

Trout Area Fishing

At this point, you're probably asking, what is **Trout Area** fishing?

Well, Trout Area originates from Japan and is a finesse lure fishing technique that has started to gain in popularity here in the UK. The method is very similar to Light rock fishing, Bait Finesse Systems and [dropshotting](#). It's another technique where a more sensitive and finesse approach is required. Trout Area, however, focuses on one species and one species only – thus the name! It follows a basic set of principles, these being: Catch and Release; Use of light braided mainlines, no soft plastic lures, ultralight spinning rods and minimal fish handling.



Ultimately, the Japanese focus on respecting the fish they capture. The use of rubber mesh landing nets and barbless single hooks are the main care elements of the method.

The concept itself has already grown a vast following in Italy and Russia and the UK trout scene has the potential to accommodate this exciting and new technique around our many trout fisheries.

Trout Area Fishing Rods

The lighter the rod the better! Most Trout Area fishing rods are between 5ft 5 to 6ft. However, the method was originally to be fished in small ponds or stillwaters. Here in the UK, trout fisheries can vary in size. So a rod of 6 – 7ft in length would be more beneficial. This would provide the extra leverage for obtaining slightly more distance while still maintaining the accuracy required for this technique.



Accuracy, sensitivity and action are the three major factors to consider when choosing a Trout Area rod. The shorter rods help aid casting accuracy which is ideal for covering rising trout and casting to tight areas. The shorter rods also benefit casting smaller lures.

The short rods allow anglers to be more mobile and in most cases, Trout Area anglers will carry 2-3 rod setups. This allows them to fish more efficiently and save them time changing lures frequently.

Trout Area rods are very sensitive, most Trout Area rods will have a maximum casting weight of 5 grams and as little as 0.5 grams! These ultra-light rods are key for picking up the subtlest of takes.

Since Trout Area fishing employs finesse tactics, it's important to have the right rod action for the job. Trout Area rods have a parabolic or through action which means the rod, blank bends through its entirety. The rod action is very beneficial as it allows the rod to absorb a lot of the fight and reduces the pressure on the lighter breaking strain mainlines that are incorporated into Trout Area fishing. The other benefit is that through action rods are more forgiving when using hard baits such as metal spoons or crankbaits. So when a trout picks up a hard lure, the slow loading rod blank provides the delay required for the angler to set the hooks before the trout realises what it has taken.

Trout Area Spinning Reels

Just like the rods, Trout Area reels have to compliment the rod. We recommend using a 500 – 1000 size spinning reel with a light drag system. The light drag is required for the light breaking strain mainlines that will be used with the setup. A shallow spool is recommended but not a necessity, this is to accommodate the thin diameter mainline more efficiently. A spinning reel with a tapered spool lip is beneficial for casting accuracy and distance, while a high gear ratio reel will allow you to vary and alter your retrieval rate throughout the day.



Trout Area Fishing Technique

Like any form of lure fishing technique, covering water is key! Trout Area Fishing involves using small hard lures, especially spoons. Straight retrieves can be applied as can stop-start retrieves. However, the method can be altered by imparting the action of the lure through the rod itself.

Like any form of lure fishing, the aim is to trigger curiosity and response. This can be done by ensuring your retrieve does not become stagnant or monotonous. A quick change of direction or a burst of speed might be the action required to trigger a bite!

Try covering areas that provide cover or hold fry/baitfish. Targeting jetties, docks or marinas are good 'hold up' areas for prey fish and are a magnet for trout.

Look at overhanging trees, sunken trees or rock piles as other good target areas.

Trout Area Fishing Tackle

As we have already highlighted, finesse and mobility are key! So when it comes to terminal tackle we recommend the following:

Trout Area Lines

When it comes to choosing an appropriate Trout Area line, we recommend using a braided line. The low stretch properties will indicate the subtlest of takes and provide a more positive hook up on the strike. Whilst the low diameter line will help aid the casting of small light hard lures.



A braided mainline of 5-10lb breaking strain is recommended. Try and use a multi-fibre braid. With 6 or more fibres incorporated into it. The more fibres are woven into the braid the better. This will help increase knot strength and the multi fibres provide a smoother and rounder line profile, which allows for smoother casting as there is less friction as the line passes through the rods guides.

Trout Area Leaders

Fluorocarbon leaders not only provide low visibility in the water but the stiffness from fluorocarbon eliminates any unwanted tangles during the cast. We recommend using a 4-5lb leader of about 15 inches in length.



Connect your leader to your braided line with a uni to uni knot or a similar line to line knot.

Trout Area Lures

2 – 5gram micro spoons with single barbless hooks are most commonly used in this style of fishing. However, small crankbaits, tail bladed baits, and spinners can all be used.



Trout Area Terminal Tackle

Snap Links:

Small snap links allow you to quickly change your lure without constantly having to cut and re-tie a new lure on, which will quickly see your fluorocarbon leader decrease in length.



Snap links also allow for better lure articulation, which means it gives a lure a more natural movement in the water.

Unhooking Tools:

When it comes to unhooking trout, we want to have good strong and reliable tools for the job. Although there are dedicated trout release tools for Trout Area fishing, they are not a necessity. A pair of forceps or a T-bar disgorger is more than adequate for the job.



This hook remover is designed specifically to remove single hooks.

Landing Nets:

Fish care is paramount, so rubberised mesh landing nets are a crucial part of the kit. Rubber nets cause minimal damage to fish and are advantageous.



