

GAME CHANGING OR CONTROVERSIAL? THE OVER-SHOTTED RIG:



The over-shotted rig has caused a ripple of controversy through the match fishing world over the last couple years. A lot of people do not agree with it and, indeed, many fisheries have banned it.

So, what is it and why is it so effective?

The rig itself is not that remarkable. In fact, you could as far to say that it is arguably standard. It is more how it is used that makes it a deadly rig in modern match fishing.

Since F1 Carp have been introduced in UK venues, they have been responsible for more swearing, more sold fishing tackle, and more hair being torn out, than any other fish in history. Carp anglers hate them because they will eat anything at anytime of the year. Screaming runs from a fish that you can put in your pocket is not what they sign up for. Ide is a species that also have a reputation for being eager eaters even in the coldest of weathers. They can both suck in and blow out a bait before the angler's brain (Yes, some have them!) has registered a bite on the float. If they get an indication at all!

In the beginning, the float was removed, and just large shot was fixed to the line above a short hook link to fool these masters of shy biting. But, and I am in full agreeance with this, it was deemed 'unsporting' by many anglers and fisheries. You need to have a float on a float rig in my humble opinion...

Having said that the float is completely redundant on an over-shotted rig. But the presence of a bite indicator seems to make the rig legitimate...

How does it work?

The Over-shotted rig is an ultra-positive rig that works in the upper layers of the water, usually (but not always) in the warmer months when fish are more active closer to the surface.

It works by allowing the hook bait to sink a measured distance below the surface at a

measured speed before the pole is flicked upwards. This happens almost constantly until one of the up flicks connects with a fish. The pole tip is/can be submerged as the rig sinks by up to 10 to 15cm before being flicked upwards. The splash caused by this action is supposed to mimic pellets being fed and therefore attracts the fish.

The tricky part is to find out at what depth the fish want to feed. What makes it more fun is that this depth can change throughout the day. So, you must change too...

Because the float is redundant and the whole rig, from hook to pole tip, is being used, you cannot adjust the rig if you want to change the depth at which you are fishing.

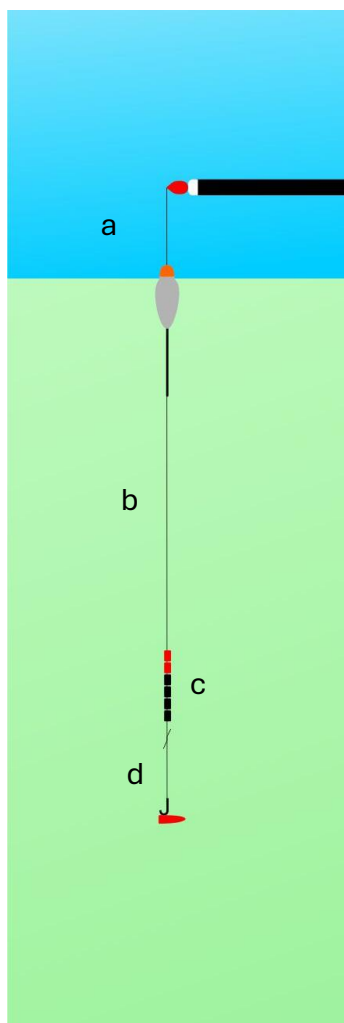
This is why a (sometimes stupidly) wide range of **top kits** are used by match anglers.

I'm going to be bold and say that you could get away with just three or four top kits for 'O-S' fishing. One set at 30cm (12"), one at 45cm (18"), and the last at 60cm (2ft).

This may vary wildly, and the above is a generalisation rather than Gospel.

The Rig:

As already mentioned, the rig is very simple. A '**Dibber**' pole float, a group of **bulk shots**, and a short hook link with a **banded hook**. See below:



From the top then, (a) shows an extremely short '**Lash**'.

Probably as little as 5cm. As mentioned already, the float is more or less redundant and is only there to meet rules or ethics. The problem that this throws up is tangles. Because the rig is so short, it is prone to bouncing around when '**shipping**' in and out, particularly with longer poles.

The trick is to keep the tip low or even in the water when shipping.

