

Tim Paisley's INTERNATIONAL CARP FISHER

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SPRING FEVER!

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TACKLING LES QUIS



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GLOBETROTTER'S WORLD

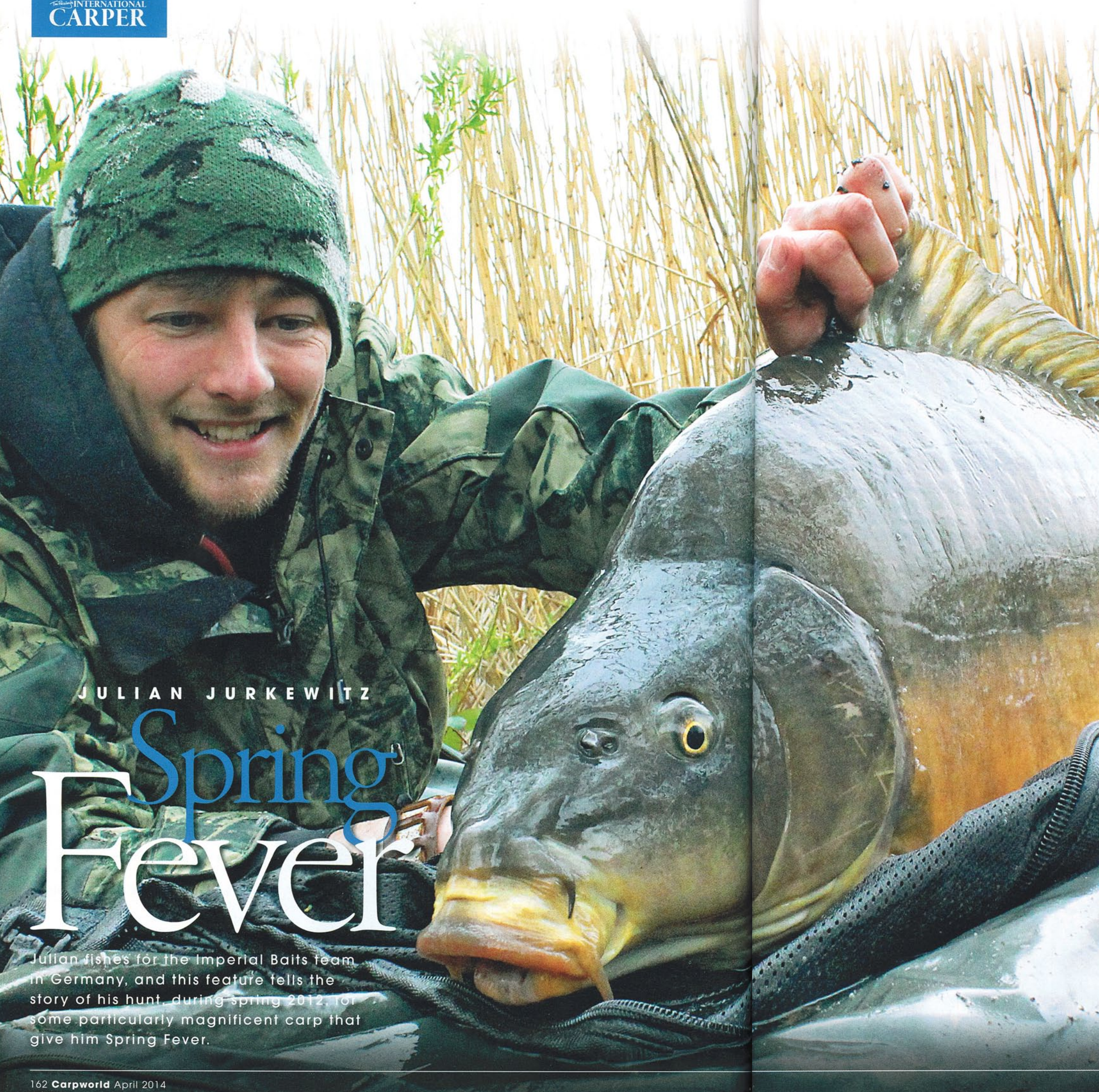


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DOMAINE DES ILES



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JULIAN JURKEWITZ

Spring Fever

Julian fishes for the Imperial Baits team in Germany, and this feature tells the story of his hunt, during spring 2012, for some particularly magnificent carp that give him Spring Fever.

Easter – this is normally when the first warm sunrays of the year make an appearance. At least that was the case in 2011. In 2012 I was standing with an axe in my hand, cutting wood for my better half, to get a cosy fire going in the freezing cold. We were sitting at a small forest lake – not normally my kind of fishing, but a particularly gorgeous fish in a photo album had sparked my interest. I had to have it!

It was cold and the water temperature had still not reached 10°C. There wasn't a sound anywhere; it was eerily quiet, but the tension was building – I could almost feel it in my fingers, it was about to start – it was Spring Fever!

Every winter the longing starts and increases day by day, and I'm waiting to get back to the hunt for the big ones. Many trade and consumer shows, multimedia shows, new tackle and DVDs – they all fuel my addiction and the craving to get back to do what we are best at: carp fishing!

