

BIG CHANGES AT GIGANTICA

Fancy a trip to one of the finest lakes in the world? Well, we've just made it even easier to book a holiday at Gigantica and what's more, DANNY FAIRBRASS gives you a rundown on the stock, tips and tactics right here...

Korda UK has taken over the bookings for Gigantica from 12th November 2011, the start of this year's winter season. This means that all bookings will now be handled directly by Korda employees who have actually fished Gigantica. Therefore, the advice you that you get will be from good anglers who've been there and done it first hand. Angling Lines did a great job of handling the bookings and I wouldn't hesitate to use them again but we simply have too many good people at Korda to not deal with the bookings ourselves.

This also means that you are now free to book your own ferries, which should give you more freedom in terms of crossing times and price. We have honoured all of the bookings for 2012 that Angling Lines had taken, up to the changeover point a month or so ago. So, the books are now open for new enquiries.

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You can enquire about available dates on 01268 820 440, from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, or at any time by emailing bookings@gigantica-carp.com.

For anglers who have been before and struck up a friendship with Danny 'Turtle' Turley, please do not ask him about availability as bookings cannot be made through his email address, they can only be done by Gigantica UK. You are still free to contact Danny for updates on the fishing and tips for tackling the lake. We have just had our best spring ever, mainly because more people fished the lake earlier in the year and bait continued to go in over the mild spells during the winter. Our first amazing catch came in the middle of March. Two Germans doubled up on Co's Point taking Fudgy's, last out in September '09 at 60lb 8oz, except now it weighed a staggering 73lb 8oz. That's a 13lb weight gain in 18 months without being on the bank. This fish is massively impressive and one I dearly want to catch. The same guy had an even more staggering fish in his net the very next night when he landed a fish I called 'The Target.' It got this name because of all the stock, it was my target fish, because of the incredible shape and how little it gets caught. It was last out in August '07 at 51lb and now weighs an even more staggering 69lbs. That equals an 18lb gain in four years without being on the bank once in that time. This fish is a clever carp; it must have been eating bait the whole time without slipping up! It remains my target!

Both fish were caught at about 90 yards on white bottom baits with very little around them. I suspect that both fish had just woken up and were caught in a sleepy state – good angling, it's us against them after all. The key here I think was very little bait. In the summer and autumn bait rules supreme. In spring very little bait, small bags and bright hook baits score the best. If you put loads in you will blank in spring! It's just a case of reading the water and doing what works best at the time of year you fish it, March is not September and visa versa!

Catches came steadily through the mild spring and other good fish were caught. Far more came out on zig rigs this year simply because far more people used them. A group of scousers, affectionately known as Dave, Dave and Dave had some amazing fish in May, all of them on zigs. These included Discus at 52lb, the Freak at 47lb and one of our most beautiful fish Rene's Linear well up at 44lb. The lads had about 15 fish between them and only had one off the bottom!

Twenty foot hook links of 10lb Kruiser Line with a tiny piece of black and/or yellow foam to a size 12 Wide Gape B is the way to do it. Lay the rig behind you on the gravel and forget it's 20 feet long, that's my advice. As long as you feather it before the lead hits the surface it will not tangle. I fish to dump the inline lead by fishing the line outside the lead, it casts really well and playing fish feels great with no lead on, you still need a mate to



Discus is one of the growing head of fifties in the lake.



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Split Pec is cradled for one last picture.



Rapunzel, a fish we had no record of. How many more are there like this one?

land the fish if the hook link is 20 feet long. With the water up at a very high level 20 feet of link puts the small foam hook bait about two feet under the surface in most swims. Adjustable zigs also work but I think in the clear water a super-long hook link is better because it can be cast further and is harder to see underwater.

Basically, if you can tie the knotless knot then you can make a zig rig, and if no one is catching anything on the bottom why not try it? The scousers had never caught a fish on one before and they ended up with an amazing hit. All of them booked for next year before they left the lake. I had my first fish on zig this spring after seeing huge shoals of fish drifting around on the surface. It doesn't have to be hot to get bites on zigs and when the fish have just woken up they spend a great deal of time off the bottom. I've had fish showing on me in the past and not caught and I am now convinced they were not on the bottom. Having one rod on a zig doesn't stop the rods left on the bottom roaring off and can often produce extra bites and once one rod gets a bite extra rods can be switched to zigs. Often one angler gets a bite on the only rod fished on a zig, then others copy him and more come and so on.

