

ANGLER PROFILE LEWIS CLAYTON



Year of birth: 1981
Home town: Astbury, Cheshire.
Favourite venue: Capesthorne Top Pool.
Favourite method: Up close and personal.
Most memorable catch: First ever thirty, which happened to be off the top and just a few feet out!

An absolute corker caught from an extremely snaggy water



LEWIS HAS SPENT THE PAST FEW MONTHS ON THE EXTREMELY SNAGGY WINTERLEY POOL

SNAGFISHING

Since the start of the year I've been doing one night a week on a local water near me called Winterley Pool in Sandbach. I've been so busy with work that travelling and fishing longer sessions has just not been feasible. It's a shallow lake, only averaging four feet, so it has good cold-water form. I have enjoyed my time on Winterley and the opportunity it gave me to fish in a way I haven't done in a good few years, and that is snag fishing. For those that don't know Winterley it is extremely snaggy with pretty much every swim having options to fish to some serious snags. Fishing is only permitted from one bank and the far bank is littered with fallen trees that stretch a good way into the water.

The range I've been fishing has been 70-80 yards, so not a massive distance but far enough to have yards of stretch in your line, even when fishing locked up. Braid is not something I favour as an actual fishing line so I required a strong mono. I've used many different monos over the years but recently I've been using 15lb



Strong line is imperative when snag fishing

GR80+, which is bulletproof and has become my first choice line in varying diameters, depending on the situation I'm faced with.

What I discovered on Winterley is very much like most snaggy waters I've fished in the past that have received angling pressure for a number of years: close isn't close enough. Eighteen inches off the snags resulted in no takes, but by taking the time to clip up and mark your line exactly and literally clip the branches on the cast, bites were a regular occurrence. With the use of the Taska sticks it was a very simple task to measure exact distance to each spot I'd previously caught from, writing down the



Taska Marker Sticks are handy for clipping up with minimal disturbance

number of wraps and reference points for each swim in a little note book, it was then just a case of turning up in whichever swim and marking out the lines appropriately, without having to thrash the water to a foam in order to clip up. It is always a massive edge if you can keep disturbance down to a minimum.

One thing I did notice on Winterley is more fish are lost than landed. Baitboats are allowed and some of the places I saw rigs dropped were little short of lunacy. I do not see the point in putting fish at risk when you have perhaps 10% chance (or in some cases no chance) of landing a carp. It just

doesn't make sense to me.

The other thing when fishing any snaggy venue is it's imperative to be close to your rods. Every fish I landed at night was in bare feet; not the most comfortable situation in January and February granted, but there was no time to be putting boots on. It was bleep, out of the bag and hit it. When fishing tight to a snag at 80-odd yards, you can't give the fish an inch. There's certainly no time to unzip your door, put your boots on and find your head torch. By that point it's all over 99% of the time. Apart from a tremendous amount of good fortune, you will be pulling for a break and leaving a fish trailing a rig or, worse, tethered up.

Tactics were fairly simple. Winterley has a good stock of fish and isn't a difficult water by any stretch of the imagination. They seemed to love S-core boilies and every carp I had was on either a standard S-core bottom bait or a snowman rig, the majority falling to the combo of S-core with a Strawberry Jam pop-up.

I started off in the colder months using singles with a small bag attached, but as the weather warmed up I started sticking out a

few baits along the snags, but not into the snags. It is important in my opinion not to bait up in the snags; I want to try to draw the fish out, not give them a free and easy meal. I wanted to try and get the carp to work for the bait and hopefully get them moving about.

Rigs were nothing special, just the tried and tested, go-anywhere rig I use for the vast majority of my fishing: size 6 Gardner Incizor longshanks fished line aligner style. I've been using the Taska Tungsten line aligners for some time now as they require no kettle scenario, which can be a real edge when you're on limited time. I used

Gardner Trickster hooklinks but reasonably long, up to 18 inches on occasions, as Winterley is pretty silty in parts and I didn't want the hookbait being pulled into the silt. I think the length of hooklink is often overlooked but I feel it is extremely important depending on the circumstances and baiting pattern you have adopted for any given situation.

If any of you are fishing snaggy waters, hopefully some of this may have been of use, but wherever you fish just remember to fish in a sensible manner and don't put fish at risk. It's not how many takes you get, it's how many you land!



GARDNER® HOOKS & HOOKLINKS Competition



Gardner Tackle has got together with Carp-Talk to offer readers the chance to win more than £100-worth of Gardner hooklinks and Covert hooks each month in this free-to-enter competition.

All you have to do is report your captures to Carp-Talk in the usual way (see page 3 for details), making sure to mention any Gardner hooklinks or Covert hooks used. All such catch reports selected for inclusion in Carp-Talk will feature a Gardner logo on the photo and will be automatically entered into the competition.

The monthly winner may be selected based on good looks (of the fish!) or merit of capture (size, means of capture, etc.).

Eligible products

Gardner hooklinks • Sly Skin • Sink Skin • Chod Skin • Disruption • Vigilante HydroFlex • Subterfuge • Trip Wire • Mirage Zig Link
Gardner Covert hooks • Mugga • Long Shank Mugga • Incizor • Chod • Talon Tip • Wide Gape Talon Tip

£100-plus monthly prize fund

Four packets of Covert Mugga Hooks (sizes 4, 6, 8 & 10 - barbed or barbless)
Three packets of Covert Incizor Hooks (sizes 6, 8 & 10 - barbed or barbless)
Three packets of Covert Wide Gape Talon Tips (sizes 6, 8 & 10 - barbed or barbless)
Three packets of Covert Chod Hooks (sizes 4, 6 & 8 - barbed or barbless)
One spool of 15lb Disruption (brown)
One spool of 25lb Disruption (green)
One spool of 15lb Chod Skin
One spool of 25lb Sly Skin (green)
One spool of 15lb Sink Skin (brown)

This month's winner is David Emson, who appeared in issue 1018 with this personal best 43lb 6oz caught during an 18-hour session on Kingsmead No. 1 Lake. David's successful rigs incorporated size 6 Gardner Covert Mugga hooks and Sink Skin hooklinks.

Please call Gardner Tackle on 01483 454678 to claim your prize and let them know whether you require barbed or barbless hooks.

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just add carp!