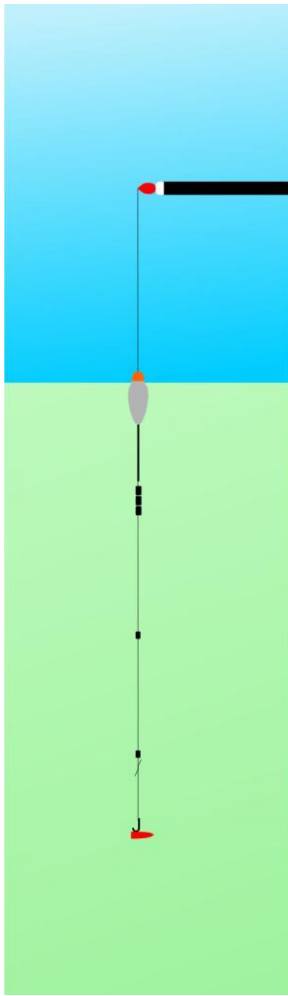
The length or depth of the rig (b) is solely dependent on the depth of the fish. More of that shortly.

You will notice two '**Stotz**' in red, and four in black (c). The black Stotz are to set the float in a normal manner (as if you were fishing with the float). The two red Stotz are the key to the over shotted rig. One or two Stotz are added to the rig **AFTER** it has been shotted normally. One if you want a slower sinking rate. Two if you need a faster sinking rate. This is a personal choice and one that you will need to work out for yourself depending on how you use your pole. It may also depend on how fast or slow the fish want the bait to sink.

Below the Stotz (d) is a short 10cm (4") hook link with a **banded maggot, Caster** or pellet as a hook bait.

I must say that this method goes against everything I was taught as a junior. The pole even touching the water was considered a crime. Apparently not so much anymore...

So, how do you know how long/deep to make the rig?



Unless you have exceptional knowledge of the fishery you intend to use the O-S rig on, a conventional **'through the water'** shallow rig (left) is used to detect the depth of the fish. Imagine a O-S rig, but without the red Stotz, and with them at the top of the rig (under the float) instead of at the bottom, with two light dropper shots.

Note the much longer lash.

With F1's and/or Ide, you won't catch many fish on this rig unless there are Carp about. But it will tell when the bites are coming and where the fish are in the water.

If you set the float at, say, 50cm (20") and flick it out to where you want to fish. The chances are that the float will slowly turn to the vertical as the shots sink and somewhere during this turn will disappear or shoot sideways. You may strike at this movement and connect with nothing because, if they are Ide or F1 bites, the fish has already discarded the bait before your brain has realised the float has moved!

But what this will tell you is roughly what depth the fish are feeding at by the angle of the float when you get the 'bite'. You can carry on adjusting the float depth until you are missing bites at the perfect depth, or you can grab the right length/depth O-S rig and start catching them!

This is why some match anglers have so many of these rigs set up because you just don't know where the fish are going to be on a given day.

This depth may also change during the session/match according to air pressure and the whim of the fish themselves.

How do you know when a change has happened?

The simplest way to tell if a change of depth is occurring is to make a mental note of how long each bite takes to happen. If this time lengthens, then they have moved, probably deeper. If you start missing bites or bumping/losing fish, they may have moved shallower.

You can predict this change by looking at where each fish is hooked when you catch one. The perfect hooking point is in the middle of the top lip. This means your rig is working perfectly and no changes are required.

In the sides (**scissors**) means you only just got it and the fish is turning away when you struck.

In the bottom lip mean the fish had lifted into the rig and hooked itself before you realised you were having a bite. The rig probably needs adjustment.

The same goes for deep hooking. No one wants a fish deep hooked, so the rig needs to be adjusted. May be a PDF for another day?

Where the fish is hooked applies for ALL fishing and not just the O-S rig.

How do you feed with the O-S Rig?

