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August 2007 | Issue 120 | £3.30

# Crafty Carp<sup>er</sup>

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# 5

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**SOLID PVA BAG MASTERCLASS** with Ron Buss  
**BAITING TOOLS EXPLAINED** with Mike Redfern  
**FLOATER FISHING TIPS** with Myles Gascoyne  
**A LESSON IN LIQUIDS** with Des Taylor

**CARP WARS** STALKING VS STATIC ANGLING





# PVA BAG

## Masterclass

**In the first part of Ron Buss' PVA Bag Masterclass he reveals some top tips and tactics for fishing with solid PVA bags.**

### Solid PVA Bags: An Introduction

Hello my lovelies, how we all doing? I have been carp fishing for over 40 years you know, and the use of PVA has been one of the biggest things ever to happen in the sport. Heaven knows what I used to do without the stuff. All I do know is that I couldn't be without it nowadays. I absolutely love the stuff, especially the good old solid bags – heck they've caught me thousands of carp over the years, bless 'em. Solid PVA bags are a brilliant tool for ensuring that a tight parcel of free bait sits with your hookbait. They can also prove invaluable in weedy lakes and be devastating when you need to fish at extreme range where you can't bait up with a throwing stick or spod. There are loads of different makes and shapes of PVA bags out there and I currently favour the ones that Gardner Tackle produce. During my time I have experimented a lot with solid PVA bags and this month I hope to pass on to you guys some of the tips and tactics that I have learned along the way.

### RON'S TIP



Before attempting to handle solid PVA bags, make sure that both your hands and rig are bone dry, otherwise you will damage the bag.

### Tying PVA Bags

Don't be embarrassed if you struggle when it comes to tying PVA bags, they are not easy, and some of the country's best carp anglers struggle to tie the perfect bag.

When it comes to tying a good bag that will cast smoothly and won't float on the lake's surface, the old saying 'practice makes perfect' couldn't be truer. My first tip before you even start to tie a solid PVA bag is to make sure that both your hands and rig are bone dry; if you have the slightest amount of moisture on them your bag will be ruined from the outset. There are plenty of instructions and photographs in this piece to show you how to tie the perfect solid PVA bag that will cast smoothly and sink like a brick.

### Angler Profile

Ron Buss

Age: 61

Hometown: Woking, Surrey

Occupation: Retired

UK PB: 43lb 14oz



**"If you follow the rules for each bag you should stand a really good chance of catching on your next fishing trip"**

### Bag Mixes

Let's start with the different ingredients that I like to use in my solid bags. There are four main bag mixes I like to use when I'm fishing on highly pressured venues. I have come across these through years of experimenting and have now got four different types of mixes that I have 100% confidence in. The ingredients I use in the mixes are a personal choice and you don't necessarily have to use





A cracking common that fell to Ron's PVA tactics.

exactly the same ingredients. All I am saying is that if you follow the rules for each bag you should stand a really good chance of catching on your next fishing trip. You may not have success yourselves with all four, so try them all and do your own experimenting until you find the one that does the business for you.

#### Mix One - Boilies

The first of my four main bag mixes only includes boilies. I like to have a mixture of three different flavours of boilies in the bag and I also like to have a variety of sizes and colours to keep those carp guessing. I will then use two of the different boilies on the Hair so that the hookbait completely blends in with all the freebies once the bag has melted on the lakebed. I have found this particular bag works really well on busy day-ticket lakes such as Oxlease and Brasenose where the carp are being fished for all the time. The mixture of sizes, colours and flavours can really confuse them, so much so that they will drop their guard and take your hookbait, and that, my lovelies, is what we want!



A mixture of different boilies is used in the boilie-only bag.



#### RON'S TIP



Ron uses two different boilies on the Hair when using the boilie bag so that his hookbait blends in with his free offerings.

