



IN CONVERSATION WITH... MAX NOLLERT

In 1986 Max Nollert made his first boilies by hand! As owner and manager of the company Imperial Fishing (Imperial Baits), established in 2004, he is now expanding into the UK. Here he talks to Carp-Trade to give us an insight into the man behind the company.

ONLINE IMPERIAL-FISHING.COM TEL +49 6541 818500

Hello Max. Could you please introduce yourself to our readers.

MN: I was born in Germany, more precisely in Traben-Trarbach, which is right by the River Moselle. I studied oenology for 5 years in Geisenheim, which is near the River Rhine, where I sometimes fished 150 nights per year. I made my first boilies out of a Dutch mix, in a cellar, with a friend, in 1986. Then in 1994 I moved to the Rheingau and met Andreas Scherf and René Rex on a trip to Forêt d'Orient in France. This changed my life, and for the first time I had experienced anglers around me who could improve my skills.

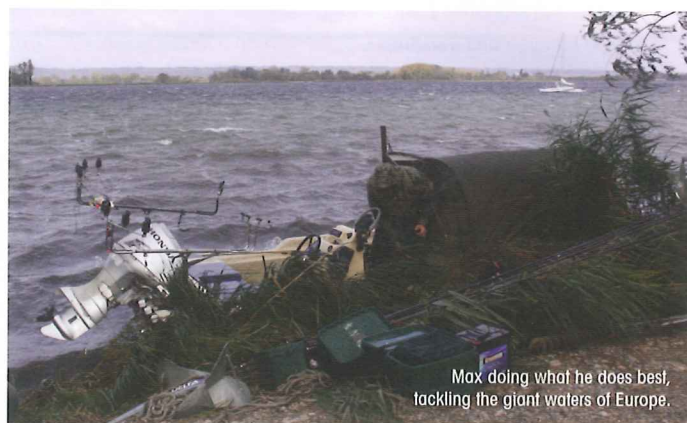
Could you explain your way of fishing before establishing your company?

MN: In 1995 I was sponsored by the company Mosella, and I worked there for 2 years from 1999. As manager my key tasks were product management, purchase, and sales to France. In 2002 I established a company with two other business partners; this worked well from the beginning but our ideas were different and we split after 1½ years.

Then Bill Cottam of Nutrabaits contacted me and I fished one season with his baits, which brought me excellent results. In the meantime I had established



Max making his first boilies in 1992 – how things have changed.



Max doing what he does best, tackling the giant waters of Europe.

Carp-GPS, selling GPS devices to help carp anglers. The Lowrance iFinder series (today H2O) are still excellent products for saving spots with pinpoint accuracy, and to find them again. In addition to my website: www.carp-gps.com I advertised my GPS appliances and they sold very well all over Europe. Finally, in 2004 I decided to establish Imperial Baits. At the time I persuaded several good friends to support the project with their different capabilities.

What made you start Imperial Fishing?

MN: My experience on the Moselle, in addition to the variety of products I'd discovered, gave me a few ideas. I thought it would be possible to combine some of them with other special products, which I

carefully chose to make completely unique boilies. I had a powder that combined with different flavours and would partly dissolve; it made an excellent attractor for boilies. After some positive trials I recognised that I had created some extraordinary mixtures which produced outstanding results. I also placed importance on hard baits made from quality ingredients such as lactalbumin and egg albumen. Besides creating and testing new mixes, an important task of the team is to present and inform the public about the right use of Carptrack products. Quality and faith in a product is important, and means that we can sell to our

customers with the knowledge that they are getting the best.

How do you explain the long-lasting success of your products in Germany and Europe? Some

of them have become best-sellers, so what are the reasons for that?

MN: Our products are used very effectively and successfully by our Carptrack teams in Germany and abroad. Today's best-sellers are Carptrack Monster-Liver, Monster's Paradise, Elite Strawberry and

Osmotic Spice, as well as the special Cold Water and Activ boilies, which are excellent. These baits have landed an enormous number of carp, amongst them many over 25 and 30kg, innumerable PBs



and even two world records. The number of carp above 30kg caught all year round caused a sensation in Europe in the past years. In our Carptrack team there are several authors who report their adventures and techniques in different international magazines, which naturally brings Imperial Baits to the attention of the public. Word of mouth is also very important, and that is maybe the reason why we now reap the fruits of our labour.

What have you got that's new?

MN: The Explosive Stickmix boilies are unique and contain, among others things, a large portion of GLM. For winter we have the sweet boilies, which are flavoured with honey and are excellent catchers. The Monster's Paradise boilies have caught some massive fish and I claim that they are the strongest boilies in the world! They're very

hard and last for ages on the Hair; they contain an extremely strong garlic, paprika and chironomid larvae and are based on the Monster boilie, which has been a winner for 6 years. Our boilies are available in 16mm, 20mm, 24mm (new) and 28mm, as well as dips, gels, pop-ups, and half-and-half hookbaits.

Imperial Fishing also offer products in the tackle sector. Can you reveal what?

