

# “Quote/Unquote”

This week: Alex Bransby. Part 1



**Alex lets just start with when it all kicked off and carp became a part of your life?**

I guess it all kicked off for me way back at the beginning of the 90's. I had been happily angling on a local stretch of the river Nene for chub and roach for years as a young lad. Then one particular winter we experienced a period of heavy flooding throughout the Nene valley and the very next spring whilst patrolling my usual river beat I began to spot the unfamiliar sight of the odd large dark shape milling about with the chub. Needless to say June 16th couldn't of come around quick enough that year, even if I did have to bunk off school to make sure I was there for opening day! Well the time had finally come and with all the preparations made by 9a.m (I had to time the session with school) I was cast out over the pre-baited area in anticipation. By midday I had landed two dark old mirrors which must have been pushing into double figures, which for me at the time totally blew me away with their power in the flowing water. From that day on I think it's fair to say carp have featured heavily in my life. Just for the record, successful tactics on the day were two grains of side-hooked corn fished with ? oz running leads.....oh how times have changed! Incidentally, I did actually get caught skipping school that particular day and was subsequently grounded for two weeks.....but well worth it!

**In your travels and on the waters you fished did you ever**



**rub shoulders with names of the future; can you mention a few of the team?**

Due to targeting the quieter less known about venues for years I can't say I have. Although a few years back on a small syndicate water I did meet two brothers that were bursting with enthusiasm and were keen to glean me of information. The two brothers in question were Jake and Dan Wildbore who are now making their mark on the carp scene. Even back then it was obvious those boys had something about them.

**Have you ever been a time bandit?**

No I never have, it's a nice thought but in reality I have a young family, a mortgage and work long hours. For sure there are times when I dream about living on the banks of a wild pit somewhere hidden away from the rest of the world, but as I get older it's becoming increasingly important for me to strike a balance in my life. It's very easy to become obsessive and single minded in this sport of ours and sometimes that's exactly what it takes to achieve your targets and fulfil your dreams. In the past I have been guilty of putting my carp fishing before everything and indeed everyone for that matter and that's just not right. As a good friend once said to me "it's all well and good having an album full of big fish, but it isn't going to keep you warm at night!"

**Do you have any other interests out side of angling, like playing**



**tiddly winks on the fast lane of the M25?!**

Being an active person I like to keep reasonably fit. A while back I started to take my kickboxing quite seriously and began to compete in competitions but as my angling took centre stage this was one area I had to sacrifice. I am also a rugby man at heart and although my playing days are now behind me I avidly support my local team the Northampton Saints. It just so happens they're probably the finest team in Europe right now!

**On the bank do you like listening to music or sport, or are you just focused in at watching and listening for carp shows?**

I do have a small pocket radio I take with me but it gets rarely used. It's important for me to stay focused on being aware of any fish movements that may occur when I'm on the bank. There have been times when I have heard fish crash during the hours of darkness and been able to move onto them and catch. Where as, if the radio was on I may well have missed these vital signs. It can be such a fine line between success and failure sometimes.

**What do you see as your strengths and weaknesses on the bank?**

I guess my strengths would have to be willingness to stay mobile in pursuit of my quarry, tactically adapting my presentation to suit a given situation or fish and watercraft. My weakness at present would probably have to



be my surface angling as it has been a while since I have fished a water where this tactic is viable and prolific enough to hone my skills on the top.

**I know you are passionate about all fish you catch but if you had to pull that one out of the memory sack which one would it be and why?**

Some years ago now, I really fancied having a go on a water situated in the heart of the Nene valley that was steeped in carp fishing history. It's a special place with a special atmosphere where Kevin Maddocks and other pioneers of the time were once part of a very select syndicate many moons ago. Over the decades much of the original stock had either vanished in floods or died of old age but there still remained one or two old originals that defied time and resided in its depths.

I can still picture it all like it was yesterday. I turned up very early one mid march morning to a spellbinding scene of mist rolling off the lakes surface just as the sun peered over the horizon. To cut a long story short I saw a small patch of bubbles in one quiet bay and with a very light lead and single hook bait I cast just past the activity and eased it back on the drop to settle bang on the money. Ten minutes later the rod pulled up tight and battle commenced. After more than enough heart stopping moments I was soon staring down into my net at one of Nene valleys finest and a true old original warrior, the big male fish known as Spike.

With old English proportions and with pectoral fins like dinner plates he really was a majestic creature!

**Do you have a nick name and why did it stick?**

Not that I know of, well nothing that's said to my face anyways lol

**Are you superstitious when angling, you know pay the lake, greet the maggies, have a lucky mascot, that sort of thing?**

Not massively, although just before arrival at my chosen water where ever that maybe I do kind of have a little ritual where I rub a cross pendant that hangs from my rear view mirror. Oh and I do have my lucky cap I take with me religiously or I don't catch...mm so maybe I am?!

**A daring question, but is there anything that scares you when you are out on the bank?**

Well in the past I have fished dodgy waters where some kind of weapon is advisable, just for self defence purposes you understand. You know one thing that really does scare me some times is just how little the majority of anglers actually know and understand about the wildlife that surrounds them whilst out on the bank!

**Tell us the most ridiculous thing that has ever happened to you whilst angling?**

There has been so many ridiculous occurrences over the years that it's hard to pinpoint just one thing. For starters there have been some bizarre coincidences that have ultimately led to captures along the way. I also

always seem to attract wildlife wherever I go so perhaps Dr Doolittle should be my nick name. All through my angling life I have been hassled be all manner of wildlife. To name a few instances – sharing my bivvy with snakes, being attacked by squirrels and regularly having my food stolen, chased by bulls, a horse sticking it's head through my bivvy door at night, plagued by rats, rods eaten by cows, mink jumping on me whilst asleep and foxes running off with my food bag.....You can see a pattern emerging here cant you?

**Perhaps you'd like to give us a brief insight into your day to day role within CCMoore's?**

Well I have my day to day job outside of angling, so my role within CCMoore's is purely on a consultancy basis which I thoroughly enjoy!

**How do you see CCMoore's developing their already extensive and innovative range in the future?**

It's hard to see how on the face of it as their comprehensive product range is already so vast and of the highest quality. One thing you can be sure of though is that the guys at CCMoore's will continue to strive in producing phenomenal bait to their ever growing customer base, and I'm sure for years to come they will relentlessly push the boundaries of bait innovation....watch this space!