#### RON'S TIP

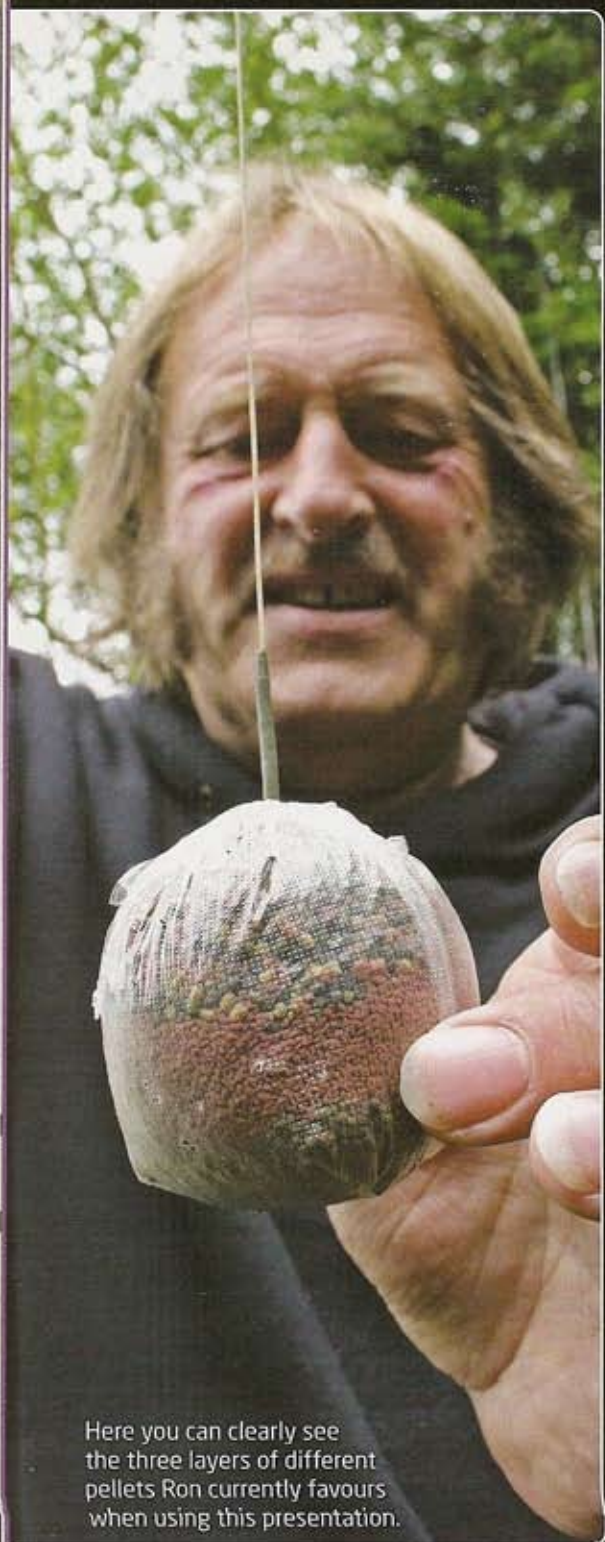


Ron places a PVA foam nugget over his hook before placing into the bag of boilies to prevent the point becoming impaled on one of the baits.



### Mix Two - Pellets

My second mix contains only pellets. I am currently using a mixture of different pellets but at times I will just use one type, it really just depends on the fishing situation and the mood I am in. My favoured mix over recent months contains three different types of micro pellet. I layer the different pellets on top of each other in the bag and bury my baited rig right in amongst them. These little pellets are extremely attractive to carp and really get them on the feed. As a carp takes a big mouthful of the melted bag's contents the hookbait is sucked up with them, and hey presto, we have a carp!



Here you can clearly see the three layers of different pellets Ron currently favours when using this presentation.

## HOW TO TIE... RON'S PELLET BAG



Ron starts by taking a Gardner Magnum PVA Bag and cutting about 1ins off it to make it a tiny bit smaller.



The next step is to put some of your chosen pellet into the bottom of the bag, filling it to about 1ins deep.



Now take your in-line lead and place it inside the PVA bag so that it sits nicely on top of the bait that's inside.



Take the excess of PVA at the top and tightly twist it round 4-5 times, ensuring all the air is out of the bag.



Now firmly stick both tag ends to the sides of your bag, like so, this will ensure the bag stays tightly sealed.



Now take one of the bottom corners of the bag and add a small amount of saliva to it to make it sticky.



There will still be excess at the top of the bag, which can either be trimmed off or stuck down. Ron prefers the latter.



Using saliva from your tongue, moisten around the rim at the top of the bag once more, to make it sticky.





3

Take your chosen baited rig and place it firmly inside the bag, being careful not to catch the sides with the hook.



4

You now need to add another couple of inches of bait on top of the rig so that it is buried right in amongst it.



7

Tightly wrap a length of PVA tape around the twisted section at the top of the bag 2-3 times, like so.



8

The next step is to use a little bit of saliva on the tag ends of the PVA tape to make them slightly sticky.



11

Fold the corner over with your thumb and press it down firmly so that it sticks to the bottom of the bag.



12

Repeat this process with the other bottom corner and your bag is already a lot more compact and more aerodynamic.



