

Pike Anglers Club of Great Britain



Safely popping up baits by Dick Culpin

I would like to offer some thoughts on what we all know is a very effective method of presenting both live and dead-baits...

As far as dead-baiting is concerned there have been a number of methods deployed in order to get the desired effect i.e. a bait that sits off the bottom. Traditionally this has meant the introduction of some sort of buoyant material into the bait itself. Usually we are talking about either polystyrene or perhaps balsa wood.

My concern has always been the effect such materials would have on the pike if swallowed. I struggle to believe that the material would in fact be digested and would cause the fish no harm. Even if, as is often the case, the bait is ejected by the fish during the fight there is nothing to stop the now 'hookless' bait being taken by another pike at some later stage.

As PAC members our overriding concern must be the welfare of our quarry. I therefore suggest a method that is tried and tested and guarantees the safety of the pike and works extremely well. The added bonus is that the method also guarantees you always get the buoyant material back.

The diagrams show the rig in its application and make-up, basically this is how it's done:

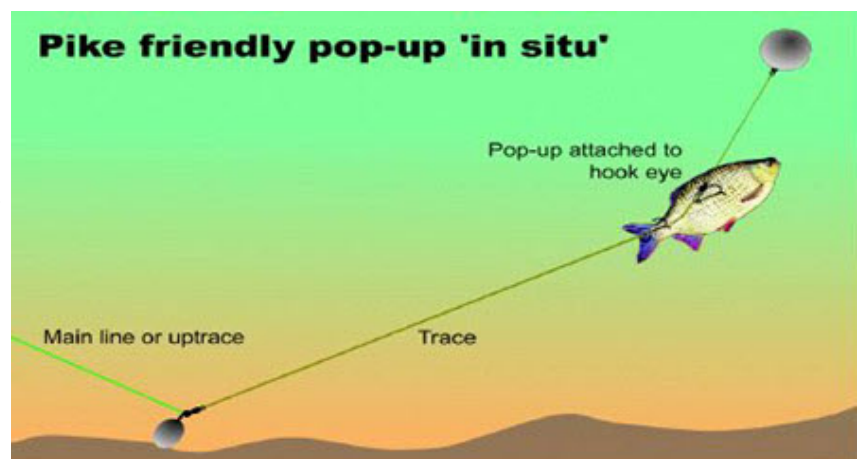


1. You need a small diameter poly-ball, I use ones that are about 3/4 inch diameter.
2. Superglue a swivel into the poly-ball.
3. Attach a link swivel by using a small length of trace wire, 3 to 4 inches is about right.
4. To use the method you need to attach the poly-ball to the eye of the treble hook. The choice of whether you attach to the bottom or top treble is an individual thing and up to you.

What should be borne in mind is that a pike will often encounter prey fish with their heads down - feeding or at least searching for food. My personal choice is to use the top hook - the one that is situated closest to the tail root of the bait.

The pop up rig is now ready for use. It gives great presentation to all manner of baits.

I have used it successfully with smelt, sardines, whole herrings, eel sections, lamprey and many others. It has never put the fish off and in fact I can confidently say there have been times when the method has been the difference between a blank and a fish or two on the bank. The rig is equally at home when using live-baits but I would suggest that an up-trace be used if you intend to be legering.



I certainly would not lay claim to having 'invented' the rig but I do feel that I owe it to our membership and the pike to share the facts with as many people as I can.

GIVE IT A TRY, IT REALLY WORKS.

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