

# The Resistance Movement Reloaded: Afterthoughts Results and Theories

By Damian "The Burglar" Wood

Some of you may still be digesting the last article I wrote with probable confusion, or disbelief. Well after writing it I have had thoughts on how to transfer what I learnt last year to other areas in fishing for eels mainly ledger tactics and concepts and ideals to minimise the usual problems we come across.

I also mentioned about the "Withy-pool rig" and if this could be the answer to cutting down the problems of deep-hooking eels, aborted takes, missed runs and missed strikes, when using either fixed or running rigs.

Also the introduction of using fixed rigs with the new concept and ideals I have about eels and how they take baits in the first place and how the method can be catered to other presentation methods to get the same results as using the "SFR" rig and "withy-hook-link" and identifying the fact that eels associate baits with resistance and how this can be used to our advantage.

After using the SFR Rig including the curved hook-link and the concept, incorporating what I have learned from this gives me the conclusion that completely fixed and semi-fixed effective rigs is almost a reality, but may not 100% eradicate all the problems we have, but will reduce certain problems considerably or eradicate some of the problems completely.

As for using worm baits and other small baits like maggots I can basically say that it is a done deal as far as coming up with an instant lip-hooking one to one ratio rig. But like anything else the only way to come to these kind of conclusion is by "trail by fire".

This hasn't happened over night it has taken seven years to get to where I am as far as rig development and the change me my ideals of what eel are doing and how to use there reaction to baits to utilise and take advantage of it to create the instant eel "Bolt-Rig".

But as yet working with fish baits hasn't been smooth sailing and still will need further development and experimenting with, unfortunately due to the eels heads the hook up to run ratio has had the opposite effect to using worms, if on the other hand the eels had a predator wider tadpole head then the story and results would be more appealing to the eye.



## **Modifications to the SFR Rig:**

Since then Two more eel have been successfully taken in this way with the same results as the eels in last article one being a low 4lber using a large single lobworms. The SFR Rig at the present this moment of writing this article stands at the run to hook up ratio is 4-4 and the lip hooking to deep hooking ratio is 4 –0. To me I personally don't need any more convincing how effective this method is and how it has eradicated certain problems we have about deep-hooking, missed strikes and aborted takes.

Since then the only modifications that have been made to the SFR Rig is the elimination of the cork-balls and the floats are in lined and attach to the top of the rig via the silicone sleeve provided when you buy them, also I have started using the clutch slackened off about 7 times and basically snag fish the rig so it can only run side ways using the line distance fished and can't take any more than that, or the clutch slows them down when they run away from you ,but this is just being experimented with at this moment in time and not a full conclusion as yet of it's efficiency or effectiveness.

The only draw back to doing this is that the clutch has to be tightened up very quickly before a strike is made or more accurately just bending into it as it is already hooked and lastly increased the lead to 3½ ounce, this is new to me and practise makes perfect as it has been seven years since I have undone a reel clutch due to playing eels the way we do with subtleness!

When last out with Peter on 18/06/03 fishing the canal a 4lber gave me a drop-back then a second later hurtled off down the canal with a 3½ dumpy lead, so are eels wary of resistance well the answer is yes and due to this and the rig used the eel was hooked in the corner of the left side of the mouth. I had no other runs that night. I know some members I have talked to recently are using it, but still have had no results back from this as yet so I will continue to keep recording my own for a bit longer.

Also I have started to reduce the amount if worms being used depending on the size of them cutting down to using single lobworms and bunching it into a tight ball, then using a pair of scissors just giving certain parts a snip to release more juices.

This has a massive advantage on waters where the runs have slowed down and twitchy or fishing waters where runs don't happen that often or fishing near surface visible snags.

## **Slight Variation of the SFR Rig:**

The fully Fixed "Dyson Rig" or "**FDR Rig**":

Also a fixed variation of the Dyson rig will work in the same way as the SFR Rig and this will be used next year on a few rods fished along side each other, both rigs can be utilised to present baits perfectly at distance and not to have to worry about tangles or parts of the rig splaying apart in the cast. One thing you would have to remember is to angle your rods and sky-line them to keep the bait off the bottom. You could probably present a bait up to or over a hundred yards with the right rod and reel only if that is required to hit those more unfishable areas.

