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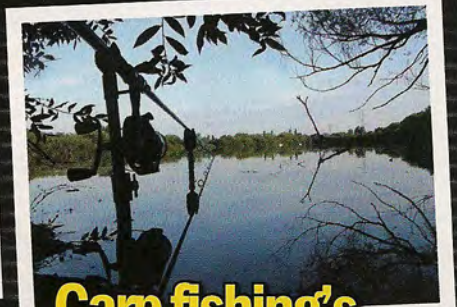

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Return to Temple

Temple Lake now (main picture) and Temple in 2006 (right)

Far right: Welcome to Bury Hill Fisheries

Although we've had some rain, in general so far our summer has mostly consisted of hot humid days. Well it has down South anyway.

Normally the high temperatures have an effect on carp fishing, but other than the carp spawning when we were on Linear Fisheries Manor, the heat hasn't caused us any problems. Wherever we've been fishing, we've managed to catch. Let's hope our luck continues.

About four years ago we fished on Temple Lake at Bury Hill Fisheries near Dorking, Surrey. This four-acre specimen carp lake hadn't been open long and was in its infancy. We had a couple of successful sessions on there and vowed to return at a later date. Unfortunately, through one thing or another we'd never managed to get back there. This was about to be put right as we made arrangements to return.

David DeVere the owner informed us there are around 95 carp in Temple Lake, consisting of around 30 thirties, numerous twenties and just a handful of doubles – most of the twenties are 25lb-plus. Temple is run on an exclusive membership basis with an annual joining fee. Separate charges then apply each time you fish. There is easy access around the lake to the 15 purpose-built, clean, free-draining swims. Each swim has a feature to fish to such as lilies, reeds, irises or shrubs, as well as four islands that run along the centre of the lake. Depths range from a few feet in the margins to around 10 feet in the deepest parts. Temple has certainly matured since we were last there and now looks absolutely stunning. Check out the before and after pictures.

Windy end

I arrived first as usual; Ben would be joining me after he'd finished work. There were a few anglers present, mainly at one end of the lake. It was very humid, but there was a strong breeze blowing into the opposite end of the lake to where the anglers were. After a walk round I opted for a couple of swims at the windy end which both had an island, open water and marginal reeds to present baits to. I'd just got set up when Ben arrived. He was happy with the swims.

There were no fish showing so we plumbed about with our markers before we started fishing. We found depths ranging between two feet and five feet, and the lake bottom was mainly clay with both hard and soft areas. The marginal reeds alongside our bank and also alongside the island were the obvious places to present hookbaits, although we couldn't rule out the open water. We hadn't fished here for a few years so it would be a trial-and-error approach.

Stealthy

Because of the shallow water we wanted to conceal our lines as much as possible. Normally we'd use leadcore to help do this but leadcore is not allowed on any of the lakes at Bury Hill Fisheries. The answer was to fish with slack lines using a fluorocarbon main line, which is heavier than conventional mono and will quickly sink to the bottom. Gardner's 12lb Mirage was ideal for this situation. This fluorocarbon line sinks like a stone and is virtually invisible in water. Laying flat on the bottom it would be concealed in the silt and out of the way of any prying carp that might happen along. For added assurance, I put 12 inches of Tungsten Tubing on the end of the main line and directly

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into the safety clips. Two ounce flat pear leads was all the weight that was needed to cast the short distances to the spots. There is a barbless only rule on Temple so we used barbless Covert size 10 Talon Tip Wide Gape hooks tied to ever-reliable 15lb Sly Skin hooklinks.

Mainline Cell and Pro-Active Pineapple boilies were our preferred baits for Temple. We were also going try some Tutti Frutti pop-ups that had been soaking in Tutti Frutti Response Flavour, because Tuttis seem to work no matter where you go. For optimum effect we put two rods each on the reeds alongside the island and also on the near-margin reeds. The other rods went into open water. Single hookbaits and small web bags containing crushed and whole boilies and a few Grubber Pellets were all we used. No other freebies were placed around the hookbaits.

Because we had hookbaits very close in, our bivvies were sited well away from the bankside and noise was kept to a minimum. We settled in for the session and later that evening I had what can only be described as a finicky pick-up. I picked up the rod and slowly tightened the line... the rod was nearly wrenched from my hands as a carp did the off with my Tutti Frutti pop-up. With the water being shallow, the carp broke the surface several times before being brought to the net, a mirror that turned the scales to 25lb 5oz.

