

# 48 HOURS ON PAR FISHERIES

WITH CHRIS BOYDA AND DAVE BENTON

This month the boys travel to Essex to fish the Front Lake at Par Fisheries. With temperatures plummeting and the weather becoming all the more unpredictable, how will they fare?

## Angler Profile

Chris Boyda

Age: 21

Hometown: Aldershot, Hants.

Occupation: Builder

UK PB: 41lb 6oz



## Angler Profile

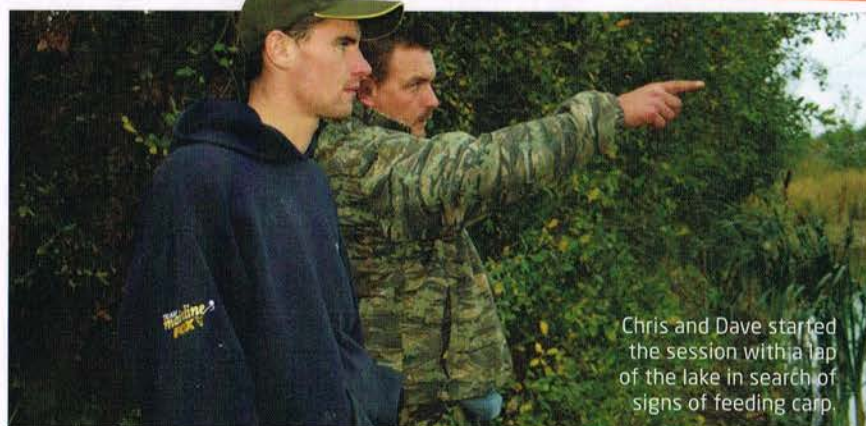
Dave Benton

Age: 40

Hometown: Aldershot, Hants.

Occupation: Carer

UK PB: 35lb 8oz



Chris and Dave started the session with a lap of the lake in search of signs of feeding carp.

**T**his month we are going to fish the Front Lake here at Par Fisheries, which is a lovely little two-lake complex in Essex run by the established tackle shop Brentwood Angling. The Front Lake has a pretty large head of carp, with loads of doubles and 20s and a couple of 30s, and it sounds like the perfect venue to fish at this time of year. One thing slightly concerning, however, is that the locals have said the lake has been fishing a bit slow of late, with the carp acting a bit cagey, so it doesn't sound like it's going to be a walk in the park! The weather forecast doesn't look very good for the next 48 hours, with a lot of rain being predicted for the second half of our stay (great!).

## DAY ONE

**1100 Chris:** We arrive at Par to be greeted by the sight of the sun shining on the flat calm surface. The lake is reasonably open, with the most overgrown part being a spit, which makes the lake look a bit like a horseshoe; it kind of splits the lake into two parts. The spit is out of bounds and so the margins should hold a few carp because any areas of quiet water nearly always do, and that certainly requires some further investigation, at least.

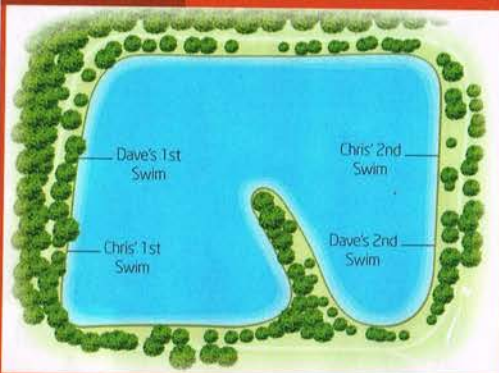
**1100 Dave:** On arriving at the venue the first thing that hits me is just how cold the air is. Winter is

certainly on its way and I just hope these Par carp are feeling hungry because my initial impressions are that this is going to be tough! I have been told that a variety of baits work here, so my plan is to experiment with a few different types until I (hopefully) stumble across the winning one! Like Chris, I think this out of bounds spit looks very carpy and I wouldn't mind a swim that enables me to boat over to it. First things first, we are both going to do a lap or two around the lake to see if we can see any signs of feeding carp.