The only difference between the Dyson as we know it and the modified version is that the hook-link is fixed between two beads as shown in the diagram below.

Fishing in this manner can open a whole new era of ideas and presentation to over come various problems that are apparent with some of the older methods of presenting baits even though they will still catch eels in their own right but the deep hooking, missed runs, aborted runs and missed strikes are a lot higher than fishing totally fixed rigs.

## FDR Rig

Since then I have been beavering away on how to use the hook-link for other eel baits used mainly fish sections. Following on from the last article, I will go through the concept of the methods I will be utilising next year when the situation calls for it and other discoveries.

I have made suggestions on how to get round them, but and only but if you can realise the fact that eels are not unique and just like any other fish, they become wary and spooky of baits and may not leave a water when captured or die for that matter, not all the time! Only when they have been deep-hooked will this be increased. You have to bare in mind that some parts of this article is theory based and some have been proven beyond reasonable doubt

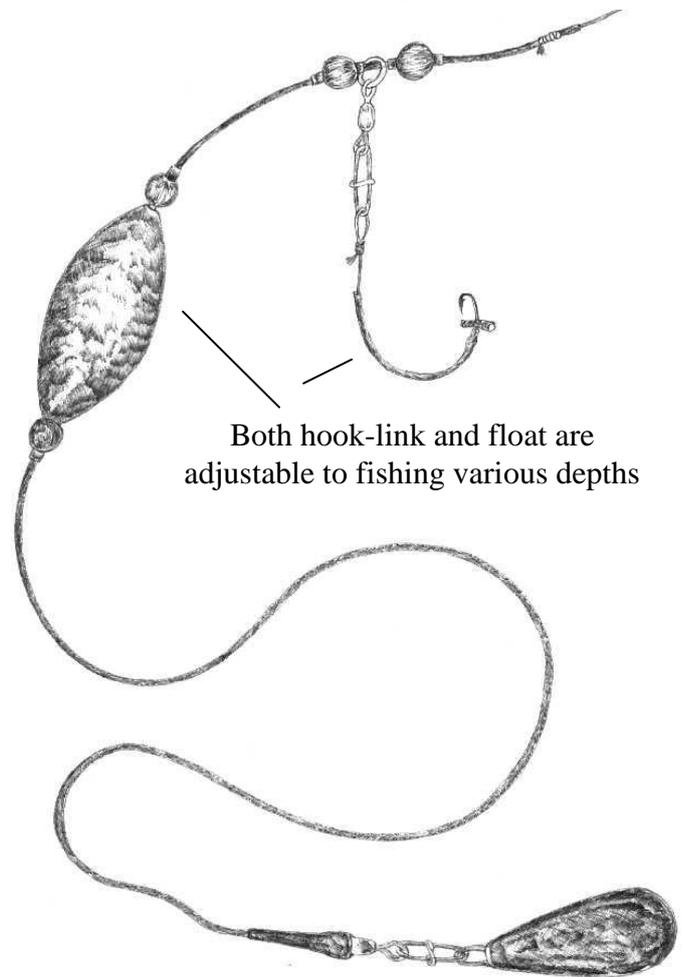
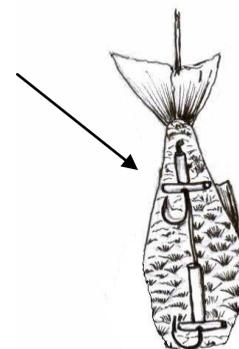
First I will list some of the problems that I have experienced fishing section baits the way I used to do, and why I fish them the way I do know.

- When hooking the bait by either just putting the hook straight through the bait, or even hooking it through then re-hooking it again.
- What happen to the bait and how the hook ends up when the bait is either fished at range or the impact of the hitting the water does to it, this can happen when under-handing baits across the canal.
- How all these scenarios effect the hook to run ratio using a conventional bait hooking methods.

