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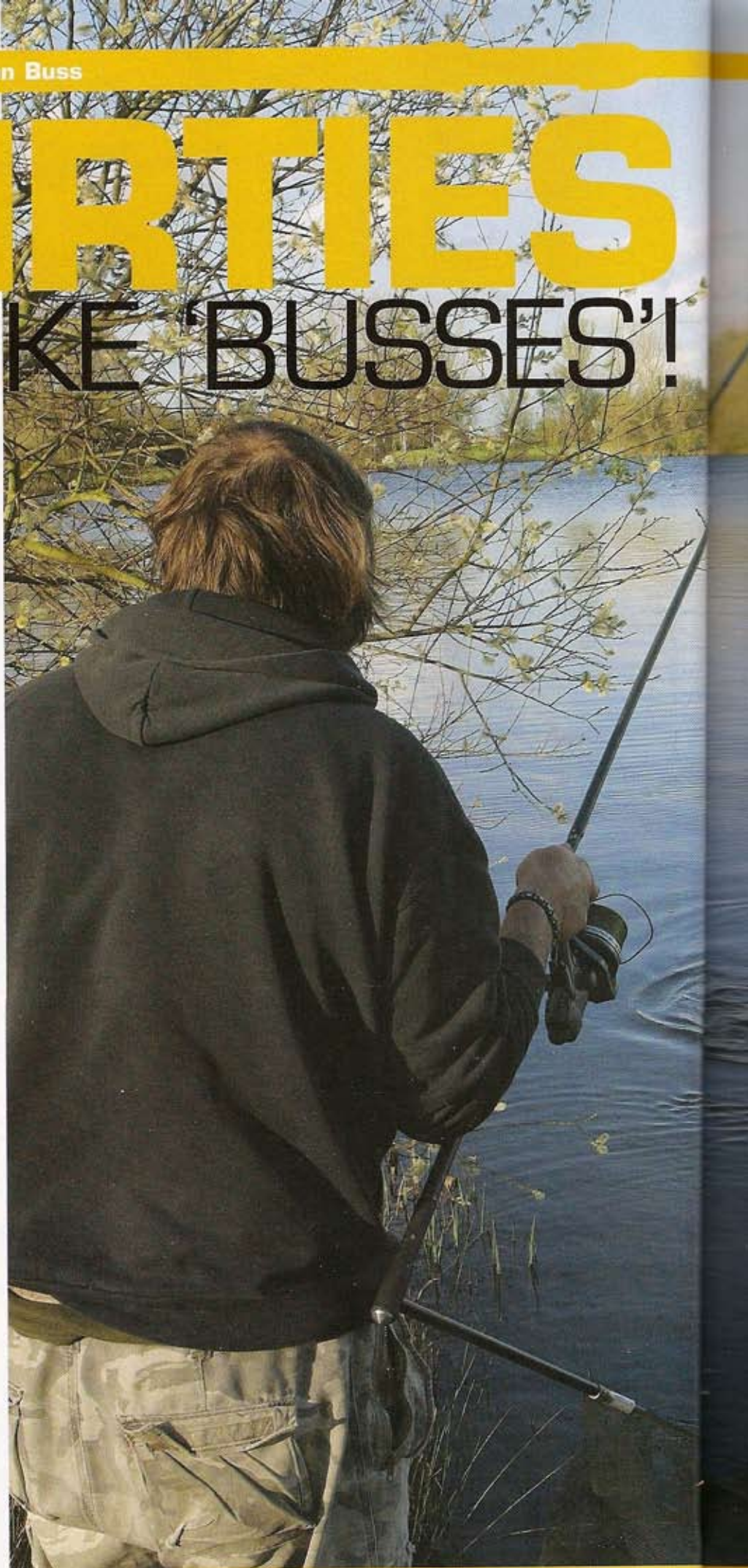
THIRTIES ARE LIKE 'BUSSES'!

In all his years of fishing, **Ron Buss** had never banked a 30lb English common. This year, his luck finally changed.

During the winter before last I made a supreme effort to catch my first-ever 30lb English common. In that time I completed 78 nights but, alas, no 30lb common came my way. However, my first 40lb mirror did, and at 41lb 14oz it was a club record.

So I returned to Langman's Lake this year, where I have been head bailiff for Woking and District Angling Association (WDAA) for more than 20 years. Langman's currently holds three commons over the mystical mark and due to its size, six acres, I thought it gave me the best chance of achieving my goal.