**1200 Chris:** Quietly approaching one of the bays near the no fishing spit, we immediately see a patch

**"Winter is certainly on its way and I just hope these Par carp are feeling hungry because my initial impressions are that this is going to be tough!" Dave**



**Fishery File** Front Lake, Par Fisheries

**Size:** 4-5 acres approx.

**Stock:** Several hundred carp averaging doubles that go to over 30lb. Also catfish over 70lb!

**Facilities:** Secure car park and Portaloos. Brentwood Angling is just a couple of miles away.

**Contact:** 01277 200985 (Tickets must be booked in advance)

**48-hour ticket price:** £60 for two rods.

**Website:** [www.brentwoodangling.co.uk/fisheries](http://www.brentwoodangling.co.uk/fisheries)

of bubbles on the surface, and as we excitedly look on, more and more patches rise. It's obvious that a group of carp is getting stuck into some grub, so we don't hesitate and go back to the van and grab our kit. At this time of year the windows of opportunity can be very small so we can't afford to waste any time. A quick capture now will help to take some of the pressure off, and it would mean the session gets off to a good start, which will help to motivate us for the remainder of our stay.

**1220 Dave:** Chris has won the toss and has set up in the corner where we saw the big group of carp tucked up. I have decided to start off by fishing halfway along the Car Park Bank towards the point of the spit, hoping to pick up any carp moving in or out of Chris' area. To start with I am just going to put out a scattering of about 50 boilies along the treeline and then boat out a small PVA stick with a chopped boilie on the Hair.

**1230 Chris:** With the carp obviously present I want to cause as little disturbance as possible, and so one rod has gone on a solid bag with the other two just fishing small stringers. They were flicked into position with little fuss and I obviously succeeded in my bid not to spook them because they are still fizzing away. A take must be moments away, so

to take my mind off it I will sit and make up some stringers and bags ready for the session ahead.

**1330 Chris:** With the sun becoming warmer I've been watching the area with the binoculars. I have seen the group of carp rise up in the water for a few minutes before they dropped back down out of sight. Then, a few seconds later, the solid bag rod bursts into life and I am into my first Par carp! A spirited fight results in a low-double common in immaculate condition. The pressure is now off – a blank has been avoided. I can now concentrate on trying an area which will, hopefully, produce a number of bites.

**1445 Dave:** The wind has really started to get up now and extra pegs are needed to hold down the bivvy. A few carp have started to show out in open water, so after loading up the boat and waiting for a while to pinpoint exactly where they are, off she goes to the area of the disappearing rings of a showing carp. With the load dropped, my PVA foam nugget from the hook pops up to the surface and looks bang on the area where the carp have been showing. Then, yes – another sticks its head out right next to the foam! This has surely got to be a bite.

**1500 Chris:** Since I banked that first carp I've been round to the out of bounds bank to bait up with two kilos of hemp, Partblend, chopped and whole boilies, and some groundbait. I have made some loosely formed balls that explode as soon as they hit the water. The plan is to make a carpet of attraction for the carp to home in on as darkness arrives. My solid bag mix is the same as the groundbait but with one addition – Mainline's Hemp Oil. I add this because it will hopefully give boosted attraction around my hookbait and it also helps to make the mix PVA-friendly. My two rods on stringers have gone out on combi-rigs with whittled-down boilie hookbaits.

**1540 Dave:** After a couple of good liners on the open water rod, the TLB buzzer lets out a one-toner and I'm off! Boy, do these Par carp scrap – however, it's not long before I'm the victor and a lovely low-double common is safely in the net. The common fell to a single piece of plastic maize presented on a fluorocarbon hooklink D-Rig style. I am relieved to be off the mark but I already want another one, so I reload the boat and wait for another carp to show. It's not long before another one does, but disaster strikes when my boat suffers engine failure. After some quick repairs I manage to make a bodge job and old



Dave opted to fish with ultra slack lines in order to avoid spooking the wary Par carp.



Disaster strikes for Dave when his beloved bait boat suffered engine failure!



The spit that divides the lake in two was the most obvious visual feature.



## HOW TO MAKE... A SOLID PVA BAG



1  
Chris starts by wrapping a small nugget of PVA foam around his hook.



2  
Take a medium-sized solid PVA bag and open it up with two fingers, like so.



3  
Put half a handful of mix into the bag so that more sits in one corner than the other.



4  
The hook and hookbait are then placed in the corner with the least mix, like so.



5  
Another half handful of mix is then placed into the bag to cover the hookbait.



6  
With the bag about half full, the lead is then placed on top of the mix.



7  
Carefully and tightly twist the top of the bag around the tail rubber of the lead.



8  
Take some PVA tape and wrap it around the twisted top three times.



9  
Tie three overhand knots in the tape and then trim away the bag ends, like so.



10  
Take a pair of sharp scissors and carefully trim away any excess at the top of the bag.



11  
You should now be left with the top of the bag looking just like this.



12  
Now gently tap one of the bottom corners of the bag to help compress the mix inside.



13  
This should then leave the corner free of any of the mix, as you can see here.



14  
The next step is to quickly add some saliva to the empty corner.



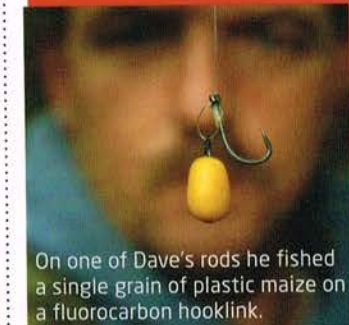
15  
Fold the moist corner over on itself and press it firmly so it sticks in place.



