

Another visit with Mark

This time last October, Mark took me to the Aller. During the three days and two nights, we were to fish for barbel and catfish, just like last September. As I had not been able to catch barbel beforehand, this target fish had to be included in the statistics.

No sooner said than done, the weather was fantastic, but the nights were chilly. Nevertheless, the time spent together was to be a complete success. Equipped with the necessary accessories for fishing for barbel, the adventure began.

Let's go, let's go...

In contrast to the last session, my bolo rod had to be in my luggage. Mark shamelessly exploited my know-how in this regard and so the clear announcement came: "Torsten, you are first responsible for bait fish." Oh yes, so that the fine gentleman can indulge his catfish lust? Or can't you fish with a float?" I replied cheekily. I skillfully unpacked my fancy bolo rod and grinned at him. "Well, you don't have anything that nice, do you?" Well, what can I say. Quite a big mouth for someone who doesn't know the water at all and has never fished there. There will probably be fish here, I thought, will probably go wrong. But Mr Gray had his own ideas about the size of the bait fish. And it absolutely had to be this one for his catfish rod. Well, that's going to be fun, I thought to myself.

I didn't waste any time, put my head back and had a noble hop drink before the start. Equipped with umbrella, charm and bowler hat...oh, I must have mixed something up.... So again, equipped with bolo rod, big Avon float, pellets for food trail and maggots galore.

Based on the existing structure, I drew up a plan for my approach. For greater reach, there was only one way to go and that was, "Get in the water, mate." Of course, this meant putting on the neoprene waders as the water was already very chilly in October. Carefully, we went into the water to test the current and get a feel for it. It is also important here to work your way slowly and not enter the water carelessly. It is important for this kind of fishing to have a secure footing and to look for a suitable foothold just in case. There should also be no stones in the way that you could fall on. Safety always comes first and should have more weight than a spectacular video in the social media, where you would get plenty of likes for the course of the accident and a live broadcast while driving out of an ambulance. So watch out for such adventures. Your relatives, family or partner will thank you.

Now enough rambling, off into the water, sound out or bleach out the pose, lay the feed line and put the maggot on it. Mark was already pushing hard and asked for the bait fish for his catfish rod. "Yes, yes, I can fish," I replied. His answer was just a big grin. After the feed line was active, success came quickly and I was able to present him with the first bait fish with a big grin. I was ready for the day and Mark could finally lay out his catfish rod. In one fell swoop, two happy anglers within half an hour. It smelled like freedom. I got out of the water and helped him lay out the catfish rod. After that, I put out my barbel rods and the day was saved for now. Relaxed, we let the sun shine on our battered but perfect anglers' bodies together.

The first evening

The day wore on rather unspectacularly and the evening approached. As the water was very clear, the chances were much higher from now on than when the sun was shining brightly. We sat comfortably with Coke (for Mark) and a hop tea (for me) in front of the propane heater in the breakfast tent and hammered each other's pockets, from old times of course. Well, I think there was

a bit of truth in it, and as seasoned men of the perfect age, some interesting stories came to light in the evening. At some point we decided to spare our eyes and take the much talked about beauty sleep.

"If something happens during the night, I'll whistle," Mark said. Jo, you whistle, I thought to myself, the night is for sleeping.

Hours later, in the nirvana of my dreams, strange sounds reached me that sounded increasingly shrill. Reality or Dreamer? Hm, the whistling grew louder and more insistent. Was someone in danger? Turn around again quickly, surely it's just a dream. Minutes later, the whistle was still blowing. Aaaahhhh, that's right, we wanted to whistle ourselves awake with fish. Quickly out of the tent, half past seven and stumbling towards the water. There should be someone standing here somewhere who needs help. "What's up," I asked. "Nice of you to come already, too," Mark said. "Have you looked at the clock," I asked back. "That's half past two". "So what? Give me a hand!" said Mark.