The next set of diagrams Will show you how I used to hook my baits up and then we will go through the stages of development to how I have decided to hook fish baits know. All these point will have a detrimental effect on the hook-up to run ratio.



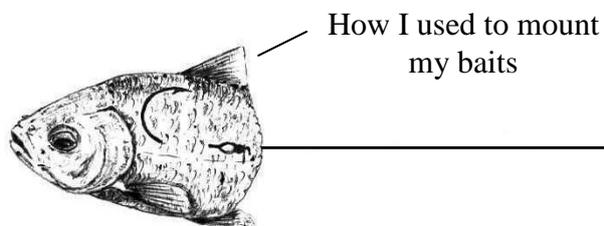
As I mentioned before about trimming the bait and still using a two hook system. I did a lot of thought on this and devised a different way of presenting the fish, using the withy- pool rig but in reverse instead. Don't ask me why, but I knew there was something in the curve to work on for other baits that may get the same result when using worms. A one to one hooking ratio.



Both hook-link and float are adjustable to fishing various depths

Since then I have change presentation to hopefully find a better way of increasing my hook rate, when using the SFR Rig and using ledger tactics in conjunction with a fish bait presentation.

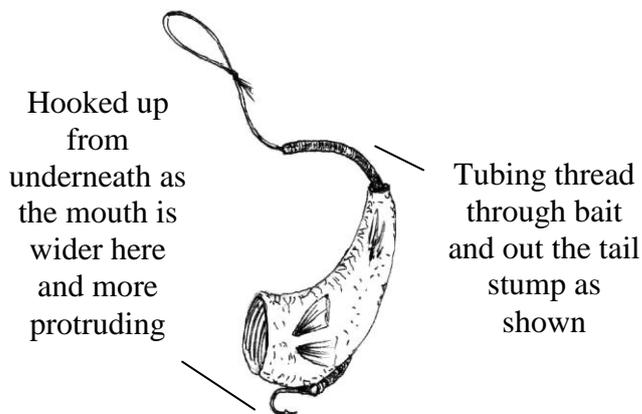
One of the problems I have found out when fishing the baits the way I did before as shown in the diagram below. I don't know when this happens, but either the bait would be reeled in, even slowly and the presentation was bobbins to say the least the braid would have sliced through the bait and it was dangling, or when the run did occur the run was missed, due to this. The main factor was either down to how far it was fished and also the impact as it hit the surface of the water, Water may be soft to the touch close in but with the velocity of the cast and arc of the bait through the air combined, the bait would be metaphorically hitting the surface of a brick wall, so it is no wonder a lot of runs are missed.



And this may happen with the other presentation if put through the same trauma of a cast and how the air effects it, as fish-baits are not exactly aero- dynamic. The last time I went fishing I did something different and found a few things out using the method I do know when it comes to presenting my fish baits using the “Withy-Pool Rig” in reverse as shown below.

As you can see I decided to use a reversed withy rig and, due to eels heads that I'm fishing for, I used a smaller bait than normal and cut the tail off completely, threading the whole rig through the fish and out the stump and hooking the bait-hook into the fish from underneath as shown in the diagram below.

Some interesting factures emerged when this was done, the bait seemed a lot more secure than the conventional way, secondly due to the tubing the chances of the bait being ripped of on the cast and contact with the water surface the bait came back in the morning the way it went out, the distance was only twenty feet or so but the other way I hooked them before it happened occasionally, but occasionally isn't good enough when the eel grabs the bait and there are no hooks there, especially using the SFR rig, or Dyson rig with the eel coming from underneath to get the bait.