When you've spent that amount of time on a water you really do get an insight into what is happening, particularly where it is happening and in which particular conditions. Through the times of angler activity, when the lakes were busy, the fish would not show. But when I was alone or with maybe one other angler, and with conditions being right, you would hear fish crashing out in hours of darkness and, although very rarely, also during the day. When this happened, notes of 'times, areas and conditions' were taken. These TACs, as I refer to them, were subsequently studied to see if there was any form of pattern to the behaviour. However, the main factors controlling multiple-fish movement were the days and nights when anglers were absent. Obviously, when the disturbance level was nil, it installed a higher confidence level in the fish to act normally. Bankside disturbance around a shallow lake like Langman's, with an average depth of four and a half feet, must have a greater impact on the fish than in a pit of, say, twice that depth.





A lifetime's dream achieved.

Armed with my TACs from the previous season, I returned to Langman's in March and planned to fish the whole month, with just a four-day break for the Five Lakes Carp Show. The first nine nights were spent camping and, although I heard one or two fish, no bites were forthcoming so I packed up and left to prepare for the show.

I returned to Langman's on the 21st and was amazed to see fish crashing all over the lake. They had obviously woken up; they were 'having it' and there had been five fish caught during the weekend period. One of the lads fished the swim I had vacated the Thursday before and, although he had not caught, he had seen fish. I opted to fish this swim again and hoped that the fish were occupied on the bait I had put in? With this in mind, I opted to fish single baits incorporated into a small PVA bag, using a 50/50 mix of 2mm Richworth Halibut Pellets and Banksides Mini Grubbers. I cast to the three spots I had recently fished; one under a willow, one in the gully off the old pads and one at a clear mark just off the gravel at 60 yards.

By 11am I was set up and fishing. Almost immediately the willow and gully rod tops were 'twanging' as the liners started, indicating fish in the area. Were they feeding though? Only time would tell.

The rod tops kept twanging and for a

couple of hours I sat on my hands, slowly being driven to becoming a nervous wreck. Suddenly, the willow rod pulled round and I pounced like a man half my age. The 3 1/2lb Free Spirit took up its full battle curve as a heavy fish tried in vain to make good its escape. It was all to no avail, and within five minutes the greedy beast was safely in the confines of my landing net.

I was ecstatic, for there in the bottom of the net sat what was certainly my first 30lb English common. Big Wayne came around to do the honours with the

weighing and photography.

For a while the actual weight of the fish did not sink in, that was until I looked at the club card! This contained the club's record-fish list. Not for any egotistical

The 3 1/2lb Free Spirit took up its full battle curve as a heavy fish tried in vain to escape.

purposes, honest, but I checked the common record for the lakes. It read 'Common carp, 34lb, J Pagulatos, Langman's 1997'. The common I had just caught weighed 34lb 14oz. My first 30lb English common and it was also a new club record – fate or what?

I managed a further three fish from the swim, all mirrors: 19lb 12oz, 27lb and 20lb 8oz before deciding to move swims, to End Dugout, as I'd spotted the roll of a fish. This swim enables you to cover a lot of water, from the Island, back down to the High Feeder and a whole host of open water and many marginal marks, gravel spots, sand spots, worm beds and the Old Lily Pads.

The fish was almost mine and I knew that I'd possibly caught my second 30lb common.



Just like buses!

The move paid off and my first bite came at 3.45am from Old Lily Pads. The resulting mirror of 32lb 6oz must have been right on the bait because, blow me, if I didn't catch the same fish at 8.45 the following morning from a sand spot 70 yards from the old lily bed; same weight too. Well, things weren't going too badly, with three thirties and two twenties on the bank, bless 'em.

It's funny, but when you're on a roll, you're on a roll. The following evening I saw a good fish move over the sand spot and that got me feeling confident of more action. It drew my concentration from the chat I was having with Bob Baker, about the effects of gout, anyway! As the talk returned to medical issues, the sand-spot rod burst into life. I was down the bank and on the rod, gout or no gout, and once again the rod is wrapped over. The ensuing fight was a bit hairy in respect of the fact that the fish had picked up a small branch, which gave me all sorts of problems for the next few minutes. With a bit of careful rod

work the fish was almost mine and, as it wallowed just short of the waiting net, I knew that I'd possibly caught my second 30lb common. The last few feet took seconds but it seemed like hours and before long she was finally in the net, safe

On a roll.



and sound. On the scales the common went 33lb on the button. It's strange how you can go all those years without catching a big common and then, like 'buses', they come along in twos.

