

# **My English style carpin set-up.**

**By Rob Perkins.**

Where do I start, well, the set up that I use is undergoing a transformation at the moment. I am currently upgrading various items at present, either due to their unsuitability for the job or because there are other items that are higher up in the market place that do the job better and therefore make my life a damn sight easier. What I shall do is run through the items of kit I have, and if they are to be replaced I shall explain what with and why, this will therefore give anyone wishing to travel down this road a better insight into the more appropriate items for their own use.



## RODS

I could start at the very beginning with my terminal tackle and mainlines, but this is a subject in its own right, and a very big one too. Anyway, as for the rods, I am currently using a pair of 12' FOX Warriors in a 2.75lb test curve rating, these are Fox's cheapest rod but are by no means a rubbish rod and are suitable for casts of around 60yds or more with a 3oz lead and a pva bag and are more than suitable for fishing for 20lb fish within this range, I shall be replacing these rods though, there are two reasons for this, the first is my demands are greater now, I am needing to put the same 3oz lead and pva bag out at over 100yds and even though the rods managed this comfortably, by doing this regularly with these rods over the past year they have softened up and are not even hitting 70yds accurately any more. The second is that I am no longer chasing low 20lb fish, I hooked into an extremely powerful fish this summer gone and could do nothing with it as I just didn't have the power in the butt section to command the fish, it commanded me, not a good feeling. I am therefore looking to upgrade to a 3.5lb t.c. rod, I have not yet decided which as there are many things to consider before buying as the stiffer the rod, the less forgiving the tip is on some models, you could say that the more you spend on a rod the better the rod performs on the tip. Once acquired though I shall be able to put my bait at around 150yds with practice and will have enough power in the butt section to deal with some of the largest fish this country has to offer.



Fox 12' 2.75lb test rods with bait runner reels

## REELS

The ones I am using at the moment are the cheapest bait runner style reels I could get when my tackle was stolen a few years back, they are not great but have done the job, I shall not recommend them though as you can understand. I am going to upgrade these as they are showing a lot of wear and tear for their age that you would expect from a cheap reel and I don't want to be let down when I have that all important monster on. I shall still be fishing with the bait runner style reel as this allows for the fish to run with the bait without dragging my rods in, vital if you are a deep sleeper, the reels of my choice to replace them with are the Shimano bait runner 10000 xte's, Shimano make a very good reliable reel that is almost good for life. I have chosen this model for its casting capabilities, although not as good as a big pit style reel used for beach casting, it has got the bait runner facility and it can also hold over 400yds of line so there is always enough to place baits by boat at 300yds if need be and still have enough left for the fish to tear off with.

## ROD SUPPORT

This will vary depending on the lake I am fishing, some are a normal bank side, this is where I would use bank sticks, I prefer the auger point ones as these are easier to get into hard banks, this allows me to set my rods apart from each other, then for the lakes that have rock hard banks or platforms to fish from I would opt for what is known as a rod pod. This is an assembly that can support anything from 1 to 4 rods depending on the attachments known as buzzer bars that are chosen, though personally I think that any more than 2 rods on a pod is too much and I would use a separate pod for the other rods, otherwise you have too many lines running through the water very close together, if a carp picks them up you are in trouble as they will knit them all together and you will probably lose the fish too. There are loads of different pods on the market at the moment and although they all do the job and can be stood anywhere I prefer to use bank sticks where I can, therefore my choice of pod is one that is a frame that holds my bank sticks, this then allows me to fish my single bank sticks and then if I cannot get them in the ground or I am fishing a platform then I just attach them to the frame and they are free standing, you can also use buzzer bars on single bank sticks, this allows you to use a single front and rear bank stick with more than one rod, also available are goal post converters, named because the set up uses two front and two rear bank sticks and there is a bar that joins the front two together and one that joins the back two together making them look like soccer goals, these also can support 2-4 rods and don't twist if one of the rods gets a take.



