



GOLDEN BALLS

Words & pictures: Mark Parker

You can't beat the sweet smell of success and you'll enjoy plenty by using syrup, says Dean Jones ▶

THE thick, amber, viscous liquid clung to the sides of the cork ball hookbait like sticky brown stuff to an army blanket!

Resembling the latest, all-powerful, chemically-enhanced, molecularly-inspired bait glug, an elixir that promised to hold the very secret to fish catching, it was in fact just plain old Golden Syrup.

Yes, the gooey sugary solution kids have been pouring over their pancakes since time began was driving the carp at Lakeside Fishery (01327 351439) in Syresham, South Northamptonshire, utterly crazy.

The angler who was doing all the damage was Frenzee and Bag 'Em-backed, Dean Jones.

Dean is a great believer in natural products and a great fan of messing around with unusual baits and concoctions. And judging by the reaction of the fish his latest idea is a real winner.

By simply immersing a hair-rigged cork ball into the pure syrup, he not only had a permanent pop-up hookbait, but one that oozed attraction, flavour and smell by the tinload.

To find out why Dean had gone down this 'sticky' path, we joined him at the beautiful and peaceful Lakeside Fishery for a day on the Method.

A STICKY SITUATION

Probably like many IYCF readers, Dean is someone who finds it hard to go shopping with his other half without spending much of his time scanning the shelves for what could work better as fishing bait rather than its intended purpose.

He drives his good lady wife mad staring at random products and pondering if and how they could be put to work on the end of a line.

"Having studied fisheries management at college and then spending time in the bait industry creating new bait ranges, I got a good idea of what textures and flavours would work," Dean told us.

"Things like molasses and scopex are both well-documented for nearly all species of coarse fish.

"To me, syrup is similar in many respects; it is just sweeter."

The major advantage Dean has found in using Golden Syrup as a dip is that it clings well to any bait, taking a considerable time to wash off once in the swim.

This helps to create a sweet, buttery flavour trail, and it was this that was no doubt driving the fish so crazy on the day.

The sweetness of the syrup mirrors the attraction of many boilie mixes and their associated flavours which frequently contain some form of sweetener.



NOW WATCH THE VIDEO...
 Dean reveals more about his Golden Syrup and cork ball tactics. See www.gofishing.co.uk/iycfvideos

SCRAPPER
 Even Lakeside's small carp scrap hard

Golden Syrup does this same job, but again, it is wholly natural, not chemical, a point that Dean is very passionate about and one of the elements which he says had led to previous successes.

MARGINS
 Dean fished down the edge with his Method set-up

POWDERED GOLD

To fish it Dean used one of the best carp tactics there is – the Method.

To the free bait – groundbait in this instance – he is able to add the syrup

directly into the mix. This permeates the whole payload with the sweetness and scent of the product.

The other edge Dean employs is making his Method slightly different from the norm by using a 10mm cork ball for hookbait.

"Fish have seen the Method so often with a static hookbait in the centre, that it's all a bit too familiar. By adding the syrup to the groundbait, the breakdown is much slower so the fish

HOW TO MAKE DEAN'S METHOD MIX



STEP ONE Dean uses Bag 'Em's Machin's Method mix although any Method mix will do



STEP TWO To a little lake water, Dean adds around 30ml-50ml of Golden Syrup



STEP THREE Mix the two ingredients together to form a sweet watery mix



STEP FOUR Now pour the Method mix into a separate mixing bowl



STEP FIVE Slowly start to add the sweet syrupy water to the dry Method mix



STEP SIX Give the crumb a vigorous mix and adding more flavoured water if needed



STEP SEVEN Pour the prepared Method mix on to a riddle



STEP EIGHT Give the riddle a shake to force the crumb through and remove any lumps



STEP NINE Firmly press any lumps of crumb through the riddle, discarding any hard lumps



STEP TEN The finished product is a fine yet sticky sweet crumb, perfect for the Method



have to literally smash the feeder to get to the bait.

“With a very buoyant hookbait – a cork ball glued in syrup – once the groundbait breaks down, the cork ball pop-ups up off the feeder.

“The fish will then instinctively take it, thinking that it’s food which is getting away.”

Using the Method, with a slightly different presentation, seems to throw the carp off guard and they are sucker-punched every time.

Although Dean was only catching carp on the day, his Golden Syrup Method and cork ball approach has brought success with other species like bream and tench, and he sees no reason why Golden Syrup wouldn’t work just as well on the rivers.

Tackle-wise, Dean’s set-up was fairly standard, comprising a Frenzee flatbed Method feeder with a short four-inch length of Frenzee Vertex 0.17mm (6lb 3oz) line down to a size 16 eyed hook. Mainline was 6lb breaking strain.

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Dean shows off some of the day’s catch

A PASTING

A wrap of soft ready-made boilie paste adds a good flavour boost to the cork ball presentation



HOW TO LOAD THE METHOD FEEDER



STEP ONE Dean uses a Frenzee flatbed Method feeder and bespoke mould



STEP TWO Fully immerse the 10mm cork ball hookbait into a tin of Golden Syrup



STEP THREE Line the mould with a little crumb and place the hookbait on the top



STEP FOUR Fill the mould completely with the sticky sweet Method mix



STEP FIVE Place the feeder face down into the mould and press firmly to load it



STEP SIX Turn the mould over and press the top to release the now loaded feeder



STEP SEVEN

The finished article is loaded perfectly with the corkball close to the top

This would allow him to easily hair-rig the small 10mm cork ball that he was using as a hookbait.

To add some additional flavour, Dean will sometimes wrap soft boilie paste around the cork ball.

This can be a good tactic when using a bigger cork ball on its own in larger waters. This is a great edge in cold-water conditions.

Casting just a few yards to his right only a couple of feet from the bank, the fish activity became ever more frenzied as the feed went in, seeing Dean end the day with a bag well in excess of 50lb of hard-fighting 2lb-3lb match carp.

Isn’t about time that you tried the Midas touch and turned some of your baits to gold?