Was I pleased? Too right I was! The Ultra-Plex that I'd helped form for Richworth was catching and six days into the session and now with four thirties, two twenties and a double, I was more than pleased.

The following evening, in the presence of Steve Carpenter, the fisheries manager, I had yet another bite. Once again the carp had picked up my offering from the sandy area. This fish was a real scrapper, 'luv it', and did not want to make my acquaintance.

I wasn't going anywhere and my patience and perseverance prevailed. Eventually the carp was in the net, and turned the scales to 36lb 8oz; the largest fish in the lake, and one that I had not caught since it was a mere 20lb. Well, my session came to an end on the March 31st when the water closed until June 16th.

Once again I had experienced some of the great fishing that Langman's can provide and yet another first. No-one has ever put five thirties on the bank in seven days... ever! Blowing my

Ron's PVA Bag Set-Up

1



Seal the end of some PVA stocking with saliva.

2



Trim off about eight inches of the stocking mesh.

3



Turn the PVA inside out, trapping the dried, bunched end of mesh inside.

4



Place a small amount of tiny pellets in the bottom.

5



Place the rig inside the mesh and use a PVA nugget on the hook.

6



Top the bag up with more pellets.

7



Twist the PVA around the hook link, forming a tight ball of pellets.

8



Double-back the PVA, so that it looks like this.

9



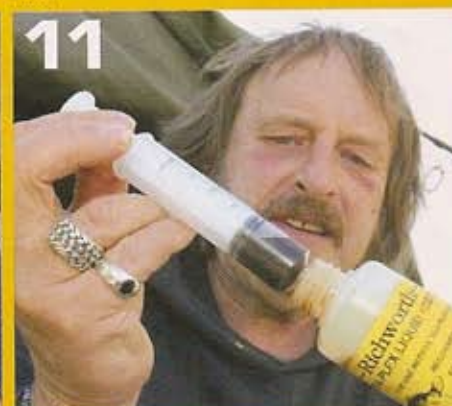
Twist the PVA and seal it with saliva again.

10



The neat little bag is all ready to go.

11



You can boost the attraction by taking a syringe...

12



... and injecting the PVA bait with liquid.

own trumpet for once? Yeah, why not, makes a change.

At this juncture, and purely for those rig buffs among you, I suppose it is only fair that I should include a brief word or two about the rig I used.

Having had a modicum of success in France and Oxford using a drop shot on the hair, in conjunction with small hooks and pop-ups, I decided to carry on along those lines.

To improve the hooking potential I wanted to encourage the hook to drop at the point.

However, due to the fact that some of the lads had been experiencing hook pulls on small hooks, 8s and 10s, I decided to go the other way, larger hooks. I upped my hook size to a size 6 Mugga. I do find these hooks seem quite large for their rating and, in comparison to some, almost equates to a size 4.

I wanted to achieve an anti-eject system with a D-rig presentation. I used 15lb Gardner Camo Skin, with a four-turn knotless knot to attach the Mugga. Over the tag end I placed a 3mm rig ring. The tag end was then passed through the eye of the hook, trimmed and blobbed with a lighter. The hair was formed using dental floss. The length determined by the 18mm bait clearing the bend of the hook by 2mm. Once the hair was tied, the bait was removed and a 15mm piece of silicone tubing was slid over it. The bait was then reintroduced to the hair so that the silicone tubing sat tight to the bottom of the bait and tight to the rig ring. This gave

the bait a swing-out effect over the small D-rig. It was almost like a stiff arm that I felt would be more difficult for the carp to eject than supple hair or a standard D-rig arrangement.

To improve the hooking potential I wanted to encourage the hook to drop at the point, so I whipped eight turns of fine lead wire onto the hook, starting 3mm up from the barb's point and finishing just short of the bend. This, I felt, was sufficient to create the drop-down effect. When using pop-ups, a short section of thicker-gauged lead wire was inserted into the hair tube prior to putting on the pop-

up, sufficient to critically balance the bait. It was interesting to see that those fish caught using the critical pop-up were hooked low in the bottom lip.

What did surprise me was that the fish caught using a straightforward bottom bait, with no lead insert, were hooked well back in the side of the mouth. The remainder of the rig comprised 2oz Korda Pear leads, semi-fixed in Korda Clips.

Well, it's off to Richworth Linear Fisheries for me for a while. Who knows, perhaps I'll see you there? If not I'll see you back here in a couple of months.

Be lucky, Ron Buss.

My fourth thirty of the month.



advanced rig



I'd had a lot of success on this rig...

advanced rig



... but felt a change was needed, and it worked!