rod tore off, it felt good to feel that weight in the arm during the fight again and to be fair I kept it all pretty under control, until near the end, when the fish went over the other lines close in (this woke Pete) who turned up just to see me scoop the net under what turned out to be a 32lb and ounces common - absolutely mega!!! - first trip after the op/7 months out, and I had bagged a 30!!! I decided to whack it in the slammer until daybreak to get



pics. What a fish to get back into it with!!! And although we only had our phones to take the pics Pete managed to get a great, what I think is retro 80s angling times style pic of me hoisting the fish up on angle, I couldn't believe it, a first night capture.

The next day came and went I'll be honest I felt wiped out from the previous day lugging all the gear round the lake, setting up and a nighttime bite had taken its toll (fatigue is a side effect of what I have had done). Also, big winds of up to 58pmh, large branches falling off trees wiping out lines, getting the rods out was nigh on impossible, I was casting to the left of my left-hand rod, and it was landing on the right hand spot. I was waiting for breaks in the gusts and having five casts to try and hit the spot and then waiting again. Whilst doing the left hand rod, it landed dead on the middle spot and went down with the crack I'd felt the day before, so that was now the middle rod with manilla, and therefore the left hand rod became the pacific tuna, I kept the 'bait up' the same as the previous day (scooping in the same mix over each spot), I just didn't spomb, due to the big winds. Pete had lost one that afternoon, early in the take his line had



snapped which we thought it may have just been an imperfection in the line, however hearing that and angler had caught a pike on boilie, it could easily have been one of them.

Bed early that night, due to feeling knackered, glad I did as at 00:10 the left hand delk warbled and I was in again, same spot different hook bait. I had to have 10 mins after netting the fish as I felt a bit wobbly but pulled myself together awoke Pete to do the pics (night pics on the phone ain't the best) a 27lb common- two Elsons carp in one session I was counting my lucky stars. As we were doing the last pic, from the next peg, Petes alarms burst into life, he legged it and I sorted getting mine back safely and got to Pete just in time to land it 'YEESSSS'. A common, I could tell it was a 20 - we had done it – AGAIN!!!. The scales went round to 23, Petes personal best, we couldn't believe what had just happened, with one night remaining! Pete really wanted to get an upper 20 next and it just might happen.

The final full day passed I decided to reposition the middle and right-hand rods as they had had no action. That afternoon I heard swearing from Petes peg- he'd

lost one to a hook pull, that could have been the one he was after. He jokingly said it was 'tatty the biggest fish in the lake'. Damn.

We treated ourselves to a takeaway that final night, which came and went, the only fish landed by Pete, was on my rod (nature called) and was a pike!

We said our goodbyes to some fine gents who we met on the trip, most who you meet on Elsons are absolute belter guys, it has that syndicate feel to it, but is a day ticket water (you have to book). Phil and Ewan were made up for us especially knowing what we had been through the last year. Again, the trip home just seemed like it took five minutes, that buzz led to nonstop rattle on the way back and it felt good!!!

Any of you who are over 45 get to the doctors and ask for a PSA blood test- I'm glad I did. You just might save your future self.

All caught using:

Greys rods, Shimano reals, ESP synchro 15lb main line, Korda safe zone hybrid leaders, 3oz leads, Korda IQ2 20lb hook link tied to size 4 barbless Korda Kurv spinner hooks.

Tight lines guys, Pete Atherton.





# Reviews

*Featuring -*

**The Nomads Kitchen Briefcase Barbeque -  
Anthony Wood**



# **The Nomads Kitchen Briefcase Barbeque**



**By Anthony Wood**



The Nomads Kitchen is a company that I always keep an eye on ever since I found their camp kitchen set which is a brilliant idea and great bit of kit.

I had been looking at the mini briefcase barbeques for a while but the quality vastly varied and some of them were absolutely awful.