Another great surprise this spring was the capture of Split Pec, last out at 51lb in May'09. This time it went 59lb 4oz and it looked spawned out! Almost 10lb up in two years and in awesome condition. The same

angler had a 44lb common (on a zig) that we have not yet recognized. I myself had a moment of elation during the middle of a failed underwater shoot. After not seeing a single fish in front of the cameras for 10 days straight I started to fish and landed a totally new fish from Big Girls at 53lbs 8oz. We named the fish Rapunzel after my stupid call sign on the walkie talkies (Turtle had already chosen Rumpelstiltskin!). We have no pictures of this truly amazing fish at any weight, quite staggering after the detailed accounts of catches over the last three years, what else could be swimming in the depths?

Amazingly, we are already almost fully booked for August, September and October 2012, with odd spaces on odd weeks, yet the spring is almost empty. After fishing the lake this spring I would say that the only reason catch reports don't match those of the autumn is that most anglers don't adjust their angling style to suit the time of year; less bait and zig rigs have and will continue to affect this. I found the fish to be just as active at this time of year and we have had some weeks that have matched the autumn catch reports.

We only had a short lull in activity during spawning and then the lake fished its head off. The Giant was long overdue and came out on 3rd June at 79lb 4oz! The same pair of anglers had The Target at a spawned out 65lb. This suggests that the Target will be 70lb plus when I have her in September!



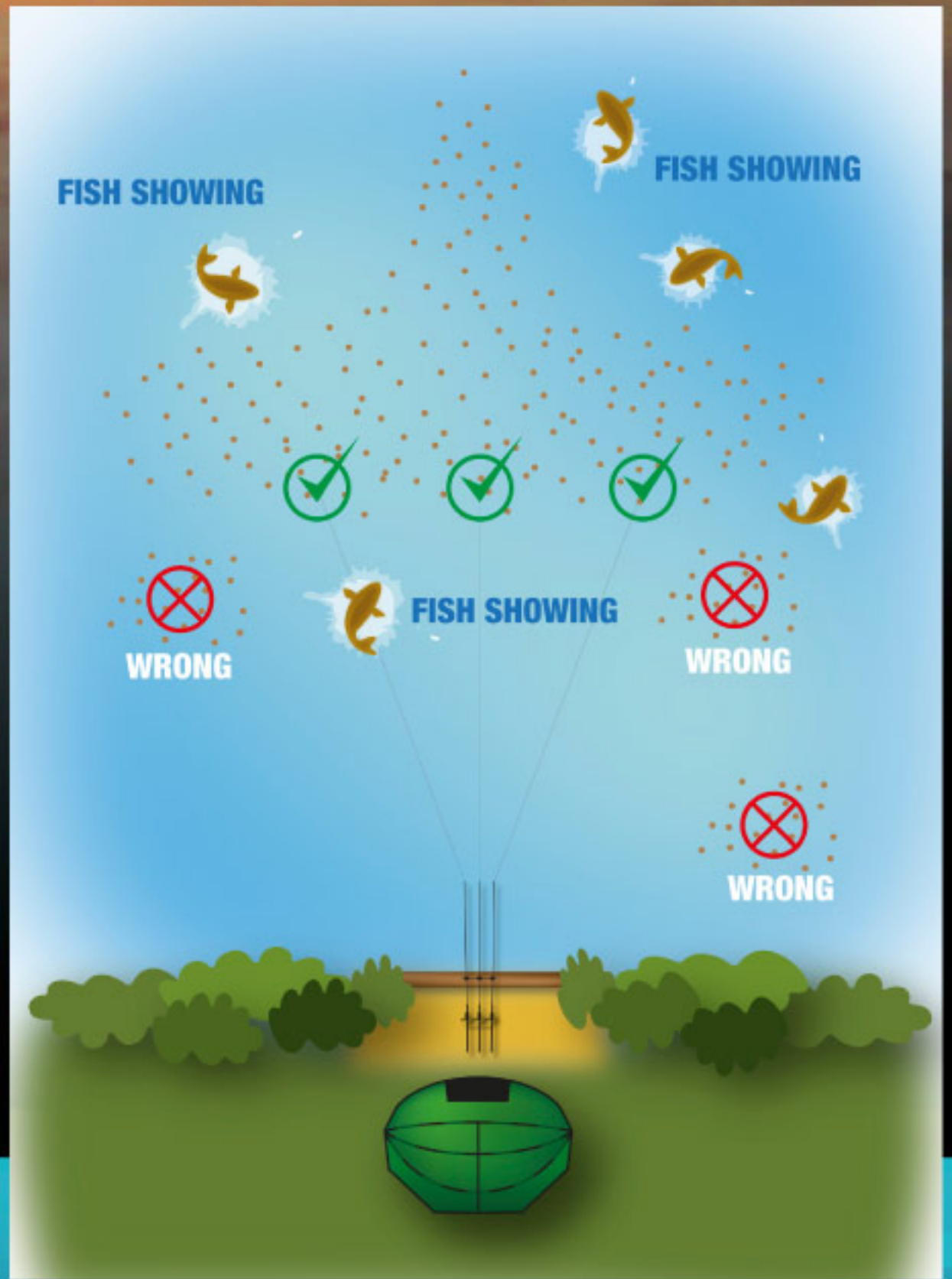
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Head Bailiff Danny 'Turtle' Turley often catches, out of the margins too!



