

***As one of the country's most respected big fish anglers, we were delighted when Neil Wayte joined our development team to work on the new Barbel range. With over 40 years of experience in all manner of conditions, he's virtually seen it all. There isn't much the weather hasn't thrown at him; there aren't many waters he hasn't mastered; he's had his fill of almost every freshwater species nature has to offer really. So who better than Nelly to tell you about our unique range of ready tied Barbel rigs?***

Gardner have always produced an excellent range of ready tied rigs for the Carp angler but with Barbel fishing becoming much more popular, why not lead the way again and provide anglers with rigs that will specifically target this elusive species? Today the magazines are full of information on Barbel fishing but what we wanted to produce were a couple of very simple to use rigs that would ensure anglers are fishing as effectively as possible. That was fine by me because my Barbel rigs are exactly that - very simple but effective. There is very little need for the complicated rigs that the Carp anglers prefer. Throughout the range only two sizes of hooks are used - sizes 8 and 10 Talon Tips which, in my view, are one of the best Barbel hooks available today. Once they go in, they stay in and don't fall

out during the fight.

With most rivers these days dominated by pellets of various sorts, the pellet rigs can be used on any Barbel river in the country, safe in the knowledge that they will catch you a Barbel. If you prefer to use pellets up to 10mm in size then the size 10 hook will be fine but if you fancy using pellets bigger than that, then go for the size 8 hook. Don't be fooled by the size of the Latex Bands used to tie up the pellet rigs because they will stretch a long way and go round the biggest pellets. A great little tip for you here: if you like to use pellets, before you loop the band around the pellet take the time to score a groove around the centre of the

pellet for the band to sit in. This can be done by scoring a Nut Drill gently around the centre of the pellet while you rotate the pellet in your hand. The groove does not have to be very deep but it will help keep the pellet located. If you do this, it makes it harder for the fish, mainly Chub, to pull the pellet free and means you can be confident that you still have a pellet on the end even after you have received several sharp pulls from a Chub.



## Barbel Ring Rig...



### Step One

When using this pellet rig it pays to create a groove around the pellet by scoring it around the middle with a Nut Drill. This helps to locate the band around the pellet.



### Step Two

Stretch the Latex Bait Band around the end of the pellet and locate the band in the groove you have created. The reason for this groove is to make the pellet more secure, safe from the actions of those hungry chub.



### Step Three

To finish off the perfect Barbel Ring Rig, attach a small PVA Bag of pellets to act as extra attraction for the barbel. This will draw the barbel to your hook bait.

Occasionally Latex Bands do break but don't worry because you can replace the broken band very easily. Gardner sell the Latex Bands in small phials so it would be wise to buy some extra to put in your fishing bag just in case. To replace the band simply put a baiting needle through the ring on the end of the rig and put a band in the crook of the needle and draw it half way through the ring. Then, push the needle forwards and over the top of the ring and pick up the loop of the band on the other side of the ring. To finish, simply pull this loop back through the first loop you have in the crook of the needle and remove the needle. It may sound a little difficult but with a bit of practice you will be able to change bands very quickly.

The second rig in the range is designed to be used when fishing paste baits for the Barbel and once again is simplicity itself. All you need to do is mould a lump of your favourite paste around the Cork Ball and you are ready to go. If you are not confident just using soft lumps of paste and prefer to use a boilie then simply remove the Cork Ball and substitute it with a boilie which you can then wrap with paste if you want to. Again you can use smaller baits with the size 10 hook and larger with the size 8.

Both types of rig are tied up using two different types of hooklinks including the outstanding

new Brown Sly Skin. This can be used in any situation but I'm personally happiest using this in deep or coloured water. For those of you who do not favour the coated type braids, I have also included a Fluorocarbon hooklink using Gardner Subterfuge. In a 12lb (5.4kg) breaking strain this hooklink has the advantage of being virtually invisible in water so it is ideal for use on those super spooky Barbel in the rivers.

*"I know that many of you who are reading this may think that because you see a lot of us in the papers on a regular basis that we all use super secret rigs but nothing could be further from the truth. The rigs in the new Gardner range are the exact same rigs that I use for all of my Barbel fishing wherever I am in the country. Believe me, simple is best in whatever type of fishing you enjoy."*

The beauty of these rigs is that they can both be fished in conjunction with a straight lead or a swim feeder. If you decide to use a swim feeder then you will need to think about what you are going to put in it. Now I know that may sound very obvious but you can increase your chances of catching by thinking about your ground bait. If you are using a Trout pellet for a hookbait then you need to find a Trout pellet based ground bait or alternatively you can go to the trouble of



creating your own by grinding up some of the Trout pellets you are using as hook baits.

At this point there are two schools of thought as to whether you should add some samples of hook bait to the mix or not. One suggestion is that you should introduce some free offerings into the swim along with the flavour of the ground bait so that the Barbel have something to feed on. The other idea is that the flavour given off by the ground bait in the swim feeder is enough to pull them into the swim and when they get there the only food item is your hook bait. I think both scenarios have their own merits. If you are targeting one big fish in your swim then the 'no free offering' approach makes sense because if it's the only fish and there is only one hook bait to feed on then you are likely to catch it. However if you are trying to catch a number of fish then by having a number of free offerings for them to feed on you will create a competitive feeding situation where they are less cautious and hopefully you will catch more of them. I'll leave you to make your own mind up over that one.

