



One of the most crucial aspects of any type of angling is the bait you use. Fishing's not much fun unless you're catching and sometimes the only thing separating the men from the boys is their choice of bait; small wonder then that there are so many bait companies out there offering you all manner of flavours, base mixes and additives. The big problem is the cost. Quality rolled baits are not cheap to buy, prices have almost doubled over the last ten years, and although most work very effectively, it does make fishing more expensive. So, unless you have a sponsorship deal, there is only one solution – Roll Your

**Own! This is not actually as difficult as it sounds; like making a good fry-up, all you really need is some simple, affordable equipment and the right ingredients. Practice makes perfect, as with anything, but it doesn't take long to learn and with the right advice and a few tips here and there, before long you could be making mouth-watering baits that no fish can refuse. We asked Jules Webb of The Carp Company, to let us in on some of the tricks of the trade. Pay attention now, it's not every day he spills the beans!**

I consider myself fortunate that, during the time I've been involved with The Carp Company, I have had the chance to discuss bait with many a like minded angler, approaching the subject from various different angles. All sorts of ideas have been kicked around over the years, some of them quite bizarre, others ingenious. We've talked about flavourings, sizes, shapes, textures, buoyancy, colours, flavour leakage... you name it, we've discussed it in our quest to produce the ultimate bait!

Rolling your own bait, nowadays, has to be one of the most underused weapons in the modern day angler's armoury. With most of us fishing on pressured day ticket and club waters we all

seem to be striving for something exceptional that will give us the edge over Mr Carp and the other anglers around us. On any lake, anywhere in the country, you won't need to walk far before you hear someone say, "so and so has had a result on this bait or that bait, so we'd all better get on it..." Doing this will work with some baits on some waters but, to be honest; with this approach you could be missing the point. By the time you get on that 'going bait', someone will have probably already had the result you were hoping for.

**"Nature learns very quickly and if a fish has just been caught on a certain flavour, ironically, there is very often less chance of a repeat catch on that same bait. My advice is, don't follow the crowd. Do your own thing, think about your bait."**

There are so many ways to individualise a bait to give you a massive edge that will have you leading the way rather than playing catch up. Here are my suggestions:

Check out all the different ingredients out there in the shops. Depending on how much time and effort you want to spend, you can either make your





own base mix from the individual ingredients (such as milk proteins, bird foods, fish meals, binding agents, etc.) or you might prefer to buy a high quality, ready made base mix. Have a good look around at what base mixes are available in the

shops - you need one that is going to be easy to roll, nutritional and attractive to the fish. For 90% of my fishing I use one of the high quality Carp Company base mixes, usually in the shape of Icelandic Red or Natural Impact.

Also look into liquid and powdered additives as this is where it's at for top quality attraction. Over the years I have played around with high and low flavour levels and have had some great catches on baits with little or no flavours but higher levels of additives like The Aminol, Minamino, Green Lipped Mussel and Amino/Betaine where you are relying solely on the amino acid profile of the bait.

Above all, don't be afraid to experiment. Nearly all the best baits out there in the shops were discovered by chance by people who decided to test out a new concoction or a different combination of ingredients. You can try putting in flavours from your kitchen at home; raid the spice rack maybe or chuck in some of that exotic cooking oil that's been sitting on the top shelf for ages. Remember - the next ingredient you

try out could be the key that makes your bait 'haul'. Trial and error; there's no other way and there isn't a single bait out there that didn't involve some degree of experimentation.

Remember to right down your recipes in detail, including all flavour/additive levels, shape, size, colour and boiling times. Guessing at the levels because you forgot to write them down is not the way to go and the old trick of adding a little extra for luck doesn't normally work the way you want it to. To make measuring easier, I would recommend a Flavour Dispensing Kit complete with measuring spoons, beakers, pipettes and syringes to ensure those critical levels are precise.