On the move

No more action came our way and in the morning Ben decided on a move. He set up in a swim to my right where he'd seen a couple of carp showing. I remained in my swim feeling confident with what I was doing.

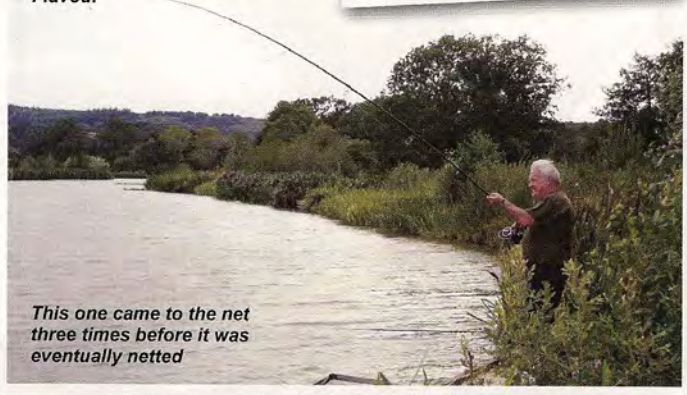
It was getting as hot as it had been the day before, but we still had the breeze and the weather forecast was for much of the same. The carp Ben had made his move for were not showing any more so he was hoping he hadn't moved for nothing. He needn't have worried because around midday one of his alarms went into melt down. A carp had taken his Pro-Active Pineapple hookbait and shot off towards a gap between the islands. It was obvious he had to stop it or it would end in disaster. Ben bullied the carp as much as he dared in his desperate attempt to turn it away from the gap – the bend in the rod showed how much pressure he was applying. Ben quickly dropped the rod tip under the water, hitting the bottom as he did so, and gave it some more wellie. This had the desired effect and the carp changed course. It didn't stop fighting, though, and it went on more surging runs. Eventually, as Ben was tiring, the carp took pity on him and gave up. Into the net it went and a 25½lb mirror graced the bank.

Two out of three

Evening came and so did a welcome drop in the temperature. It was still light and I'd just refreshed my hookbaits ready for the night when out of the blue I had a belting run on the island rod. At the time I was making some coffee, which was sent flying in my rush for the rod. Line was peeling off the reel as I lifted the rod and grabbed the rotating spool. The carp was trying to go round the end of the island but luckily I managed to stop it. Gradually I turned it and slowly began bringing it back towards me. I didn't get it all my own way, though, as the carp went on several powering runs; just as I thought I had control it would shoot

These helped keep everthing pinned down in the shallow water

Right: Tutti Frutti pop-ups were soaked in Tutti Frutti Response Flavour



This one came to the net three times before it was eventually netted

Above: A 25-pounder for Ben Right: Barry's 33lb 2oz linear

off again. As it got closer to the shallow margin it rolled and hit the bottom, sending up a cloud of silt and debris. As it broke surface we could see it was a good fish and I don't mind telling you I was glad when it dropped into the net. The carp in Temple fight really hard and don't give themselves up easily. On the bank we opened the net to reveal a large stunning linear. Apparently, there are only three linears in Temple and all are thirties. This one weighed 33lb 2oz and was caught on a Cell boilie. We fished through the night and most of the next day, but it was the last carp we had on that session.

We returned a few days later for another go and I was rewarded with another thirty and another linear at dead on 33lb – one more for the hat-trick. It was the only carp we had during that outing, but we definitely want to go back and try again. Temple Lake has much to offer any carp angler.

We'd like to thank Sean Howard for kindly helping us out with swim advice and tactical tips. Apparently, Sean is an old friend of Chris Ball, but we didn't hold that against him! Sean knows Temple like the back of his hand and catches loads of carp from there. It's reassuring that there are some fellow anglers who are willing to give help and advice to other anglers. Thanks for that Sean.

LOOKING BACK

- Don't neglect the margins.
- Try and hide your lines, especially in shallow water.
- If you're not catching, move if possible.
- Refreshed hookbaits can sometimes bring a quick response.
- Don't be afraid to ask advice – you're never too old to learn.

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