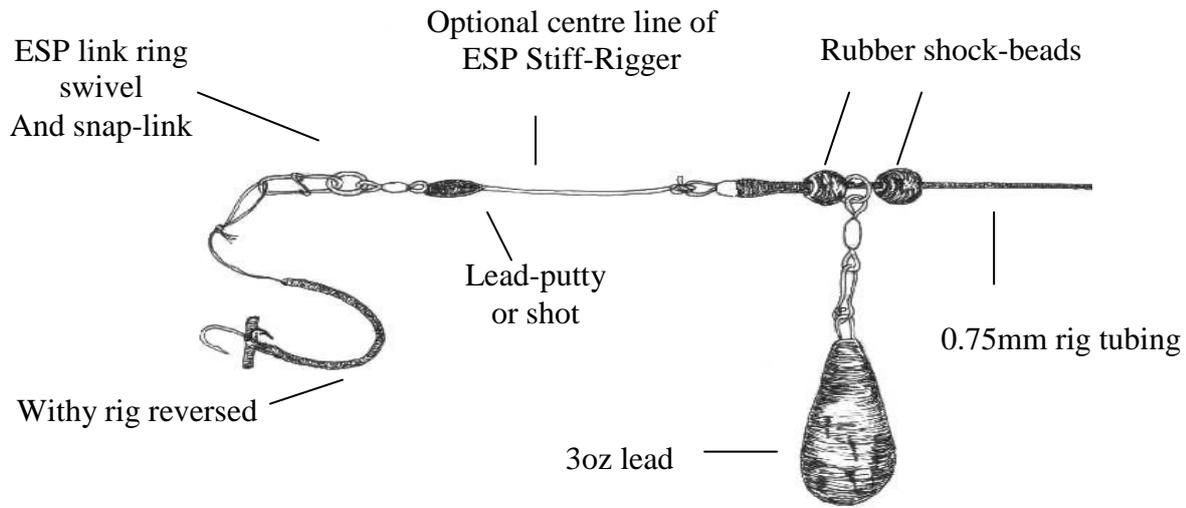
Also there is the added factor of the anti-deep hooking aspect as the tubing curves around the eels mouth on the initial take, or after the strike is made, depending if you are using semi-fixed via the run clip or a fully fixed set-up.

This is fine when fishing off-bottom rigs, but how do you get the same result fishing on the bottom or when you have to cast a longer distance to match the same results using the SFR rig? As I mentioned before that I will not fish a bait on the bottom, but I would fish a bait popped off bottom using either a free running rig or a fully fixed rig. This is how I would do it when the situation arises and I will go through some of the features, bearing in mind the concept of how I fish for eels today and the reason behind it and other lines of thought about eels and resistance as mentioned at the end of the last article I wrote “The Quest for Big Canal Eels”.

Going back to this idea of eels associating baits with resistance, the question you may be asking why use full resistance in the first place if that's the case? It all depends on how you look at it and how it can be

utilised and when it has to be changed for our advantage, I will explain the best way I can later. Firstly I will go through the bolt-rig ledger style, using the same concept as with the SFR Rig.

**Fig 1: Pop-up Hinge Rig:**



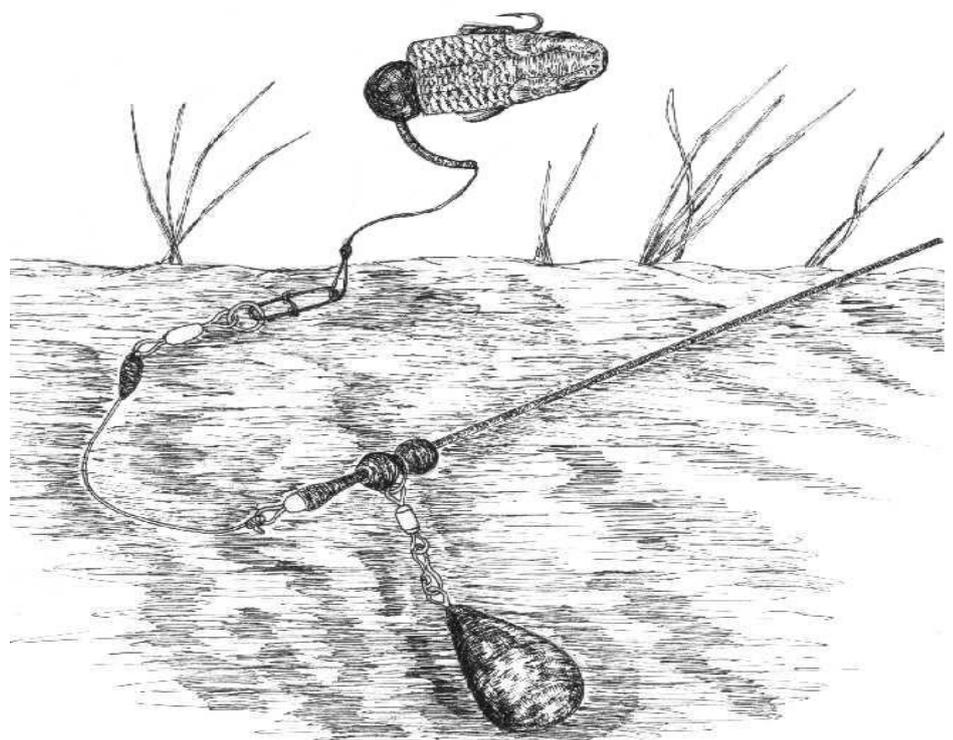
As you can see from the diagram the rig is fully fixed and the hole rig is presented on rig tubing and not lead-core due to the omission of a break-off, so the only thing left in the eels mouth would be the hook-link, this is the safest way of using a fixed rig unless a safety lead clip from Korda or Nash is going to be used. If using a helicopter fashion rig, then I would use lead-core as on the SFR rig, but that is to come yet.