Then I saw TheNomadsKitchen had released their own briefcase barbeque. Admittedly it was a bit more expensive than most of the other ones that I had seen (only by £5-£10), the price didn't really bother me though as I knew that as a brand TheNomadsKitchen would only use the best quality that they could find.

When the barbeque arrived, I instantly knew that I had made the right decision. The metal was thicker than the cheaper ones that I had looked at and the legs were much sturdier and better made.

It did come with instructions but in all honesty, the instructions weren't really needed as it was a simple case of fold the legs out until they







touched the supports, undo the clasp and open the barbeque, remove the internal silver part of the barbeque, and push down the two support parts either end of the main body.

As you put the silver part back in it will extend down into a larger container for the charcoal and rests nicely on the top of the main body. The grill plate has some handles that allow you to move the grill plate up and away from the heat if you require a slightly less direct heat.

I liked that the charcoal holder was deep enough so that the food you were cooking was far enough away from the coals to be able to cook at a sensible speed and not burn, unlike disposable barbeques which not only cook too fast but quite often burn the food.

It is a nice and compact barbeque that will nicely hold a couple of one-to-one-and-a-half-pound trout, four beefburgers, eight sausages or king prawns to give you an idea of its capacity.

Fuel wise I went with a brand that I have used before and that is Big K.





Their products follow strict sustainability guidelines right from sourcing to manufacture and they are FSC® certificated. I normally use their bigger bags but the 1kg Instant Light Lumpwood Charcoal bags are absolutely perfect for TheNomadsKitchen briefcase barbeque.

I was ready to get barbequing so I lit the corners of the instant light lumpwood charcoal bags and waited twenty minutes for the charcoal to reach cooking temperature. The bag will give you approximately one hour of cooking time which is normally plenty of time and you aren't waiting around for hours afterwards for the charcoal or briquettes to cool down.

The barbeque performed amazingly, there was no warping and was easy enough to empty out and wipe clean (obviously there are burn marks) and all in all, I am extremely impressed with the size weight and performance of another great product from TheNomadsKitchen.

You can find it on their website <https://thenomadskitchens.com/products/bbq-briefcase>





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# Lee Caunter



Strawberry Fields lakes.

New pb grass carp 35lb 4oz

First time at strawberry fields very hard water . I managed to land 2 fish and lost one as I was sorting out the grassy, had my right hander go off. It was on for minute or so, but unfortunately hook pulled. This was caught on D rig snowman style using Iconics white banoffee popup with a sticky baits frozen krill boillie

It was a session to remember, as I fishing with some good lads who I finally got to meet in person... and hopefully many more to come.





Blake Bradley



Chris King



Chris Ridout



Darren aka 'The morning carper'