Many say autumn is the best time of the year. However, in my opinion, spring is at least as productive, with the big spawning machines being at their optimum weights. Big bellies full of eggs – it's the voluptuous big carp mamas that I love the most! That's why I spend most of

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the springtime in Germany before heading for foreign waters as of July. In this report I'd like to give you an insight into my approach and how I catch those cautious mamas.

Location, Location, Location
In my opinion, the most important thing to getting started in March or April is to locate the flat areas. Most carp tend to return to the same spot each year. Having said that, I have seen them go for a different spot for their rendezvous each year. Nature is a moody beast and we have to react quickly!

New reeds or weeds develop, a tree plunges into the water, or a landslide creates a completely new layout. Very often these changes in a spawning area are due to human actions. If you already know the area, or have a good idea, I would recommend starting there. Often, the fish visit the area before mating, and that's where we put our traps!

Carp like warm water, and shallow water obviously warms up more quickly, so that's where I head. In the past, I've managed to catch carp even in water temperatures below 10°C in depths between 50cm and 4 metres.

In November, when I travelled with Max Nollert to France, we agreed that many reports don't really reveal anything new, and many topics have been covered over and over again, not really making us much wiser and, unfortunately, at times, rather boring. Many interesting subjects are

discussed. In my opinion, for example, interesting topics would be: choosing the right location; how to correctly put out your rods from a boat; the best feeding strategies to trick big fish, and also how to consistently catch carp. These are subjects that I like to focus on a bit more in my own personal angling style. Even if I only scratch the surface at this point, I'll put some of the most important details together for you later. ➤

MAIN IMAGE The first big spring fish at 40lb. Not the goal, but a start.
BELOW It may have been Easter, but Isabell was still cold, so I spent some time chopping wood for a lovely warm fire.



Let's Get Started

As mentioned earlier, we were sitting at a forest lake, with my mind firmly set on one particularly big fish. We always start with locating the fish. Even the best boilies and cleverest tactics combined with a magic rig won't help you if there are no fish anywhere near.

The 'magic rig' is another interesting subject. Personally, I have caught most of my biggest carp on very basic ones, just the same as most of the other well-known German big-fish-hunters, like Jan Brauns, Christopher Paschmanns, and many more.

So, how do we actually locate the fish? Well, there are several ways.

Let's assume we are faced with a water where we have no experience, and also no information from other anglers. First of all, we should get an overview of the lake. As I said before, it is the shallow areas we want when fishing in springtime. If there is only one small area in the water, then the decision for the first try has already been made. If there are more areas, then you have to observe

them. Especially on very sunny days, fish quickly show up at the surface.

They are likely to do that between, or underneath, branches and dense reeds. I like to slowly drift in my boat along the banks, standing and trying to be as quiet and still as possible.

Branches, reeds, sunken trees and bushes are, in my experience, nearly always absolute top locations. I have caught countless carp in these areas.

But let's assume the worst – no fish in sight! Then you're left with only one option: put on the boilie and get it out!

I believe that many successful carp anglers are particularly good at location-finding and that is the main reason for them being able to pose with so many impressive big ones.

Using a Dinghy to Put Your Rods Out

My favourite spot at this forest lake was a tiny cove, with the bushes hanging about 3 metres into, and over, the water. I suspected fish would be underneath those, so I placed both my rigs as closely as possible. I didn't prebait, because I was certain this was where I would catch!

I added only a few 16mm boilies

to my hookbait. Per rod I only threw a further 10 boilies individually. I managed to aim perfectly, almost as if I had drawn a line into the bush. Almost every time I make sure I have no bait on my side on the lead, to avoid cautious carp coming close to my main line and getting suspicious. That means my hookbait is always on the outer border of my feeding area, never inside it!

I threw three or four boilies into the big bush, with about 40cm space between them to attract the carp. When I put down the rig, I slowly wind the reel back and take the rod in a half circle around the stern of the boat, ensuring that the rig sinks in a straight line. Once it reaches the bottom, I have a feel around and then wind the rig completely back in. Whatever then sticks to my lead gives me a pretty good idea of the conditions down there. I really like the types of leads that have a coarse surface that picks up mud, leaves and other stuff. If the area is reasonably clear, then I drop the rig again. Once

it's on the bottom I don't move

it, otherwise it could mask the hookpoint. I would

also advise everybody who uses a boat to

have an anchor and to use it. That

allows you to work undisturbed and

concentrate only on what you are doing. This

is, for me, the most crucial

part of fishing, creating the

perfect trap. Sometimes I spend hours on just perfectly positioning my rig, completely in my own world.

So, everything was now ready at my little lake. During the first night I managed to land one of the lake's biggest residents at a good 40lb, but not the one I had set my heart on. Over the Easter holidays my girlfriend Isabell and I managed to catch several big beauties, but I was still looking for my big queen of the lake.

We went back for the May Day bank holiday – I just had to! By then the water temperature had climbed above 10°C and this time a few sunrays were enough to bring fish to the surface. Again, we caught several at the old spots.



TOP One of the fish I caught from the spot under the bush. A really dark warrior.