Nothing new here as this has been used for carp for a number of years now, but the same effect could be used when in conjunction with a running lead, if you adjust the tension of the drop-back clips on your indicators, as there is more to it at first than meets the eye.

As you can see from the illustration to the left this is what it may act like on the bottom, depending on the consistency of the lake bed being fished and the lead design should be changed to cater this scenario, i.e. If the lake bed is gravel or heavy silt or hard clay bottom, or leaving or adding a centre section if the bottom is soft-silt.

When using running leads or rigs the whole rig can be transformed into a bolt rig by the adjustment of the indicator clips on the drop-back system, this I would class as a semi-fixed rig utilising the resistance of the clip to modify the rig, bending the rods around to the rig, this concepts date back to the very early bolt rig featured in "Carp Fever" by Kevin Maddocks.

As I have said in the past when using the methods that I do, the clip is the most important aspect of the whole concept as resistance is what eels associate baits with either after being



caught or having a bait ripped from their mouths on the initial strike. But this can be used to our advantage as I have mentioned before in past articles.



A 4lb 01oz canal eel, which was taken using a single worm on the SFR Rig. Another lipped hooked one to one run ratio beauty. This eel picked up a 3½ fixed lead and hurtled off with it. Giving me the conclusion the open bail arm could be a thing of the past. Again Peter Waterfield accompanied me on this session to witness the whole event.

Does this spell the end to the problem of deep-hooking eels and missed run and aborted takes using baits like worms or other small baits like maggots for example? Yes to the first aspect and almost yes to the second and third, but as with good laid plans one day a run will occur that will be the exception to the rule and wont be instantly hooked, that I could live with the exception to the rule! If it starts to happen to often then back to the drawing board and more modifications will have to be made to compensate this.

With this notion in mind the longevity of the eel has increased due to the immense decreasing of deep-hooking and hopefully another step forward to finding what actually happens to eels after a capture by facts and not just theory. And maybe this could possibly be the beginning and the turning of a new page of the book on modern eel-fishing methods and tactics.

This season has been difficult to get out only managing roughly about ten to fifteen trips all year due to work commitments and also taking time out after spending lot of hours over the years fishing intensively. I think it is called a social life!

### **So what is to come?**

Next year I will hopefully be getting in some hours to keep records of run ratio's to hook up rates and put some time back on the banking as the enthusiasm I'm looking forward to the new season too come and making plans already to hit the waters hard and get some good eels from them and also to have some thing new and challenging to write articles about, as I am running out of things to talk about for now! Also I have some other irons in the fire to look forward too next season hopefully it will be an interesting season to come. Well I will be leaving you there for now and hope all the very best for the New Year to come and the season to follow, tight lines and buckled rods!

With respects "The Burglar"