

Try Something DIFFERENT

Follow **Jon Arthur** through a session as he tackles a lake that he has never fished before.

I have fished the impressive main lake at Barton reservoir since because it's a huge 124-peg water that holds some really prestigious events in the match calendar. It's the place where I was crowned UK Champion again last year, so that's something I will never forget. Even without that experience it's always a nice feeling driving down the long lane to the venue, crossing the River Blythe, going through the golf iron gates, past the solar panels and ponds and then pulling up in the restaurant car park full of anticipation for the prospect ahead. There's also another nice landmark that I'm sure every angler must glance at seconds after crossing the river and that's the little lake on the left-hand side. It's called Daisy's Lake. It's a much more modest 18-peg pond dotted with reeds and lilies, plus four little islands down the middle. I've always wondered what's restraining about in this little lake but I've never had a chance to fish it... until now!

CORNER PEG

When the editor asked me to have a go on this lake I jumped at the chance. Who doesn't like fishing a new water for the first time? I did a quick circuit of the lake to pick where to fish. There were no obvious signs of fish on the top or nocking down the edges but I could already see a couple of anglers playing fish at the roadside end. Being me, however, I had no hesitation in heading straight for the opposite corner. I've been called

ANGLER FILE

JON ARTHUR
Age: 40 (Pole 64)
User: Calrod
Sponsor: Drennan
Pole: Drennan Acrylic Carp

VENUE FILE

DAISY'S LAKE
Location: Barton Lakes, North Hove
Form: 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18
Day tickets: £8.50, concessions: £5.50
Contact: 01273 444600
Web: www.bartonlakes.co.uk



Several good slimmers like this also nocked in on the net.

End Peg Arthur ever since I was a club angler, but it's been like ages since I drew one of these hallowed pegs! There was none to no wind and the only seam on the surface had collected nearer the roadside pegs, but this area still looked like it should be worth a few fish.

The island was well beyond pole reach but there was a nice, long margin to my right, plus a fishy-looking clump of reeds on my left around four metres down the bank. The longer margin was definitely going to be my main target but a lot of people don't seem to realise that you can often catch fishing the opposite way as well, so this shorter swim was not to be ignored. I could feed this spot by hand and hoped to see the reed stems swaying if the fish arrived here.

Because it was to be a short session, my plan was to keep things really simple and target these two margins most of the day. However, by swinging the pole out into the open water I could also use the same margin rigs to try up in the water if the fish could be unspooled. It was a simple throwaway line that may or may not work on the day.

WHAT BAIT?

The obvious bait I would advise anyone to carry on a lake they have never fished before has to be pellets. This is the safest option for a good day and should catch you a few carp whenever the time of year. However, me being me, I wanted to do something a bit different this time. So, there wasn't a single pellet on my side tray!

Instead, I had a couple of pints of fresh caster, plus live and dead maggots for the hook and leftover cubes of red-dyed mace from a recent match.

Apart from the fact that it's nice to do something different, I'd noticed a load of frogspawn in my pond at the weekend. That's a sure-fire sign that other life forms are getting ready to spawn, if they hadn't already. When this happens casters can really begin to work well. Quality fish love crunching casters and they make a lovely fish-attracting noise

BANDING CASTERS



The Pin Drennan Bait Band hooks a caster perfectly.

You can simply slide them into the band without breaking the shell.



Jon loves feeding his sloppy groundbait porridge for carp and F1s.

on the water as well. I also don't think they see as filling as pellets, so you can be more aggressive with the feed without overfilling the fish. Given the choice between loose feeding bait and frugally kinder-ponging a few metres and it's the easy every time for me! I doubt these fish had seen many casters but that didn't worry me. All species love casters, so it's a good choice for filling me exactly what's swimming about.

SHRLE SLOP

One other item on my side tray is a tub of sloppy groundbait. The main bit will be loose-fed casters and these will spread over a couple of metres, so the groundbait helps to create more of a focus area.

The mix is about a quarter of a bag of Sonubaits Crushed Expander mixed up to a really sloppy porridge. I only really need a couple of pints but I forget just how much this stuff swells!

Groundbait is great for feeding down the margins because it gets the fish grabbing around. Being sloppy makes it clod quite nicely too. I don't want the fish preoccupied on the bank, however, so I'm only fishing half a 250ml pot at the start and a very occasional smaller top-up if I feel the swim needs it. The shorter left-hand swim will also be fed with an occasional sloppy corn-based ball thrown in by hand.

RIGGING UP

My main rig for my 20m margin swim is a really six-and-a-half-metre setup, consisting of a 0.3g Drennan A54 float on 0.18mm Supplex main line. With standard reds and orange-looking breambles that the fish could plough through you need strong and reliable line, plus a float that won't fall apart.

The hooklength is 0.15mm to a size 18 Carp Hair Riggers hook. In fact, it's actually a Drennan Carp Banker hook to nylon. **30**