

# King Of The COUNTIES

Does where you live affect how you fish? We join three commercial masters from different corners of the UK to see how their approaches differ!

**T**here has always been plenty of debate among anglers from varying locations in the UK, often because they fish very differently from one another.

We have teamed up with three anglers from totally different parts of the UK at White Springs Fishery in South Wales, to establish the differences within their approaches.

## The Contenders...



**ANDY OLDHAM**  
Ex-England international and UK Champion  
Sponsors: Frenzee, Bait-Tech  
Age: 50  
Lives: Maltby, Rotherham

**THE NORTH – ANDY OLDHAM**  
Coming from up north, I've been surrounded by amazing anglers and enjoyed a real variation of fishing. For many years I was a member of the mighty Barnsley Blacks squad, sharing information with the likes of Alan Scotthorne and Tommy Pickering, to name but two. I always pride myself on fishing high-profile matches and, although commercial fishing is my main priority nowadays, I always want to win.  
A vital lesson that has led me to hundreds of match wins over the years is to quickly establish the positive tactics that will catch you the most fish from a swim. I'm not one for fishing negatively and would rather blow-out knowing that I've had a chance of bagging up, than winkle out a few fish and not make the most of a swim.




**ANDY NEAL**  
Welsh international  
Sponsors: Frenzee, Bait-Tech  
Age: 39  
Lives: Aberystwyth

**THE WELSHMAN – ANDY NEAL**  
Stereotypically, anglers from the south are very positive. The fishing is very consistent in this part of the country and, even in winter, it's rare that we get any ice or snow. We're lucky to have some fantastic venues too, where there are always plenty of fish to catch!  
My swim presents me with different options to the other two lads, in the way of a long banking to fish against to my left. I like to treat features like this as I would an island. Although it's merely a long margin swim, the lake shallows up towards the bank and the bush-strewn margin is sure to hold plenty of fish.  
To make the most of this swim I'm going to fish the long pole at a full 13 metres along the bank. I'm expecting to catch a lot, so I don't want to confuse myself by feeding and fishing lots of swims. When you're looking to catch to a feature, feeding bait out in open water can often split your fish up.



**JOHN WHINCUP**  
Commercial master  
Sponsors: Frenzee, Bait-Tech  
Age: 39  
Lives: Peterborough

**THE FLATLANDER – JON WHINCUP**  
I served my angling apprenticeship on the Fenland drains and have since transferred the skills that I learnt here to the commercials I fish nowadays. I'm faced with a wide, open-water swim. Although I have no obvious features, I have lots of power to draw fish from a wide area.  
In my experience, the best way to draw fish into the swim is through loose feed, especially in the summer months when the fish are competing for bait.  
With FIs and carp being my target species, I am planning to loose feed 4mm pellets and fish banded pellets on the hook.



**VENUE FILE**  
**WHITE SPRINGS FISHERY**  
Location: Garnswllt Road, Swansea SA4 8QG  
Day tickets: £8; concessions £7  
Contact: 01729 885699  
Web: www.whitespringsfishery.co.uk

Even when fishing short, try to be accurate when feeding by hand, it makes a big difference!

**CHOOSING QUALITY**  
One of my key aims in fishing is to always target quality fish. No matter if it's a small-fish race on a canal, or big-weight bagging for carp, if you can catch bigger fish than everyone else, you're going to be very difficult to beat.  
I'm faced with an open-water swim, with no visible features other than a few sedges and an adjacent platform in the margins. On swims like this it's vital to give yourself maximum fish-pulling power. The best way of achieving this is to keep things dead simple and feed just one area of the swim to begin with. This way, any fish that want to feed are drawn into the area and will actually trigger other fish in their vicinity to feed too.

I've decided that I'm going to concentrate on a short-pole swim. Once I venture out past six metres, the bottom is virtually flat. However, the near shelf is a natural patrol route for bigger fish. By feeding this one area, I can hopefully catch the fish that are gathered around this underwater feature but also draw in extra fish from the open water beyond. If I fed other lines further out, these fish would have little reason to venture in to feed.  
The other area that I'm going to target is a margin swim. The later you can leave this swim without fishing it, the better it will be. The bigger fish in today's commercials are very wise and will often wait for people to pack up later in the day before they venture in to feed. I'm aiming to trick these astute specimens by leaving the area alone until I really need to fish it, often for a late match-winning run of big fish!

**BACK-UP SWIMS**  
I've found around two and a half feet of water. If you move into water much shallower than this you can suffer long, quiet spells when fish are less willing to move into the shallows to feed, especially if you're looking to catch a mixture of species, as I am for the first part of the session.  
Nevertheless, some days you can often catch the bigger fish by getting into really shallow water, particularly later in the session. Along the bank to my left I've found a small area of mud banking and against this I can get into just 14 inches of water. I'm going to plumb a rig up for here and treat this like my margin swim for later. Hopefully I'll snare a few 'heifers' here!