Freddie Gunn



Geoffrey Vantomme



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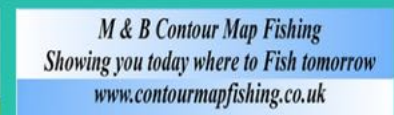
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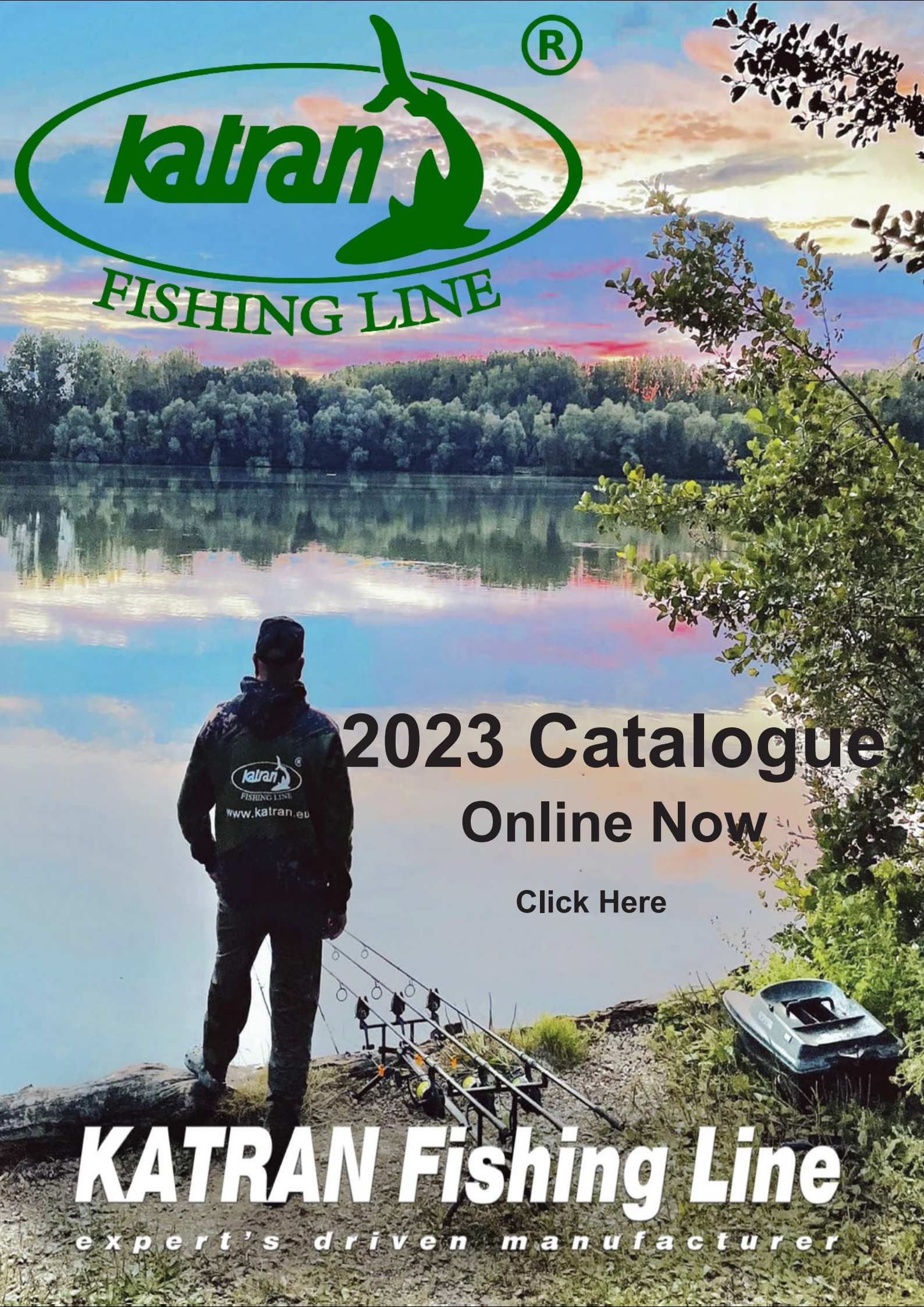


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Throughout covid we like every other lake in France struggled but survived moving guests to the following years at our own expense and are pleased with the outcome, year after year our returning guests return complimenting us on how the establishment has improved over the years since we took over.

This year the lake now has a full time Bailiff who is an excellent cook, two freshly cooked hot meals a day with baguettes at lunchtime delivered to the bankside has received very positive feedback, as has the covered pool table and charcoal BBQ which has enabled groups to socialize in the evenings.

As for the fishing during covid weed did appear and eventually got the better of us, thanks to Ben at Gills & Scales and his incredible specialist weed removal boat the weed with roots was successfully removed last September, some weed is inevitable but we now know who to call sooner rather than later should it re appear!

The current lake record is **64.5 lbs** this incredible fish has not been out for eighteen months, there are now multiple fish in there mid 50's, at the time of writing this groups are currently hooking out nineteen fish a week, people wish they could stay and several groups did last year when the following week from theirs was un sold.

This years plan is to completely re-roof and floor the lakeside house eating area and in the winter of 23/24 install electric power points around the lake and net the lake to reduce bio mass.

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