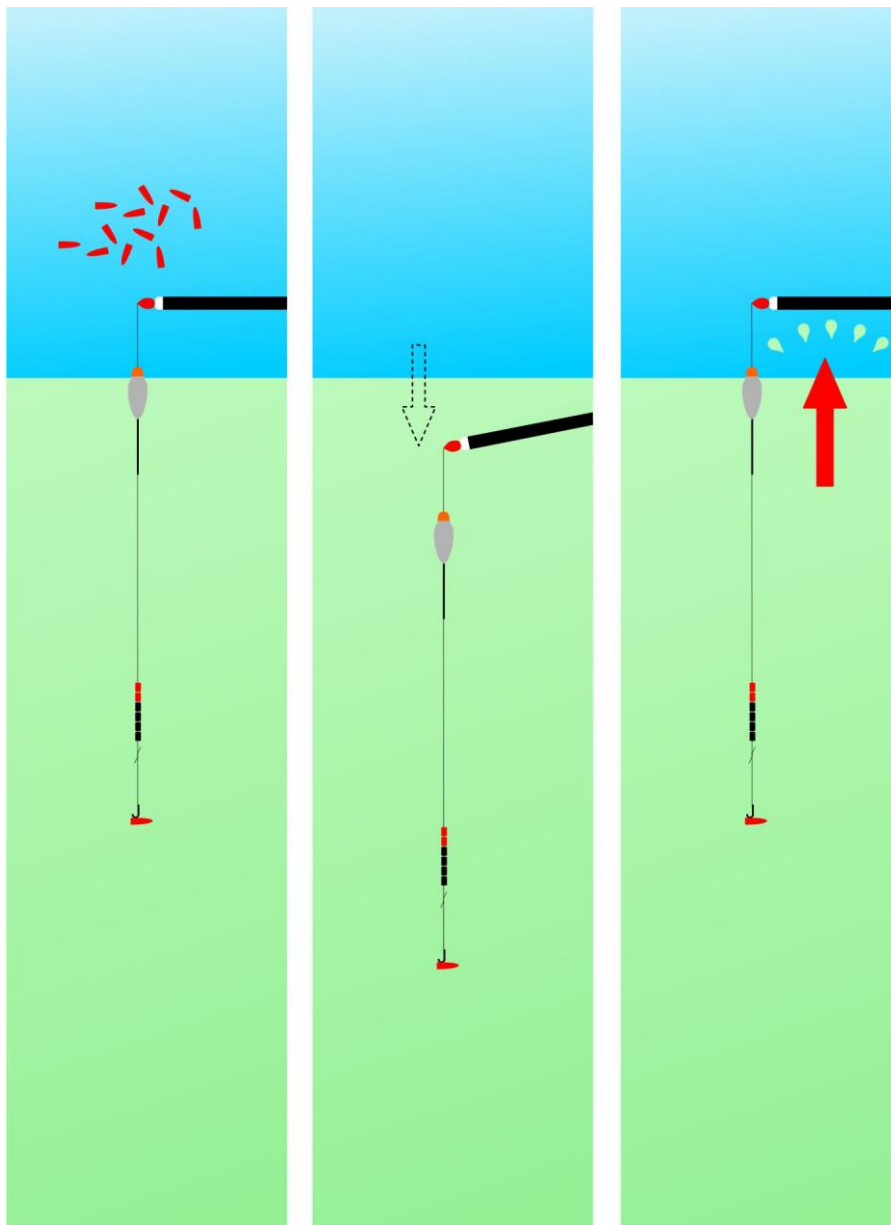
Naturally, how you feed with any rig will depend on the day. But you will probably be feeding regularly. Let's assume that the fish are warm and feeding in the upper layers of the water. You will need to feed around 20 maggots/pellets accurately with a catapult every 10 to 20 seconds. This will vary wildly according to conditions, but it's a fair guess.

How do you use the rig?

After feeding, you need to get the pole out to required length quickly, you will 'Slap' the rig on the surface a couple of times and then feed again.

Your rig has already begun to sink along with the float.

Follow the rig down at the rate at which it would sink naturally with your pole, allowing



the tip break the surface of the water by a few cm's. Using your knee or elbow, flick the rig upwards with a swift jerking motion as if you were striking into a bite. But not enough to lift the float out of the water too much. Then follow the rig down again, repeating this action and feeding every few flicks.

The flicking motion will make a 'splash'. The splash will simulate more feed going in, attracting fish towards the feed area. The only maggot/pellet they will find will be yours. Eventually you will flick upwards and connect with a fish you didn't even know was there...

If you do miss a bite, lift the rig out, slap it, and repeat all this section again.

How much bait do I feed?

The most important part of this method is the feed. You **MUST** feed regularly, probably every 5 to 10 flicks. This will depend on how hard the fish are feeding.

If you don't keep feeding, two things will happen.

The fish will go down with the bait you have fed and out of range of your rig.

It is more likely, however, that the fish will move to someone who **IS** feeding regularly.

Either way, you will have lost them.

If you find the fish are going too deep, feed less more often. This will bring them up.

If you are missing bites or foul hooking fish, feed more less often. This should push them down. '**Double pouching**' can work in this situation.

Rig Components:

11 to 13 pole elastic

0.15mm (5lb) main line

0.2g or 0.3g Dibber float

No.8 Stotz

10cm (4") hook links to size 16 barbless hook with a **Micro band**.

I believe this method does have a place in fishing because it still requires an amount of skill to do it. But, only as long as there is a float or bite indicator on the rig. Early versions of the O-S rig were just a long hook link with a large shot pinched to the line. I have done it, and it did not feel right in my opinion.

Where we live in the south-west, there are few fisheries that stock a great deal of either Ide or F1's. But, rest assured, they are coming. Whitemoor have extensively stocked the Canal Lake with F1's, and Todber Manor have stocked *some* Ide in Ash Lake. So, is a good chance that you may come across them at some point in the near future.

Juniors Sec...