MN: We offer a small but select range of products that are designed to make fishing as easy and productive as possible, all of which we source from the very best companies. Take the echo sounder, the Eagle 350c – its price and performance is excellent and is

perfectly suited to the needs of carp anglers. The products we have in our catalogue can be used for carp fishing and that is what it should be about. The Combi-Carpo range of rod pods is produced for us exclusively by Amiaud. We also now supply the range of iBoats in sizes from 160 to 400, which we believe are the best inflatable

boats for carp fishing. These boats are stable and have loads of interior room. They also inflate easily at low pressure and are made from hard-wearing PVC material Dezitex. The iBoat 400 has been produced primarily for static boat fishing, and is lighter than aluminium, and above all, quieter. The boat has a width of 190cm and plenty of inner space, about 3 x 1m, making it the perfect stable fishing platform. You can even get a purpose-designed boat bivvy to make the package even more versatile.



Using two of the iBoat range to transport his gear.



LEFT The beginning of Carp-GPS, one of Max's first companies.

Is your team absolutely essential for you?

MN: The dedication of my team is also the secret of my success; people don't realise just how much time and effort goes into fieldtesting a product. Most things we put through their paces will have had at least a solid 12 months' testing, but what people forget is that there are also loads of things that don't make the grade. This can be frustrating for the guys when all that time and effort comes to nothing. We also go to a number of fishing events all over Europe, probably attending 15 shows a year. This is normally all in a short period in the spring, and sees the team driving hundreds of kilometres, assembling stands, talking to the public, then packing up and going home. My guys do a great job.

Can you give any young carp anglers out there some advice on making a career in angling?

MN: Yes, I can! Fishing, fishing, and again fishing! First of all, before knocking on the door of your favourite manufacturer, it is better to have found your style of fishing. It isn't all about having an album packed with pictures of big fish; you also need to be a well-presented and likeable person. You need to treat fieldtesting like a job and be organised, and be able to report back your findings in a

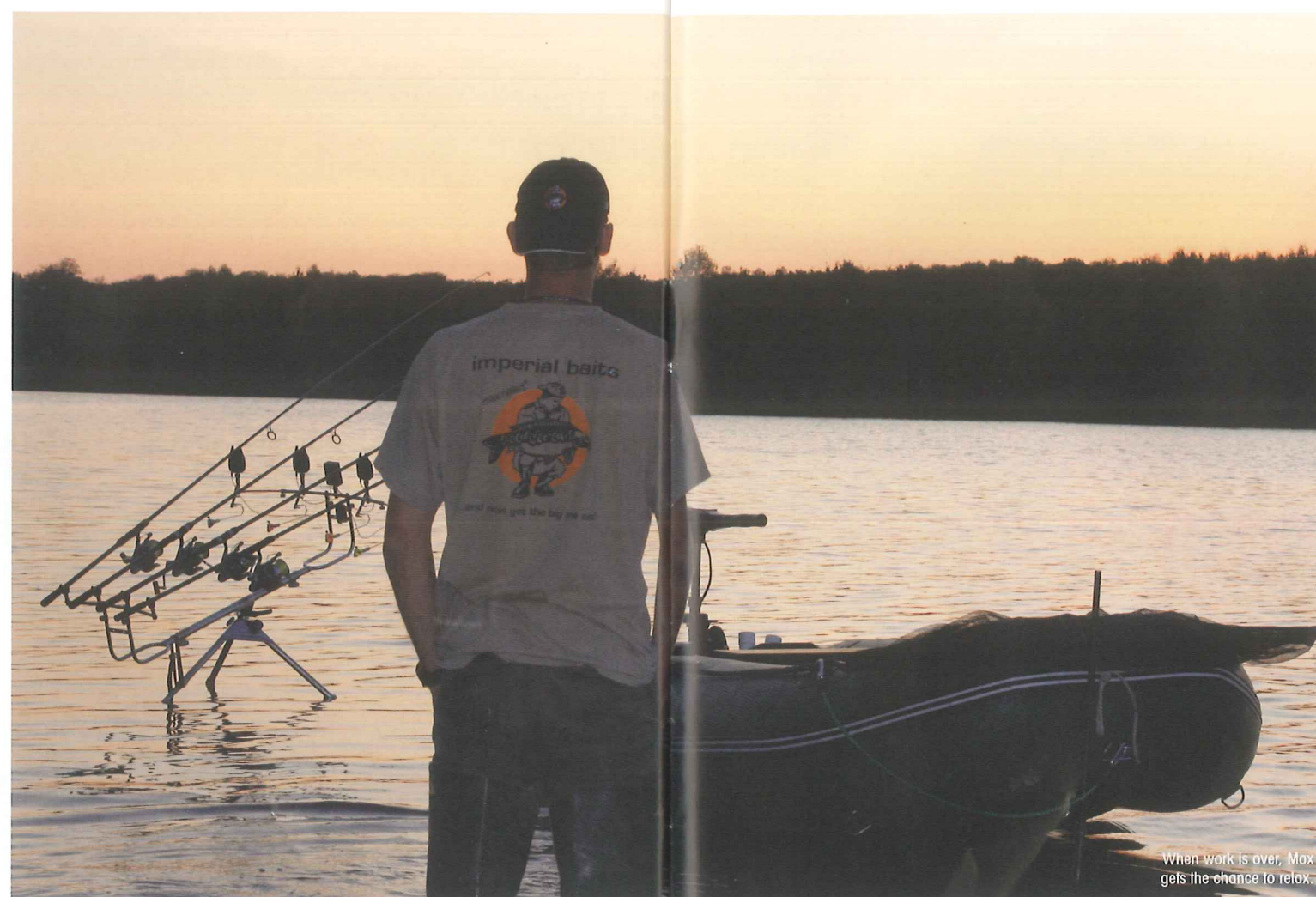
clear manner. You also need to be skilled in writing and photography because you will be asked to do features for magazines. It is often best to do your own features describing your own adventures, and get recognised for doing your own thing first. You must also have a good basic knowledge of how tackle actually works, so that you can make accurate and truthful statements when testing products.