A running lead coupled with these rig components are Danny's usual approach.



Simple baiting tactics that score well at Gigantica.

Our fishery manager/chef/jolly bailiff Danny has been able to fish a few more nights this year because we have reduced the number of anglers on 35 acres from 12 to 10. Once the draw has been done he takes what's left, usually ending up in a close-range corner swim. He has been pretty consistent throughout with his biggest fish so far being the mighty Brutus at 55lb. He's had a rake of stunning big 'uns including Bottom Lobe and The Smiling Fish.

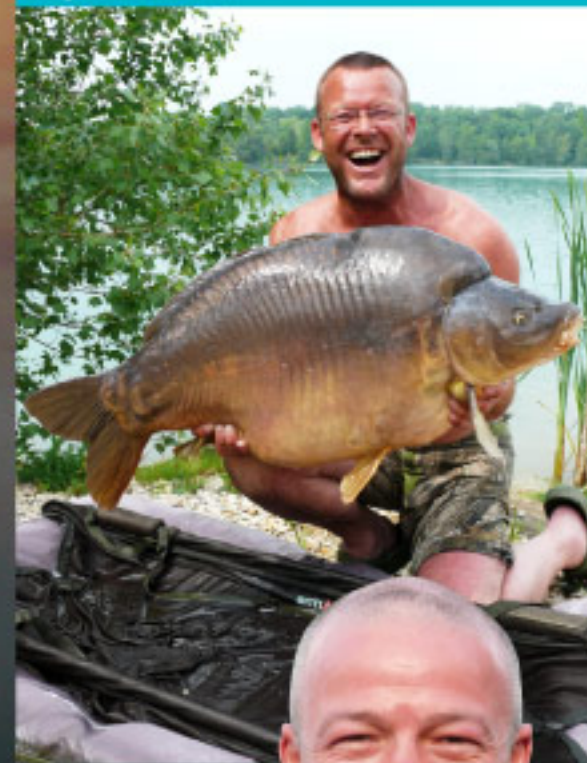
Danny's tactics are simple, a running inline lead, longish N-Trap hook link, size 4 Kurv B and two or three 20mm baits on the hair. He doesn't fish in the day 'cos he's working so puts a couple of kilos of Cell out in the evening and in the night he gets chances. Simple fishing that anyone can emulate.

The vast majority of people who blank have either chased the fish around their swim, rather than working an area, or used agricultural rigs. Often, too many rig components are used and the rig is unbalanced and clumsy. Simple 15lb mono and a sharp hook is enough if you get the baiting right. It continues to stagger me how many stunning carp we have, by next spring their will be at least...

1 x 80 plus
5 x 70 plus
6 x 60 plus
40 x 50 plus

And at least 100 other forties, any of which would make my week! Get on the phone because places won't be there very long!

Gigantica now has over one hundred forties!



Plus you can expect great hospitality!



Drop Tail is a sought-after fifty pounder.



Rene's Linear fell to a zig during Scouse week in the spring