16  
Repeat the folding process with the other corner and you will have the perfect bag!



Chris added some hemp oil to his groundbait mix to convert it into his solid bag mix. The oil not only makes the mix PVA-friendly but also helps to draw carp to the vicinity of the hookbait.



On one of Dave's rods he fished a single grain of plastic maize on a fluorocarbon hooklink.

### CHRIS' TIP



Before tying a new bag it's imperative that you make sure your rig isn't wet, otherwise it will melt the PVA. A really quick and effective way of drying out a rig is to cover it in your bag mix so that all the moisture is absorbed.

HMS Benton limps out to another showing carp. It doesn't look like the boat is going to last the session – poor girl.

**1700 Chris:** The wind is getting stronger and colder and I fear that it may take its toll on the fishing. I am in a quandary because the carp may leave the bay for the sanctuary of the deeper water, but I have decided to stay put for tonight because. I feel confident that the out of bounds area will still hold some carp. I'm going to reel in and quickly go round to the far bank with the marker rod and 10 Method balls to prime an area to use as an option for tomorrow if the going gets tough around here.

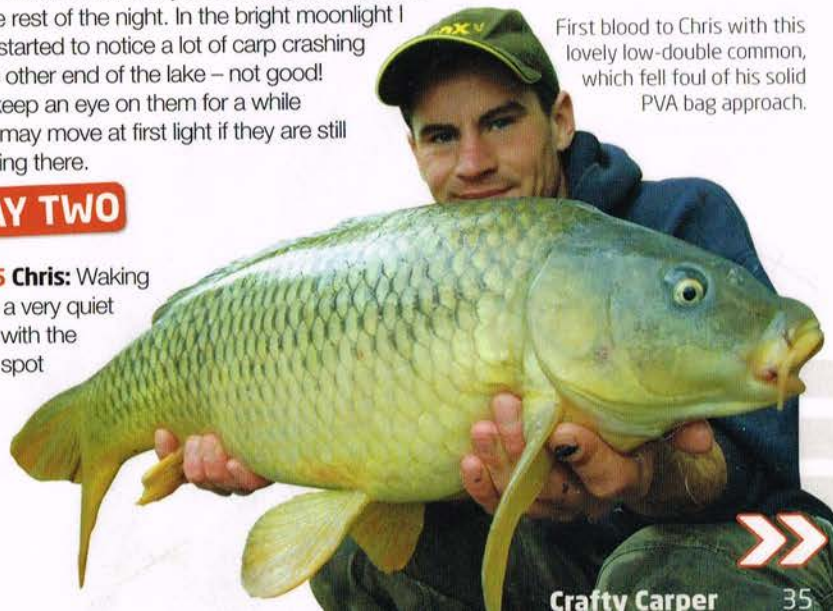
**1900 Chris:** It's now well into darkness and I've just had a savage liner on the baited spot, which is encouraging, so I'm thinking that a bite won't be too far away. I just hope that liner wasn't caused by the carp leaving the area!

**2345 Dave:** The open water rod is away again and another common of similar size to the earlier one is soon in the net. As with my first bite, this one fell to

the single grain of plastic maize, but with the boat now deciding it's not going to work at all I will have to go back to the old style of casting out my baits for the rest of the night. In the bright moonlight I have started to notice a lot of carp crashing at the other end of the lake – not good! I will keep an eye on them for a while and I may move at first light if they are still showing there.

### DAY TWO

**0645 Chris:** Waking up to a very quiet night with the main spot



First blood to Chris with this lovely low-double common, which fell foul of his solid PVA bag approach.



# HOW TO...

## CONSTRUCT ATOMIC'S MAGGOT RIG



The Maggot Rig from Atomic Tackle is purposely designed for fishing the Mag-Aligner presentation.



Start by attaching the extra-large-eyed swivel from the Maggot Rig to one end of your leadcore leader.