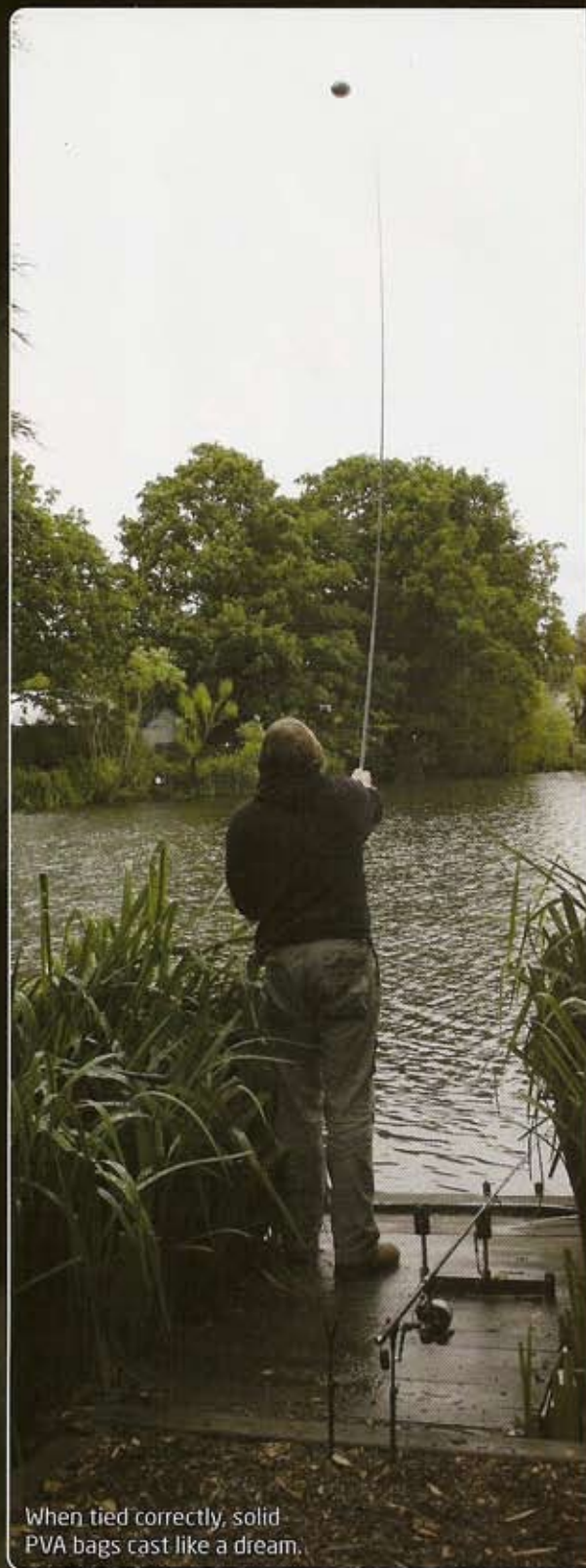
15

Stick the rim down around the main bag to make it more aerodynamic and also make it stronger for casting.



16

Complete the bag by using sharp scissors to pierce lots of small holes in the bag to release any remaining air.



When tied correctly, solid PVA bags cast like a dream.

**As a carp takes a big mouthful of the melted bag's contents the hookbait is sucked up with them, and hey presto, we have a carp!**

Turn over to learn how to make Ron's ultra-effective sticky bag mix!





## HOW TO MAKE... RON'S STICKY BAG MIX



1 Start by adding some dry groundbait to a mixing tub.



2 The next addition is some tiny Micro Salmon pellets.



3 A liberal scattering of Mini Match boilies is then added.



4 Give the ingredients a good stir in order to mix them up.



5 20ml of Richworth Aqua Stim liquid is then introduced.



6 Now stir up the concoction in order to work in the liquid.



7 The mix is really sticky so load it into a PVA bag with a spoon.



8 Put your rig inside and tie off the bag, as illustrated earlier.

Ron has caught literally hundreds of carp of all shapes and sizes using the tactics outlined in this article.



**"The result is a sticky, wet mix that once in water leaks off loads of attraction, drawing in the fish from all over the lake and away from everyone else's swims"**

### Mix Three - The Sticky Mix

This particular mix that I like to use is certainly the messiest! It includes mixing dry groundbait with some tiny boilies and some micro pellets. I then add some lovely Aqua Stim liquid from Richworth; it is PVA-friendly and so won't melt the bag. The result is a sticky, wet mix that once in water leaks off loads of attraction, drawing in the fish from all over the lake and away from everyone else's swims. This can be a real winner in deeper lakes as the flavours help to attract the carp down from the upper layers; I have also had a lot of success with this type of bag in the winter.

### Mix Four - Pure Liquid

The final bag I will sometimes use is a pure liquid bag. The liquid, obviously, has to be PVA-friendly, so if you are unsure about a certain liquid ask for assistance from your local tackle shop. I will often fish with 20ml of CSL Liquid on its own





in a bag, which I will present in conjunction with a single boilie hookbait. This is a really effective tactic when everything else appears to be failing, and it has earned me a number of bonus bites in the past, bless it. It's a real one-bite-at-a-time method and again has proved its worth to me in deeper venues such as Hardwick Lake on the Richworth-Linear complex over in Oxford. I have recently received a very crafty new PVA product called Plastic Tube (from a company called Strategy in Holland) that is basically a combination between the PVA mesh systems and your normal solid PVA. If you don't want to go through the hassle of tying your own liquid bags then there are some companies out there that manufacture them, so all you have to do is hook one on and you're ready to start haulin'.