To manage a company like Imperial Fishing surely requires an enormous amount of time. Is there any time to go fishing, and to do other things in life?

MN: Fishing is part of my business and is luckily my dearest and favourite hobby. Due to work it is often difficult for me to plan a weekend of fishing, so for this reason I predominantly fish on my own. I'm lucky that I get out occasionally, doing product shots and testing as part of my day-to-day work. During the show season it is very busy and I survive on very little sleep. However, in the summer months I like to play tennis and we often do wakeboarding – I need a bit of variety!

Do you only fish for carp, or do you also fish for other species?

MN: I also occasionally like to fish for catfish but mostly prefer to target carp. From time to time



When work is over, Max gets the chance to relax.

we go boating on the Rhine, and 3 years ago I lost a truly massive fish one afternoon, having only really landed cats to around 30kg. Last year it was different and we managed to boat lots of cats over 200cm, with the top fish falling to Markus, at 217cm, from the same spot.

What types of waters do you like and have you got any tales about your adventures?

MN: It is difficult for me to make a choice between lake and river because I enjoy both – each has its own unique characteristics. On the whole I like to target big fish from very large wild venues, where I can use my skill and knowledge to

track down the fish. If I am sitting in my boat I feel good. I like the Lac du Der, and in 1997 I started to fish it by boat for 5 days and nights in a row, and I have loads of great memories from there. There are lots of other lakes in France where we have been very successful, among them the Lac de la Liez and the Etang de la Mouche. In 2003, together with Klaus Schneiderhan, we hit the bull's eye on our trip to Villegusien, and we banked 135 carp in 10 days. The DVD, *The Story About Crazy Lake*, which is still available, is surely known to many readers. My favourite river remains La Moselle in Germany and France. The little story I would like to talk about is a 4-day trip to Lac du Der. Fishing on the boat with René Rex early in April 1997, we were anchored in the middle of a large area in front of an island and fished into the open water, and never had a bite for 24hrs. The sun was high and strong when I decided to go boating around the island in search of fish. In the reeds, in just a metre

of water, I discovered feeding fish, and they were big too! Immediately we changed our strategy and fished into the reeds, and over the next 3 days we had lots of fish, among them a dream carp of 24kg.

What is your greatest memory?

MN: It is really hard to pick a greatest memory because there are so many great things that have happened in the last 22 years. I will never forget my biggest carp, which I took in dense fog on a trip with my friend René Rex. Also, the trip with Klaus Schneiderhan to Crazy Lake was a very special time. We only knew that the lake existed because it was close to a series of lakes we'd already fished. In the end we had 135 carp, and saved 35 different spots in our GPS, which still produce fish for us to this day. But also current trips with Stefan Ista in East Germany, and Dylane Porte, Thorsten Feil or Bernard Hesse in France will remain unforgettable. It is not always the trip with the biggest carp which

are engraved in one's mind. A good experience with a friend when you have battled the elements to succeed is always a special memory. My most current great memory was my new PB, which I caught at 8.5 degrees in an 1,100ha lake on 21st November 2011, when a 3-day blank was almost finished and I was already packing my tackle.

What will be your next session, and why?

MN: I'm hoping to return to a large reservoir where I've been

baiting for several weeks. With the weather on the up I can't wait to get out because I know the carp will be active and on the feed. It is often all about timing on these big waters, and I think I will have it absolutely right on this occasion.

To finish the interview with a smile – I once read in a newspaper that you fished the Moselle in a strange way from your home?

MN: My parents' house is near the Moselle; only a pavement, a

5-metre wide lawn and a street are between the house and the river. One day in November I decided to put my rod pod in the garden, which is 3m higher than the street, and fish across to the river. I stretched the line as high above the trees as I could, high enough that a truck could drive through. Everything was right, and I went to bed. At midnight the continuous tone of my alarm could be heard. Was it a car, a truck, or a boat? I thought about all these, but never dreamed it would be a carp. After a bit of a battle I finally crossed the road to net my fish, a 23lb common, and who knows how many carp had swum right past under my nose for all those years! **CT**



Max's first session of 2010 started well.



A massive 24.1kg fish from the Moselle in January.



LEFT The very successful Worm Up! Carptack Mix.

