

# Keeping It Simple



The secret to our style of fishing is to keep it simple and to travel as light as is humanly possible. This photo of Wayne in action shows perfectly how little gear is actually required for a days fishing on the rove.

All that is missing from this photo is the landing net which is usually clipped to the back of his waistcoat, a small bag containing enough bait for a day's fishing, a few extra tackle/lure items, some drink, snack bars, terminal tackle, etc. And of course your rod and reel. Everything else that is required for the day is held within the multitude of pockets in the waistcoat.

The real beauty to our style of fishing, is that it brings it well within the financial reach of any angler wishing to try it out for themselves for the first time, or for those who wish to escape from just sitting behind a pair of matched rods waiting for pike to find their bait. Getting on the rove will bring more sport, and more enjoyment.

For those wishing to try it for themselves, here's a breakdown of some of the equipment that you'll need.....

**Landing Net** The first choice net for the BPS was the Huntsman Landing Net marketed by **Harris Sportsmail**. Sadly this has now been withdrawn. A fairly new company called **Spro**, who have two differing styles of net that fill the void nicely. The first is very similar to the Huntsman except for being based on a traditional Salmon/Grilse net with a slide through handle; whilst the other net is available in two sizes and has a folding triangular net head. This also has a clip for attaching to your belt or waistcoat. Both nets feature adjustable handles and a pike-safe rubberised mesh. Both are available from various mail order firms for between £25 and £30 - excellent value for money.



Other companies offer similar products, so shop around for the best deals.

**Rods** Forget about the need for 3 lb test curve rods, you just don't need these. Any decent Carp rod of around 2 to 2½ lb test curve will do, with a length of up to 12 foot easily covering almost every water you will fish. In those waters where you don't need to reach over marginal weed to fish, a fairly strong spinning rod of between 9 and 10 ft is ideal.

There are many manufacturers out there producing suitable rods to suit all budgets. I personally use two rods from Fox & Greys.

I own a Fox XS Predator 9 ft spinning Rod, and a brand new Greys Prowla 11ft 2.25 lb T/c Bait Rod. Both of these rods will cover virtually any water and conditions that I could ever face.

Everyone will have their own idea of what suits them best. But as a general rule, you want a rod that is light enough to be carried all day long and to cast and retrieve both baits and light lures as well as occasionally putting a float out for a reluctant taker or a short rest.

### Waistcoats



A waistcoat is a key part of our roving system, allowing you to travel light; but carry those essential items with you. There are two types to decide on - Shorties & Regular.

Shorties & zip off vests allow you to wade in fairly deep water without getting the contents in the lower pockets wet, whilst regular waistcoats offer a far greater load carrying capacity and warmth to your lower back. When choosing a waistcoat, look for those that feature a strong shoulder design and preferably a woven or neoprene collar to help support the load.

Shakespeare, Daiwa, Greys, Wychwood, Orvis, etc; all offer a variety of waistcoats to suit all budgets and requirements. I now own the Orvis Lightweight Super Tac-L-Pac waistcoat which is simply superb. Carries a

mountain of tackle items with ease and comfort. Buy the best you can afford within your budget.

## Tackle & Bait Bags

The choice of a tackle bag is very much down to the individual. Most of us have at least one bag suitable for the purpose, though if you can afford it a specialist bag is a real bonus. From keeping your baits fresh, to storing all those extra tackle and food items you might want with you for the day.

You need to remember that you are trying to travel as light as possible, so keep the size of bag down to a minimum. Just large enough to hold your bait and those extra items, comfortable to carry with good straps, and Not too large, and easy to carry throughout the day. These styles of bags can cost from as little as £15 if you shop around.



## Tools



You should always carry 2 long forceps of at least 10" in length, with short tips to enable easy unhooking of pike. Take a look at the New 'Prowla' range of tools from Greys. A great range of well made tools purpose designed with the predator angler in mind. A good pen knife is also very valuable to carry.

An unhooking glove with steel wire woven into the material can be an affordable and useful item to ensure your fingers are protected from the pike's razor sharp teeth and gill rakers. Any of you that suffer from diabetes out there, would be well advised to purchase and use a glove to help protect you from the risks of infection from cuts/grazes.

## Terminal Tackle

here is a temptation to carry far too much terminal tackle with you in your pockets and in small tackle boxes. You should carry just enough of what you really need for the day, for the water you are facing and not take the kitchen sink! I carry a small lure box with a selection of favourite rubber shads, and for when the pike want something more active - a couple of spinners or spoons. Plus enough strong spinning traces for the day's fishing.

A small multi-compartment box fits in one of the pockets of my waistcoat contains a few SSG Shot, with beads and bait-flags. Whilst another pocket contains a selection of egg sinkers or drilled bullets, with a Gazette Bung float in a spare pocket so that I can change to a float fished bait when required.

My traces are individually packed into a small clear sealed bag, and then placed into an easily purchased plastic cigarette/tobacco case. A couple of these cases ensure that I have enough traces to see me through the day. Bait goes into the cool bag; smelt, roach, spratts. of 3-6" in length for wobbling. The only other items I'll carry are food, drink, first aid kit, and anything else I consider of importance. Keeping it simple allows you to wander all day, covering a greater area of water in a day; thus presenting your baits to a greater number of feeding pike.



## Lures



There are a few staple lures I never travel without in my bag. One of these is the Sandra Shad as shown left. This has a really aggressive action which on its day can drive pike crazy. The simple Pearl/White or Pearl/Red Head version scores well, though I've also had a bit of success on the Yellow/Red Head as shown. Any of the Storm Naturistic shads or SavagGear shads are also well worth carrying. Plus don't forget a few simple spinners or spinnerbaits as well.

## Last but not least

Two more items of importance to think about, are that of footwear and waders. On many waters you will be able to get away with a pair of solidly built walking shoes or boots. Forget about trainers as they don't offer much in the way of protection or grip on the bank. Also you might want to consider buying yourself a pair of breathable waders with stocking foot boots and a decent pair of wading boots. Get a pair two sizes larger than you normally wear. To allow room for the neoprene stocking feet. A good pair of waders and boots will allow you to fish areas left un-fished by others, allowing you to cover fish that are don't expect an angler is after them...

Hopefully the information listed here will help you to select the gear needed to fish our favoured method of roving for pike with wobbled dead-baits and lures. So get out there and start enjoying!

*Mike Skipper*