After the fish was expertly cared for and photographic evidence was laid out for the offspring, it was back to the plump little bed. Chubby???? Cold as arse by now as the tent was open. Brrrrrrr.....

Half past six in the morning in Germany again strange whistles. this time I was quicker. "Say, are you still going?", I asked, arriving at the water. Quickly the usual ceremony and off to bed. Sleep was out of the question and my mind was racing. Why does he always catch fish and not me? It was the same with the last fishing trip.

Well, new day, new luck. Now a nice breakfast with bacon and eggs and a cup of coffee. "Don't you want to put the rods out? They're not catching anything outside," was Mark's tenor. "Let me do it, you'll see. It's going to bang. Now it's breakfast time," I called out to him. He just grinned and I was brimming with self-confidence. Today it must finally work.

Perfectly fortified, we set off on the barbel hunt with new tactics. The first thing was to change the bait to barbel hookbaits and wait. Not suspecting anything and clearing the table, an impact came out of nowhere and the rod bent violently to the left. Oh, barbel in the morning, banish the worries? Those were my thoughts. Now just don't do anything wrong. Suddenly there was a pause in the fight. Nothing worked. Oh noooo, hanger in the reed island. Now quick decisions were needed. Mark held the rod and I put on my waders. A little tip on the side. It's best to get rubberised waders that you can slip into quickly at night and during the day. That saves time and nerves. Neoprene is more suitable for standing in the water for longer periods of time, such as when spinning or fly fishing or when using a float rod in the water.

Long story short, pants on and off we went. After a few metres in the water, I successfully released the barbel and the monkey dance continued. The barbel rod, equipped with the Korum Zelos Mini Pit reel, did a good job and I was able to pick up my barbel minutes later. The day ended rather unspectacularly. Neither barbel nor catfish showed up. But it was already 1:2 in my favour and I still had one night planned.

The second night

Around half past three in the morning, my bite indicator went off. Half awake and stumbling, I headed for the shore. The rod bent at right angles and line slowly ran from the reel. Strange, I thought, what's up with that? Unfortunately, the nearby weir had been opened overnight to reduce the pressure caused by the accumulation of weed. This weed now ran into our lines and triggered a false alarm. All right, rod out, weed removed and rod back in. This time very close to the bank, which makes more sense in the dark than during the day.

Quickly to bed and hoped for fish. Oops, I dozed off, not 13 minutes later the alarm sounded again. This can't be true, I thought. This time fully awake from the last mission, I immediately saw what the phase was. This was it. Rod up, hook and a loud "Yes". As agreed, I whistled to myself. Only Mark didn't react. I kept whistling as loud as I could. Unfortunately, I have hardly mastered the art of whistling at all. Mark still didn't respond. The fish had almost landed. I began to call out loudly. Still no response. Slowly I worked my way up to his tent and whistled to myself. My mind was on a roller coaster. Holy shit. Is he still alive? Is he unconscious? Why isn't he responding? Questions upon questions.

In the meantime I had landed the barbel alone and the Mark, you can hardly believe it, yaaaa, he's still alive, he's still alive....usw. came crawling out of the tent. "What's the matter? Did you whistle? Any news?" he asked innocently. "Yes, of course I whistled," I replied. "How did you whistle?" he asked. I whistled at him. After that I got a lot of laughter and Mark showed me how to do it properly so that he would wake up. "Great, I don't think I'll be able to do that in this lifetime," was my reply.

A quick picture for the offspring and off to bed. Since the score was 2:2, the rods stayed on land and I was able to fall asleep contentedly. As it was the day of departure, I had to be fit for the journey home.

End of the day

After a hearty breakfast, Mark packed his things, as he still had something to do. I packed as well and waited for his return. I used the waiting time with the bolo rod for further successful explorations on the water. Afterwards, Mark wanted to show me the beauties of his area.

If you have read this far, thank you very much. Enough words. Enjoy the beautiful pictures of the impressive river landscape with me.

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