The other major way of making a bait that stands out from the rest is shape. I would say that 95% of baits used are round, be it an 18mm, 14mm or 10mm, they are still a round sphere. Over the past few seasons, however, I have been using baits of all different shapes and sizes to devastating effect.

**"Think about it, how often do you see a perfect circle in nature? Animals certainly don't expect their dinner to be a nicely formed sphere! It's so easy to make barrel or pellet shaped boilies that look less suspicious."**

To make barrels, try using a 14mm sausage on a 16mm table. This works because there is not enough paste to fill the channel and the table just rolls over the end of the paste. For the pellet shape, try a 14mm sausage on a 20mm table. In this case there is even less paste in the channel so the ends are rolled over but the centre is kept straight as it is not touched by the rollers. Does that make sense? Try it and you'll



see what I mean! Standard, round boilies are made with the same size sausage as the size of the table.

I have been using a 20mm barrel shape a lot in my fishing and I am extremely confident in the pick up and hooking rate with this type of bait, which I also use for my Barbel rigs. I am convinced that variations in size, shape and colour of hook baits have really paid off on numerous occasions where one small change has led to a take. Sometimes they have caught even the most challenging fish; those seldom seen let alone caught on the toughest waters, all because of a slightly different appearance. These hookers are brilliant not only for Carp but the Barbel love them too.

Not only can you mess around with the shape and size but you can also change the firmness of the baits. By adding something like Jaw Breaker into the mix, you can make extra hard hookers that will combat Crayfish as well as other nuisance fish. These hookers will also give you added confidence on waters that you fish all season, knowing that your





hook bait will always be on the hair where it should be.

**"If you are looking at rolling your own baits, Gardner is the only real option. They offer a wide range of quality, British made, rolling equipment, much of which we use ourselves professionally."**

The big Rolaball Baitmaster tables and Deluxe Sausage Guns are perfect for making serious quantities of bait and are mainly aimed at advanced and professional producers. The Deluxe Sausage Gun has a large capacity metal barrel that can cope with making large amounts of bait and is designed to last a lifetime. The Deluxe Sausage Gun XT has extra

tough internal mechanisms, specifically designed to handle those harder, stiffer mixes.

There is something for everyone. People who are new to baitmaking or only making smaller 'occasional' quantities may prefer the smaller Rolaball Longbase tables and the standard Sausage Gun, both capable of making the same quality boilies but more economical for the average angler wanting to have a go at baitmaking. All of the Gardner guns come with 8 pre-cut nozzles in sizes from 10mm to 24mm so you will be equipped for most eventualities. For particle size boilies, get the terrific little Rolaball Baitmaker, all you need to make smaller 8mm baits, which encourage more frenzied feeding. If you have a couple of different

size rolling tables (for hookers I use the small Longbase tables) as well as a Sausage Gun you can always come up with some great looking baits.

Before I start rolling I always clean the rolling table with a cloth that has Salmon Oil on it to stop the paste from sticking. Don't soak the table in oil because that will have an adverse effect and make the paste slide instead of roll. So simply wipe a drop of Salmon Oil, Hemp Oil or something similar, up and down the rollers.

Air Dry Trays are a fantastic bit of kit. I never seem to have enough of them. They provide a safe and secure area to tip out boiled baits and are specially designed to stack safely, allowing a free flow of air

to aid drying.

Storage is simple. A hook bait pouch is an ideal way to store baits in the freezer and transport them to and from the lake. My preferred way is to use a Dipstick or glug pot and soak the hookers in Aminol or Golden Corn Oil so I have instant high attract baits to hand at any time.

The great thing that can come from making your own baits and hookers is that feeling when a small amount of work pays off – priceless! You will be amazed, a kilo bucket of base mix, 6 eggs and away you go. If you start with 1 egg mixes, you can end up with 6 different size, shape or colour variations. Rolling bait is so simple and easy and with a bit of practice will soon be second nature to you. Take my advice - do your own thing, try something new and try not to follow the crowd.

**Tight Lines**

*Jules Webb*