My current single bank stick set up



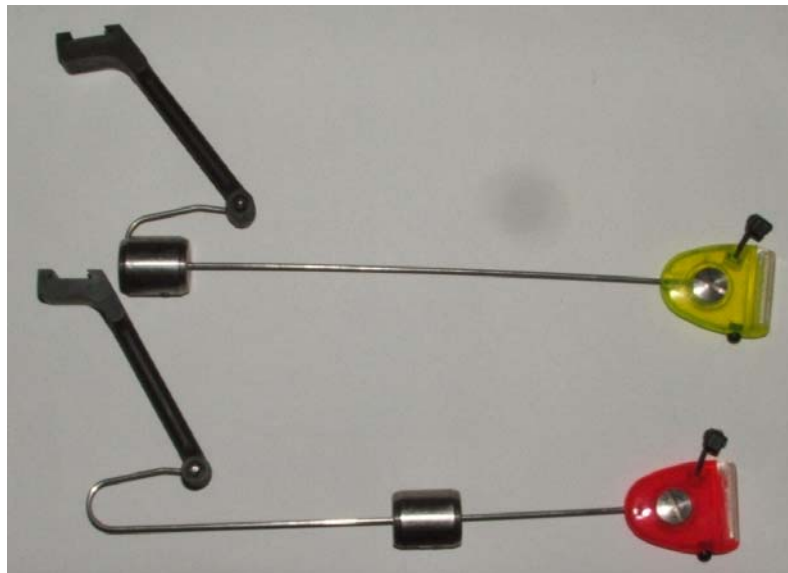
Solar tackle rod pod set up for 3-rods

## BITE INDICATION

I have some good gripping rear rests on the back bank sticks/buzzer bar and on the front I have got a pair of FOX 'm' bite alarms, this is Fox's bottom of the range alarm and their features are as follows. They have a two magnet roller wheel sensor, red latching LED, adjustable volume, on/off button and an extension box socket. These are a great little bite alarm and very reliable and have served me well for over 3 years now and have took the best that the British weather can throw at me, though the roller wheel does have a habit of freezing up in frost but I quickly remedied this with a tiny squirt off wd40, there is a bit of a debate about this stuff damaging line and other stuff but I have never had any issues with it and I have done this for many years now, if you are unsure though then a few food environment silicon sprays are available which may do the job but I'm not certain about this as I have never found the need to not use wd40. I am going to replace these alarms though but not because they are bad and can't do the job, I shall give them to my son to use, it is because there are features on their higher model the 'mmxr' that will make my life easier, the extra features that this model has are as follows. Choice of red,yellow,green,blue or purple LED's, this makes it easier to determine which rod has the take, four magnet roller wheel with adjustable sensitivity to detect those more timid bites, adjustable tone which helps you to audibly tell which rod has the take, also it has a power out socket to allow the use of illuminated bobbins which will light when the alarm sounds, the LED's and the bobbins on this model also tell you if the fish is running away from you by lighting constantly or if it is running towards you by flashing, therefore you know whether to take up the slack before striking. The main feature that this alarm possesses is the remote receiver, at present I am using an extension box, this is a box with a speaker and four LED's, red,yellow,green and blue and a socket corresponding to each LED, you then have leads that links an alarm to each socket and when the alarm sounds the box does too and the corresponding LED also lights. Anyway, back to the 'mmxr' receiver, each alarm has a transmitter built into it which signals the receiver, so when you get a take, you could be chatting to your mate 30yds down the lake and still hear your alarms if you have the receiver on you, I think it has a range of over 100yds, this would be of great benefit to me as being a bailiff I have had to reel my rods in while fish were feeding on my bait to go and check tickets, this will save me having to do that, instead I can take my receiver with me and run like hell if I get a take, it also saves the need for using my extension box which involves finding a safe way of routing 20 meters of cables, and due to the length of some platforms I cant always put it inside my bivvy where I want it.



Fox 'm' alarms, bobbin and line clip arrangement



Fox swingers with sliding weight to adjust line tension

Now for the hangers, there are two different types, the bobbin and the swinger, I prefer the bobbin as they are easier to pack away, my current bobbins are vary small and light weight, I find this best because you can attach extra weight to it if necessary, the lighter the bobbin is you can fish slack lines so it is laying flat on the deck near the terminal tackle, and if the fish come into contact with it it's less likely to spook them than if it was bow string tight. I do carry a set of swingers with me as these are better in high winds as they don't sway and give false indication due to the fact they are mounted on a bar. All bobbins and swingers have a slot for an isotope/betalite or starlite so you can see movement in the dark, you can even get illuminated bobbins and swingers compatible with certain makes of alarm, these are a great advantage in seeing which rod has the take as well as showing a drop-back (when the fish is running towards you with the bait.) run by flashing, or a forward run by staying lit. Along with the set up I will also place a line clip on my rod as when the line is clipped into it I feel that the sensitivity of the set up is increased for slack line fishing.

## Fish care

This is probably one of the most important parts of my fishing and always will be, when fishing for uncaught monsters I want to return them as close to the condition they were in if I am lucky enough to catch one, to let them live to grow on and to fight another day. Let's start with my landing net as this is an item that I urgently need to replace, I currently have a Diawa 42" hex mesh triangular specimen net, the net needs replacing as the base of the net is large mesh and when lifting a fish out in the net the bony part of the anal fin pokes through the mesh and tears the fin, so I am replacing it with a net that has a sack base, the net of my choice shall be a Fox 42" folding net, the folding arms allow me to release the tension off the arms and draw cord when I unlock them to allow me to remove the handle and roll the top off the net over a few turns to make it easier to carry a large fish to the unhooking mat. The unhooking mat as the name suggests is a protective mat to lay the fish on while doing any thing with it out of the water, mine is filled with polystyrene beads which the fish settles in once placed on it, you can then fold the other side over the fish and use the snap buckles to retain the fish and stop it from thrashing around. In the pocket on the mat I keep any items I want close to hand when dealing with the fish, these are a weighing sling, this is made from a light fabric that is easier to zero on the scales, also a carp retaining sack, this is a very fine porous material bag with a zip on and a long cord on it so the fish can be retained for enough time to sort out a mate to take photos, I also have a pair of forceps and some carp antiseptic to treat the hook wound and any damage the fish has received. In my tackle bag I carry a good set of scales too, they are Nash tackle 70lb, 2oz division stainless steel backlit scales and they have a good beefy handle on them for heavy fish.