Thread a gate latch needle through the plastic insert of the in-line lead and hook hold of the loop in the leadcore.



Slide the lead onto and down the leadcore and then fix it into position so that the swivel sits inside, like so.



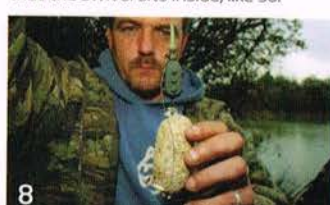
Attach your Mag-Aligner rig to the other swivel supplied and then thread the swivel onto the leadcore.



Position the swivel of your rig over the plastic insert that protrudes from the in-line lead, as illustrated above.



Simply thread the tail rubber down the leadcore and onto the plastic insert to secure the Mag-Aligner in position.



Finally, tie a bag of maggots to the large swivel, nick your hook into the bag, and the setup is complete.

**"The fluoros are usually winners in winter but I can't help thinking the carp are preoccupied on naturals, so in this scenario there is only one thing for it - MAGGOTS!" Dave**

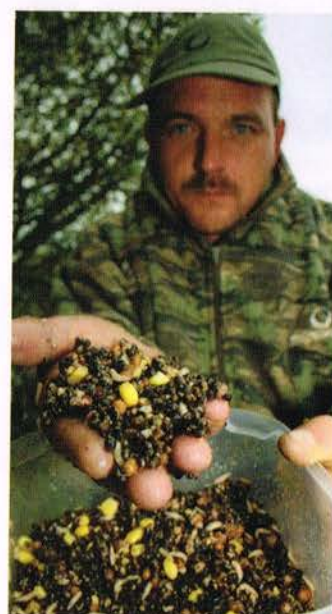
looking dead and no more liners was enough for us both to reel in, make a circuit of the lake, and have a rethink, as it's clear the carp have moved on. On the opposite bank, in the slack water created by the spit, there's plenty of fizzing going on. It would make sense, as this part of the lake is probably more comfortable for them because it's sheltered from the cold wind. With what we have seen we have no choice but to up sticks and move to the other side of the lake. It takes a lot of hard work and effort to move in this cold weather, but hopefully this effort will be rewarded with some more bites.

**0730 Dave:** The move had to happen, and after staying up well past 2.00 a.m. watching fish show, my head is done in! I should have moved in the dark but decided not to, so I am going to make up for that lack of effort now by getting around to the slack water on the other side of the spit and hopefully nicking a quick bite.

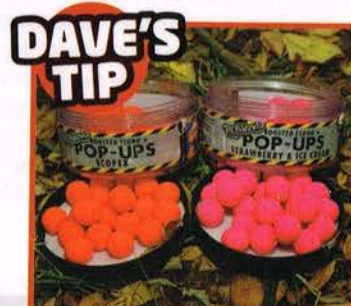
**0830 Chris:** After moving swims I start by fishing my bag and stringer approach to the areas where I had seen the most carp activity. Three carp have head and shouldered close in, only 30yds or so out, in the last half hour, so I am feeling quite confident. However, with this cold air temperature I am not brimming with it.

**1130 Dave:** The fish have been fizzing lots since I moved but so far my plastic maize and fluoro pop-ups have yet to produce a bite. The fluoros are usually winners in winter but I can't help thinking the carp are preoccupied on naturals, so in this scenario there is only one thing for it - MAGGOTS! Unfortunately, I haven't got any with me so I am going to have to make a quick trip up to Brentwood Angling.

**1200 Chris:** Regular recasting with bags and stringers to different areas has failed to produce a bite so I have decided to get the marker rod out and try to locate a carpy-looking feature. A couple of chucks soon reveals a gravel strip at 30yds, right on line with where they were showing earlier. I've decided to tightly spod a



Dave opted to feed a mix of hemp, Partiblend, corn, and maggots in a bid to trigger the carp into feeding on anglers' bait instead of the naturals.



At this time of year it's always worth carrying some high-attract fluoro pop-ups in your tackle bag. More often than not they will get you out of jail, even on the bleakest of days.

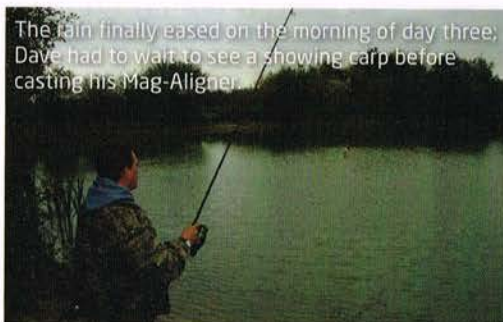
The plastic maize produced this hard-fighting common to Dave.