**UP AND DOWN**  
When basing an attack around loose feeding, you create the option of catching at a range of depths. I plan on starting the session on the deck, before eventually catching shallow. I've set up numerous rigs to cater for this. The first is for fishing on the deck, the second around two and a half feet deep, and the final one set just a foot deep for when they're really having it! Because the feed will be covering all levels, it's vital that I keep changing depths to find where they're best feeding in the water column.



Inline dippers are virtually tangle free – perfect for slapping!



John fooled this pretty ghost carp after 10 quick taps tip on the water with his pole tip!



**ANDY OLDHAM**  
 An hour into the session, I seriously doubted whether or not my short attack was right. I started by potting in a mixture of hemp and 6mm meat, and regularly fed a dozen or so cubes of meat over the top at regular intervals. It took a while to start getting bites and my first few fish were actually skimmers, soon followed by a run of F1s. As the swim slowly grew stronger, I felt that my loose-fed meat was too selective, so I began feeding a little secret combo of mine – casters and meat!

This worked a treat and definitely brought more fish into the swim. Often, I think that fish such as skimmers and roach will come to feed on the casters and in turn attract the bigger fish. This has certainly been the case and after two hours the skimmers diminished. I've then enjoyed two good hours catching big F1s and numerous proper carp.

Catching well on my short swim gave me very little reason to even feed my margin swim. I managed to hold off until the final hour, when I decided to feed a large pot of corn and hemp to my left-hand platform. In the closing 40 minutes I sneaked in eight pot-bellied mirrors, feeding a large Soft Pot of my black-and-yellow combo after each fish to keep them interested. I finished the session with just over 120lb; not bad from a venue that I've never seen before!

**ANDY OLDHAM**



Carp will venture into very shallow water right next to the bank, while skimmers and F1s are better targeted in a depth of two and a half feet.

**ANDY NEAL**

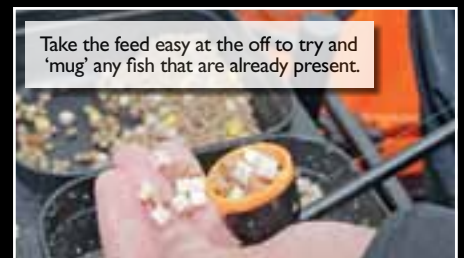
My session couldn't have got off to a better start today, with an 8lb ghostie coming to the net first drop-in. This fish was obviously in the swim already, and by starting the session by feeding just a medium Soft Pot of meat, you can often mug a few of the residents straight away. Several smaller mirrors followed, before the F1s and skimmers arrived. These fish tend to live in open water, so it shows that they've moved into the shallower water to feed.

I enjoyed a steady run of fish for the first part of the session, catching plenty of small fish, with an odd carp mixed in. However, I definitely felt that I could up the ante with feed to try and draw in bigger carp, so I began feeding a large pot of loose groundbait after every carp.

This worked well for three or four fish; the bigger critters were definitely coming into the feed! However, I was struggling with liners and foul-hookers in this depth of water, so with two hours remaining I decided to hit the shallower swim with the same feeding tactics.

This definitely paid off and, although

I didn't get as many bites here, I caught several bigger carp in the final part of the session. It was risky hitting the swims with my big potting technique but by catching the skimmers and F1s to start with, the bigger carp helped boost my 100lb-plus net in the closing stages.



**Pole Fishing Says:**

Three top anglers, three different approaches and a very similar result. As interesting as it was to see how our three experts tackled their pegs, the fact that they all finished with a similar amount proves that there is more than one way to effectively skin a rabbit!



Often, the longer you can wait before feeding your margin swim, the better it will be!



Part of Andy's stunning haul, all caught fishing against the banking!

**N-TICE POLONY**

Polony is one of the all-time greats of the bait world thanks to two main factors: its meat ingredients and heavily flavoured attraction! Our spiced polony has taken waters apart all over the country!

Bait-Tech's **N-TICE POLONY** has been produced using the finest pork flavoured naturally with Bait-Tech's unique mix of garlic, betaine, herbs and spices to give it an incredible twist.

Garlic needs no introduction as one of the all-time attractors so its addition in this instance simply boosts an already irresistible hook and feed bait. Use it punched, cubed or in big chunks for pole, feeder or waggler fishing when

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- Packed full of garlic & betaine
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 Also available in this range:  
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"N-TICE Polony has caught me huge bags of fish in various circumstances. It really is a bit of an animal!" *Grant Albutt*

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