ABOVE I was fascinated by this fish, and when I caught her at 59lb 4oz, I got goose pimples all over my body!

BELOW Isabell also knows how to catch a fish!

As the carp were already much more active this time, I could afford to use a bit more bait without running the risk of overfeeding.

Hard Work Pays Off!

At the beginning of the May session I put the rods back on my old April spot. This time I increased the bait to about 1kg per rod to attract as many carp as possible to this spot. Too much action was supposed to scare off the big lady, so I could fish another spot just for her. In my experience, most big fish prefer solitude, and are less likely to be seen swimming within groups. I very often get lucky outside the big feeding grounds, so that was my strategy. I covered the main spots three times a day, plus I chose four more spots and fed them with as few as 10 boilies per feed. After a couple of nights I caught a few more smaller ones. Everything went according to plan. Now it was time to start fishing the four prepared additional spots in rotation. To avoid commotion I would leave a spot after a bite but continue baiting.

My strategy totally worked! The very first fish appeared and I was just bursting with adrenaline! I got her on the edge of a steep drop and she was putting up a hell of a fight. The second time I tried to get her into the net I reached so far towards her that I almost fell out of the boat, but in the end I was able to hold a massive lady with a huge belly full of



eggs. On top of having achieved my goal to get this one in particular, at 48lb 4oz she also set the new record for the lake.

After I calmed down a bit I continued my strategy and was successful at all four spots with more of the top fish that the lake had to offer. This included a rare common duo, one a male and one a female, one shortly after the other, and at the same spot. We photographed them together and they're on the cover of *International Carper* this month.

One Just Ain't Enough!

The following weekend, I was invited by my mate Frank to go fishing at his local quarry pit of about 86 acres. It is old and very deep. Exactly one year earlier, another Imperial Baits' team member, Heinz Windeck, managed to catch a beautiful common at an impressive 59lb 8oz. Since then I had been fascinated by this lady and I happily took up Frank on his offer.

The weather forecast was promising the same conditions that Heinz had when he got lucky. Up until that day she had only been caught once, despite many anglers hunting her.

That means she's a very cautious fish, and it's probably only possible to catch her at specific times. It probably helps to know

ABOVE One of my target fish at 48lb 4oz, and a new record for the small lake in the forest.

TOP RIGHT My four favourites from Imperial Baits' Pimp My Baits range: Carptrack in P, Carptrack in L, Liquid Amino and GLM full-fat.

BELOW Another fish from the ultra-hard low-stock lake.

what she was caught on the last time; carp have a short-term memory and she had most likely forgotten what trapped her the last time. So, it looked like she favoured our Carptrack Elite Strawberry, a fishy bait with a strawberry aroma and a sweet aftertaste, so I packed a mix of 16, 20 and 24mm for the two nights. In addition, I also took a pure fish bait, which I had used for years and which had caught me most of my big fish.

On the Friday evening I stood on the bank for the first time. I searched in the dark for a suitable spot. Not an easy task at this lake because I had been told that the depth dropped away directly from the bank.

The echo sounder told me that there was a thermocline at 6 metres, which meant I couldn't go below that. On the bank opposite I found a tiny step at 3.5 metres, which I thought was perfect to put my rig onto. From a depth of 6 metres up to 1 metre, I placed a small amount of mixed boilies every metre.

As I was fishing from the opposite corner I attached a backlead to the line, so that it would run alongside the edge and not get into contact with any fish. The backlead touched down at 11 metres – I was playing it safe!

Weather conditions were far from ideal, but that was exactly what I wanted; rain, cold, dark clouds,



and a full moon. Not nice conditions in which to catch, but the air pressure was falling. Bingo! Even so, when I finally, after hours of work, lay down on my bedchair I wasn't very optimistic. This lake had a reputation of being very difficult and nobody had seen any fish here in weeks. My bad feeling was confirmed the next morning. Nothing!

While I was having my breakfast, one of my rods bent down. Due to the backlead on the line there was a bend underwater, which meant the bite recognition wasn't exactly smooth. We set off towards the fish in our dinghy. At the other side it turned into a massive fight. The first time it broke the surface

I thought it was a 30-pounder, but I couldn't really see the actual size of it. Finally I managed to net it. With a bit of difficulty I managed to get it into the boat and it was very clear that this one was far beyond the 44lb mark. We weighed it and I couldn't believe my eyes – 59lb 4oz. I honestly couldn't believe it and had to get my own Heaton's out of my bag, which did confirm it. That is when I realised that this was her! My queen, full of eggs and just how I imagined her. She was a beautiful, untouched and pristine fish. Truly amazing! I still get goose bumps looking at pictures from that day.

Quit While You're Ahead? Not My Motto!

So we carried on, wondering what else would happen this weekend. And I really got lucky again. I managed to get two more big ones out of this low-stock lake. I was happy to see that Frank also managed to catch a lovely 44lb fish. The weather and the low pressure probably helped a lot, but most important was the location in combination with the right rig and bait placement for our kind of fishing.

I hope this feature has given a small insight into my carp fishing. If you would like to see video images from this feature you can find them on my site: www.carpscent.de
Enjoy, and tight lines! **CW**