The number of times you recast your feeder will also affect your fishing. If you have a lot of Barbel feeding in the swim, you will need to keep the swim topped up with food to hold them there but if you just have a single big fish feeding, repeated casts will undoubtedly spook the fish.

So if you just plan to cast once and leave the hook bait out for a fairly long time, you will need to pack the ground bait tightly into the feeder so that the rate at which it is dispersed from the feeder, by the water flowing over it, is slowed down. On the other hand, if you want to keep dispersing free offerings into the swim then you need to use less pressure when loading the feeder. By doing this the water will dislodge the ground bait and freebies much quicker giving the Barbel more food to find in your swim.

***"Hopefully this brief explanation will make you think a little more about your feeder fishing. It's not just a chuck it and chance it method of fishing but something that does require some thought to get the best from."***

If you want to use a straight lead with your Barbel rigs then there are a multitude of varieties available. Their primary use is to give you the weight needed to get your hook bait out into the river and secondly to anchor it to the bottom. However, lead technology has moved on since the time of the Arlesey bomb. We now have many different shapes of lead and the ones used primarily in Barbel fishing are flat to help overcome the effects of river currents. Some have knobbles on them to help them hold the bottom of the rivers, whilst others are even

## XL Barbel Ring Rig...



### Step One

When mixing your ground bait, make it as dry as possible so that when it breaks down small particles are released slowly from the feeder.



### Step Two

Pack the ground bait as tightly as possible into the feeder and try to include some different sized trout pellets within. As these pellets are released they will travel different distances down the flow of the river increasing the flavour trail that will draw the barbell to your bait.



### Step Three

The XL Barbel Ring Rig is designed so that the longer hooklink keeps the hook bait well away from the loaded feeder. At 24 inches (60cm) long, I feel this is about right when using feeders on the bigger rivers like the Thames or the Trent.

designed to have ground bait wrapped around them so that it washes off in the current and once again feeds your swim. So, again, use a little thought before you choose your lead.

One of my favourite tricks is to use some scalded pellets wrapped around my lead so that I introduce some free offerings around the hook bait each time I cast. To prepare the Trout pellets all you have to do is put some in a bucket and then pour boiling water over them. Leave them for a few seconds and then drain the water off. This softens the pellets without them turning to mush and then they can be moulded around a lead. It takes a little practice to get right but it is worth the effort to create an inexpensive ground bait to feed your swim with.

If you want to use boilies then you can just use some PVA string with three or four boilies on each time you cast out to introduce free offerings or you can load PVA mesh and attach it to the hook on each cast. If you prefer, you can break up a few boilies in to halves or even quarters so that the biggest food item in the swim is your hook bait.

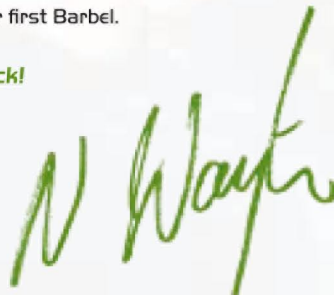
Going back to the free offering or no free offering argument; you can achieve the same effect when using boilies. If you break some boilies down in your hand, you can reduce them to a crumb.

These can then be poured down an 'Easi-Loada' tube and compressed before pressing them out of the end of the tube. By attaching your hooklink to the swivel on the end of the main line by using a Q Ring, you can remove the hooklink so that it can be passed through a crumb boilie stick and then reattached. After you have cast out, the PVA melts which releases a cloud of crumbed boilies that have very little food value but release a huge amount of flavour into the water to draw the Barbel to your hook bait, much the same as a swim feeder loaded with just ground bait would do.

As you can see there are loads of ways to use the new Barbel rigs but it is up to you to decide on your own tactics. The one thing you can be assured of is that if a Barbel picks up your hook bait, you can hook it with confidence and the fight will be on!

I hope this advice inspires you to go out and catch your first Barbel.

**Good Luck!**



## Barbel Cork Ball Rig...

### Step One

The Cork Ball Rig is designed to make paste fishing as simple as possible. It's ready to go straight out of the packet, all you need to do is wrap a lump of paste around the cork ball on the end of the rig.



### Step Two

It's vital to make sure that the paste you use is stiff enough to stay wrapped around the cork ball. Most of the pastes you can buy in your local tackle shops are made for commercial carp fisheries and they are too sloppy. However you can buy readymade paste from either the Carp Company or Heathrow Baits that are much stiffer and are very good for barbel fishing.



### Step Three

When you wrap the paste around the cork ball, make sure that there are no cracks or splits in the paste that the water can get into. If you do not make the paste round and smooth then the water will get into the paste and push it off the cork ball. With a stiff paste it is possible to leave a bait in the water for up to one hour.

