



We Catch Them In Our Sleep

It was a filthy day. Pouring rain, 60mph winds and The Royalty was bursting its banks.

I had a stinking cold. But we of The Barbel Society are made of strong stuff and I did not want to lose the deposit I had paid on the B&B.

We experienced barbel specialists know just how important it is to select the right swim. I remember Fred Crouch saying at one of our Barbel Society meetings 'it is best to select a swim that has some fish in it.' I have never forgotten this wise advice from Crouchy. I considered all the relevant factors – temperature, wind direction etc. for several seconds and decided to fish Home Pool because it was closest to the car park and toilets. 'Time to start fishing' as Mr Crabtree often said to Bobby.

For the technically minded, I would like to explain my set up. I call it the XYZ Super Sinking Rig and, believe me, it produces results. I use a rod - black with rings on. A reel with a line on it. Finally I add a ledger weight and a hook. I always use Kamikaze Super-Shankless. They are really cheap.

Bait selection is also so important. Was it Steve Pope who said 'Using bait improves your chances of catching a fish.'? Well said Popey. I chose luncheon meat (Co-op 67p large tin) because I had some left from my previous outing.

I cast with precision into the raging torrent and the bait was immediately swept into the margins. Good spot. Before I settled down to concentrate on bites, it was time for the yellow bladder pill (Alpha Blocker – can cause drowsiness, impotence, unusual hair growth. Do not operate machinery or take with Beta

successfully, I became painfully aware that the bladder pill was not functioning as well as expected. I hurried across the car park toward the facilities and nearly got there in time.

Out with the luncheon meat again and time for the brown heart capsule. (Beta Blocker – can cause drowsiness, impotence, unusual hair growth. Do not operated machinery or take with Alpha Blockers or Thyroxine).

I settled down to watch the rod tip. As Peter Wheat wrote in an early B.F – 'If

thyroid pill. (Thyroxine – can cause drowsiness, impotence and unusual hair growth. Do not operate machinery. Do not take with Alpha Blockers or Beta Blockers). Settled down to concentrate ...

I awoke to find my rod butt protruding from Home Pool. Like a panther I leapt forward and made contact with what felt like a slow moving sack of potatoes. Fortunately I remember Bob Wilson's advice, 'If you hook a fish, pull it towards the bank, ho ho he he !' Well put Willy. With great skill and tenacity I played what I though was probably an eel/ weed cocktail. But no, a huge fish came into view and co-operatively flopped into the landing net held by my downstream neighbour. A gentleman with a forgiving nature. The barbel weighed 13lb 8oz and was a B.P as they say in B.F. We were photographed, I smiled, and she was safely returned.

Must run, don't bother, too late again.

Luncheon meat, yellow bladder pill, brown heart capsule, white thyroid pill....

I awoke surrounded by a deputation of Andy the bailiff, Alan the previous bailiff, the gent from Davis Tackle (Established 1945. Wide range of centre pins always in stock) and several observers of lower rank. I was duly reprimanded for not calling them, not using their scales and camera and for releasing the fish before verification by officialdom.

Must go, oh dear, should have gone earlier, never mind, great day.

"I became painfully aware that the bladder pill was not functioning as well as expected"

Blockers or Thyroxine).

I awoke with a start. My rod had been pulled from its rod rest – or bank stick as John Found said in the B.F. (Barbel Fisher Magazine). 'Use a bank stick to stop your rod falling into the water.' he said. Good one Foundy. Anyway, back to the important bit. I sprang forward like a greyhound from a trap and reclaimed my rod. I could feel a really heavy weight staying deep in the water. It had already ploughed over 50 yards (45.72 metres) downstream and I had to pump hard to regain line. Fortunately my 30lb Fireline braid held (Walmart £9.99) and I managed to drag a huge clump of weed through the swim and tackle of the angler in the next swim. Sorry.

Having landed the weed

your rod tip moves you may have a bite from a fish! Pearls of wisdom Wheaty...

I was awoken by the baitrunner screaming. Most of my line had been taken and the rod tip was bucking madly. I leapt into action like a coiled spring. I grabbed my rod and wound that handle thing on the side of the reel. She fought long and hard but I was a match for her. My 3lb test curve carbon rod (Badger £24.99) took the strain and a large eel came splashing across the surface of the downstream angler's swim. Sorry. I think he was a bit cross because he had blonked and I was bagging in.

Never mind, must rush, too late. I am not as quick as I was.

Out with the luncheon meant. Time for the white