Another disaster strikes as horrendous rain prevented Dave from being able to regularly recast his Mag-Aligner for a number of hours!



The rain finally eased on the morning of day three. Dave had to wait to see a showing carp before casting his Mag-Aligner.



kilo of mix onto the gravel area in the hope that this will kick-start the fishing. Most of the lake is around 6ft deep but this spot is a little deeper, at around 8ft, so two rods are cast over the bait whilst the third rod will act as a rover (basically, if I see a carp show I will chuck a solid bag on its head and hope for the best!).

**1210 Dave:** I have returned with a bucketful of maggots, which, in turn, has brought me a bucketful of confidence! With the carp still fizzing I will cast Mag-Aligners on the fizzing and hopefully outwit these cagey Essex carp. The Mag-Aligners are simple to construct, especially when you use the great Maggot Rigs from Atomic Tackle. I am not going to put all my eggs in one basket though, and will bait a couple of areas with some spod mix laced with maggots in order to prompt a response.

**1800 Chris:** This is doing my head in! I've still had no further action so I've changed two rods over to Chod Rigs with Mainline's ever-faithful high-attract pop-ups as hookbaits. I'm going to get up a number of times during the night to recast to different spots on these rods but still keep one on the baited area from earlier. The plan is to hopefully nail one of Par's bigger residents and save this session from being ruined by this nasty weather!

**1830 Dave:** The only fish I've undone is a bream, and it's now starting to rain very hard, which is the worst thing that can happen when fishing the Mag-Aligner. Regular casting is key with this approach but the bags are bursting before I even start to cast the rig. Waiting for the rain to slow down is starting to take its toll, and I will have to wait until it stops to get the rhythm going. This session is turning into a nightmare!

**2300 Dave:** There's just no let up with the weather, and I'm feeling like I'm camping as much as fishing! The rain is not slowing down, not even for a few minutes, and with the late night I had and the early morning start, I think I'm going to get my head down for a while. It's got to be better in the morning.

## DAY THREE

**0700 Chris:** All rods are now on Choddies in a last-gasp attempt to catch one of these head-banging creatures. The cold wind and rain has eased today and it's now similar to how it was at the start of the

session. I've had a look around where I first started, only to find they've moved back in there. The only problem is, so has another angler! I'm going to try to move round to where I baited with the 10 groundbait balls earlier in the session to see if the carp have taken advantage of the free food. The swim also covers a lot of water so the other two Choddies will be fired out there to search for feeding carp around the swim.

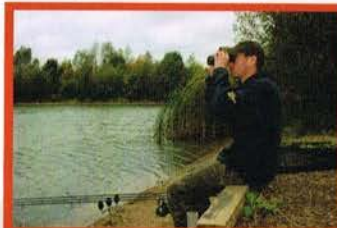
**0830 Dave:** The rain eventually eased in the middle of the night and I managed to get a couple of rods out, but the fish have moved again, and so have I. The pressure is now on for just one more in the next few hours. Bags of maggots will be launched at any signs of feeding carp. After the euphoria of last month's success at Swan, we are both beginning to feel that this session hasn't at all gone to plan!

**1200 Dave:** As I reel in the rods I start to think this has been one of the harder features, as everything that could have gone against us did! The weather has been terrible and every time we moved the fish appeared to do the same.

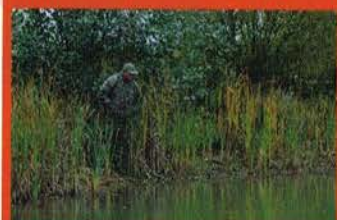
**1200 Chris:** We have come to a very frustrating end to the session, and it seems like we've been chasing our tails. After trying nearly everything it seems that the carp weren't willing to get their heads down. The only carp we did catch were over a handful of bait, but that's fishing for you – one session might not go to plan but next time out you might bag a whacker. We both hope to return to Par in the near future to unlock some of its potential. There is no doubting that on its day this is one of the best day ticket fisheries around.

Until next time, get out there and do the business.

Chris and Dave. **CC**



Having moved swims early on day two, Chris spent hours scanning the water with his 'bins' for the slightest sign of feeding carp.



Dave also moved swims early on day two and managed to find some fizzing carp in the calm water behind the spit.



A quick trip to Brentwood Angling and Dave returned with a bucketful of maggots – and a bucketful of confidence too!



Dave made it three for the team with this common shortly before midnight on the first day.