

The first day of spring

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March was the date for the spring vernal equinox, it's the date I normally call a halt to my predator angling and start to get my head into carp fishing mode.

This year I very nearly carried on piking as the cold weather continued to hammer the country, but a decision had to be made and having seen carp rolling on a previous pike fishing trip I knew the time was right.

So first thing Thursday morning I headed off to one of Mid Kent Fisheries shallower waters, these shallow lakes always seem to wake up early and with an average depth of just 5 feet it seemed ideal. As is my usual way, I spent an hour having a good look about for signs of carp, but on this occasion I didn't manage to see a thing.

When this happens all you can go on is previous knowledge and instinct. I decided to put myself in the middle part of the lake, my figuring being that this way I'm never going to be too far away from some carp and I can keep an eye on the water around me in case a move is in order.

This time of year with the carp just starting to get active I'm looking to attract one or two into taking a bait, they are not going to be feeding hard so a solid bag approach is the way I like to fish, with just enough bait to do the job.

A high viz bait in a solid pva bag filled with Sonubaits 2mm "S" pellet has caught me a lot of fish, I also pop several extra baits in the bag so to leave a little extra out there after a recast. A simple inline lead arrangement with a nice soft supple braid with the size 8 hook kicked out KD style.



The weather for this trip was absolutely bitter, with a temp of just 2c and a windchill of -5c. I must admit to being a little surprised when at 5pm my middle rod tightened up and I found myself into my first carp of the year, I played her in very gently as I really wanted to make sure she went in the net which after a 15 minute scrap she did. An amazing fish to start the new campaign, a 29lb 7oz scaley mirror.

An hour later the same rod is away again with a 22lb 10oz mirror. After dark I had a couple of tench and decided not to recast those rods, and at 9 the next morning my final rod was away with a small 8lb common. I fished the rest of the day with no more activity and with the weather set to get worse with snow forecast I decided to make a timely withdrawal.