Nash tackle beanie mat



Nash stainless steel nitelite scales

## Shelter

At the moment I have got a 60" oval umbrella called the Big Z, with a removable pole and zip in front panel made in England by a company called Trakker, there is a ground sheet available for it but I prefer not to have it. This is a very good and very robust broly and I have been abusing it for over 3 years now, I have packed it away wet and never washed it and it still shows no sign of letting me down in the near future, I shall be replacing this though due to the condensation suffered in the colder nights and long sessions that I am doing more of these days, I chose to replace it with one of Trakkers top selling bivvy's, the Armadillo, combined with the extended winter wrap this is probably the country's best twin skin bivvy set up and is virtually condensation free, I shall get the 2-man version so I have the extra room for myself and I can take my son or the missus with me, or if a mate wants to fish with me it saves setting up 2 bivvy's. Inside the broly I have a 2-leg bedchair which is getting old and due for replacement soon, I shall be getting the JRC Terry Hearn cocoon 3-leg bedchair due to it being very wide, comfy and light too. At present I have got a four season sleeping bag made by Trakker with a Nash fleece lined waterproof cover, on long winter sessions I shall place this under my bag as this prevents condensation on the bottom of the bag and I just wear more clothes to keep warm. I shall be replacing the sleeping bag for trakker's 5-season bag and I shall get another waterproof sleeping bag cover so I can have one on the top and one on the bottom, very snug. I then will have my tackle bag in the back of the broly behind my bedchair, my cooking kit and cool bag are at the foot of my bed with a Coleman sportster petrol stove and my water carrier. My bait buckets are at the head end doubling up as tables, one bucket for any bait and in the other I have a quantity of mixed size pellets, lots of different pop-up and bottom baits all soaking in flavours, baiting tools and pva bags and pva mesh tubing, this is great stuff, it melts on contact with water, you fill a bag, or fill and tie off a mesh bag with the mixed pellet, attach it to the hook and cast it out, after 20-30 seconds the bag bursts and dissolves leaving a small pile of pellet with your hookbait, devastating, I have the stuff on me everywhere I fish.



Trakker Big Z 60" oval broly with zip in front panel



Trakker Armadillo with extended winter wrap



Water soluble pva mesh and pva bags



Bedchair folded up with sleeping bag



Bedchair set up with sleeping bag and the waterproof cover over the top

### Luggage

My tackle bag is a large capacity carryall with four pockets, two on the front and one each end, this shall be replaced with a Free Spirit framed carryall, this has an internal frame with adjustable feet and it has a metal top that serves as a table, one side of the bag falls open allowing access to the main compartment with out disturbing the table. In my tackle bag I carry numerous things that I need such as my end tackle pouch, spare leads, camera, scales, clothing and what I would consider my essential items such as my head torch, Polaroid glasses, full brimmed hat to shade glasses, binoculars to look for signs of fish movement or feeding activity elsewhere on the lake. I then have a small cool bag which I carry my stove, pans, kettle, cutlery and tinned and other various foods. For my rods, bank sticks, landing net, pegs and my shelter I have what is known as a quiver, this can hold 5 made up rods and the shelter goes in the main compartment, all the bank sticks and the landing net go into a tool roll which secures with snap buckle straps covering the purpose made peg pocket. Then to top all of this off I have got a folding barrow made by Nash tackle, this is a frame with two wheels on the front and is essentially a wheelbarrow with out the bucket and designed for the purpose of transporting tackle around lakes, so unless I am doing a 48hr+ session where I take more food, water, 12v car battery to charge phone etc, I can take it all in one load to the swim I am fishing. Eventually I shall replace this with a single wheel version as two wheels are a major struggle on very uneven terrain as they tend to steer the barrow for you, I have lost count of the times I have just stopped it from rolling or going in the water, other than that it does a grand job.



End tackle pouch contains hooks, line, leads etc



What I consider essential for me to fish effectively



Nash tackle Space Shuttle 5 rod quiver



This bag carries absolutely everything I could need for short sessions



Folding Nash twin wheeled carp barrow

Well that pretty much sums it all up and that is pretty much every thing I would carry when fishing for carp overnight, this is probably the general type of kit you could expect to see on the banks of lakes and rivers the length and breadth of the country, if you choose to try your hand at getting this kit and giving it a bash then I hope my insane rambling has helped in any way.