Trout Area fishing

From Japan to Northern Ireland – a round-up of the inaugural L.Baits / Yarie UK & Ireland Trout Area League held in 2018

□ Issue 22 (May-Jun 2018) □ Steven Powell

We had been toying with the idea of trout area fishing for quite some time, but had never really done anything about it. Quite recently on my travels for **Snapbaits** □ I have met some quite extraordinary fishing brands and being who we are – lure fishing fanatics – we snapped up a few companies that would bring us closer to our first area league.

Not so long ago we acquired both the Yarie UK and L.Baits UK & Ireland distribution rights, both manufacturers of highly sought after fishing equipment in terms of performance at tournament level. We needed to get the word out that these exciting brands were now available to other UK stores through our distribution network and so the idea of trout area fishing was immediately taken on board and supported.

We actually held a similar style tournament back in 2016 but due to lack of fish it was a serious flop for us. However, the competitors at the time saw the tournament as a new way forward and an addition to their own fishing, especially in the older months when the weather gets rather sour and the fish are not so easily caught on lures. Many of the same guys were more than up for another go at this interesting style of competition fishing and so the L.Baits/Yarie trout area league was born...

SO, WHAT IS AREA FISHING?

Area fishing involves the use of short rods and lightweight equipment with the target being to catch the most fish in each round of a competition. As the whole point of area fishing is to practice C&R, the use of light braids or mono, small rubber lures, spinning rods and minimal fish handling are paramount. Ultimately the focus is on respecting the fish at the highest level, incurring minimal damage and having a lot of competitive fun at the same time. Additionally, as releasing the fish with the greatest possible care is one of the core principles that underpins the practice of trout area

fishing, single barbless hooks and landing nets with rubber mesh are used to minimise damage. Stiff rods, heavy lines and barbed or treble hooks are totally out of the question and are strictly not allowed.



A lot of planning and searching was done, with many phone calls and enquiries made to find the right venue. The hardest bit was explaining the process of 20 to 30 anglers using lures to catch & release on a stocked trout fishery. Many stocked rainbow & brown fisheries are open on a pay and take basis, of course, and fish are rarely released due to the damage and exhaustion landing them can cause. Their inability to recover again (particularly rainbows) after a fight usually means it is better

to knock them on the head instead of waste them, and quite rightly so. After all no one wants a trout fishery full of dead trout!

However, experience and the development of lure angling for trout has come a long way in many parts of the world, but in many cases catch and release is still not practiced in the UK or Ireland. Nowadays the use of short rods, fine lines and barbless hooks are common. Trout area fishing was conceived in Japan where people needed to fish ponds of reduced size. The logic behind this was to ensure consistent catches and to allow many fishermen in one small space. It has since become a highly specific technique that sits somewhere around halfway between fly fishing and spinning.

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The concept of trout area fishing with lures soon began to draw the crowds in Northern Ireland (where we are based) and many anglers adopted the idea of using hard baits, spinners, small spoons and jigheads to catch as many fish as they could in a 30 minute timeframe over 3 separate rounds.

The dates of 28th January, 25th February and 18th March 2018 were carefully selected in advance as the tournament days in advance and the selected venue for all was the **Rectory Lodge Fishery** □ near Cookstown, Co. Tyrone. The fishery was blown away by the new method and discipline of catch and release, and very supportive of the new league initiative.

The trophies for the top three league places were sponsored by both Snapbaits, with long term sponsors Barracuda Fishing Tackle, Dungannon donated a custom Dragon trout area rod and Dragon reel, along with three goodie bags full of Dragon fishing tackle. We had some excellent wall calendars and year planners from this magazine as spot prizes. Rectory Lodge also provided a voucher for a free days fishing and Dave Bowles of Fermanagh River Adventures provided a free guided trip for trout. On top of that was the prize payout for 1st, 2nd & 3rd places for each round with the overall league winner getting a bonus prize.



A resounding success...

On the eve of the competition, Rectory Lodge stocked an additional 400 trout on top of the hundreds already in the well-stocked fishery. This meant the competitors would get loads of action. Additionally, an extra top-up stocking of 150 trout was added on the eve of each round.

The night before the first league round saw us panicking about how well it would all go down with the anglers, most of whom had never fished this style before. Pegs were drawn (as in any match) and the competitors went to their set swim with ten minutes to set up and ready themselves.

We needn't have worried about how it would go. As soon as the first signal went fish were being caught all over the lake and it was clear it was all going to be a huge success. The first round of the league back in late January saw over 300 rainbow trout caught and released unharmed, with a mixture of spinners, spoons and soft baits working well for most. It really couldn't have gone much better.





Round 2 and 3 continued in similar form, with lots and lots of fish being caught. The February leg saw much cooler weather, less active fish and, due to the fact that many has been caught and released during the previous round, maybe slightly wiser trout! The same can be said for round 3 actually (what a long winter that was, eh) but still though, almost 650 trout were landed and successfully released over the three rounds.

Jacek Gorny took first place overall, having lead from the very beginning – a truly great performance. Predator Team Ireland manager **Tomek Kurman** placed 2nd overall, with **Aleksanders Trifonovs** taking 3rd. Almost all anglers improved on their catches and techniques throughout the league, which was great to see and the overwhelming feeling was that this certainly won't be the last trout area league. In fact, we are already planning for a bigger and better one next year!

Thanks to all the anglers who took part and all of the supporters,

Steven Powell