Ron favours relatively supple coated braids for his solid bag rigs.

#### Rig Setup

I don't want to go too deeply into rigs because this is a feature about PVA bags.

**"Whenever I am fishing with everything inside the bag I will always use an in-line lead, and my favourites at the moment are the 2oz Korda Square Pears"**

However, I do think it's important to at least address the issue. Firstly I would like to mention hooklength materials. Many people will tell you that when you are putting the whole rig inside a PVA bag you should use braid because it is really supple. That is a valid point but I must admit that my preferred choice is to use relatively supple coated braids such as StripTeaze, Black Silt, and Camfusion. Something else worth mentioning is that I like to doctor my lead setup. Whenever I am fishing with everything inside the bag I will always use an in-line lead, and my favourites at the moment are the 2oz Korda Square Pears, which come with a solid plastic insert through their core. I like to remove this plastic insert and replace it with a rubber Shockleader Sleeve from Korda. This sleeve means you have a long tail sticking out of the back of the lead which you can then tie the back of the bag around.

## HOW TO MAKE... RON'S PURE LIQUID BAG



Ron has recently been using this clever PVA Plastic Tube from Strategy to construct his liquid bags.



Start by tying a simple overhand knot into the end of the Plastic Tube PVA to form the bottom of the bag.



Now carefully cut off approximately 12ins of Plastic Tube PVA from the spool with a pair of scissors.



Ron then draws 20ml of CSL Liquid into a syringe. You must be very careful when handling such a tool!



All the CSL is then carefully dispensed from the syringe into the bag. At this stage be careful not to pierce the PVA.



The next step is to tie another overhand knot in the PVA Tube to seal the CSL Liquid inside the bag.



You will now need to leave a 1ins gap and then tie another overhand knot in the Plastic Tube PVA, like this.



Now, simply hook your baited rig into the PVA in between the two knots, like so, and the rig is ready to be cast out.



## HOW TO MAKE... RON'S IN-LINE LEAD SETUP



1 Ron uses a 2oz Korda Square Pear in-line lead for all his solid PVA bag fishing.



2 Firstly, take the lead and carefully tap on the plastic insert with something firm.



3 Stop tapping once the insert starts to come out of the other end, as shown above.



4 Now take some pliers and firmly grab hold of the insert, as illustrated in this picture.



5 You now need to pull the whole insert out from the middle of the in-line lead.



6 You will need a rubber Shockleader Sleeve to replace the discarded plastic insert.



7 With your thumb and forefinger, carefully ease the plastic loop out of the Sleeve.



8 Now insert the Sleeve into the lead so that the thin end sticks out of the back.

## HOW TO MAKE... THE RIG OUTSIDE THE BAG



1 Thread the hook on your rig through the middle of a PVA foam nugget, all the way down to the anti-tangle sleeve.



2 Now place your rig inside a solid PVA bag and pull the hook through the bottom of it, like so.



3 Now pull the whole rig out of the bag until the PVA nugget sits against the bottom of the bag.



4 Place the lead inside the bag. Note how the PVA nugget will stop it from coming out of the hole created by the rig.



5 The next step is to fill up your PVA bag with your chosen bait. Ron chooses to use pellets for this presentation.



6 Now, tie the bag as detailed earlier in the article, and hook the rig into the top of the bag as shown above.

### The Rig Outside the Bag

So far I have talked about tying solid PVA bags in which the lead, rig and hookbait are all inside the bag with the free offerings. If this type of presentation doesn't do it for you then maybe my crafty rig-outside-the-bag tactic will. I designed this particular setup to mimic the effect that you would achieve with a Method feeder. With this presentation the lead still goes inside the bag but the rig is pulled through the bottom of the bag. You then tie up the bag as I have shown earlier (the ingredients can be whatever you fancy) and then nick the hook into the top of the bag. Once the bag has melted on the bottom you will be left with your hookbait sitting nicely amongst a pile of pellets – pukka!

### Over and Out

That's all I've got time for this month, unfortunately folks. I hope you've picked up plenty of useful tips and that you will give my suggestions a go next time you are on the bank. Please let me know if you've given the old solid bags a go via the Crafty Carper office, as I will be interested to hear your feedback.

Until we meet again, tight lines and solid bagging! CC

### Next Month...

You won't have too long to wait until you meet big Ron again because he returns in next month's issue of Crafty Carper with Part Two of his PVA Bag Masterclass in which he turns his attention to PVA mesh bags. It's set to be another article full of useful tips, which you can't afford to miss!

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