



Browning-backed **Adam Richards** remembers a weekend's pole fishing that saw him secure the coveted 2009 Kamasan Matchman Of The Year title.

With just three Kamasan point-scoring matches of the 2008/2009 season remaining, I was four points behind leader Gary Skerritt. For those that don't know, the Kamasan Matchman Of The Year is a competition that runs from June 16th to March 14th (the traditional coarse fishing season) and anglers can score points from any weekend match of 50 anglers or more. Four points are awarded for a win, down to one point for fourth place. Having had a great start to the summer I spent a lot of the season at the top of the table, before Gary overtook me towards the end of the summer. From then on we had been stuck on 27 and 32 points respectively.

With a severe lack of 50-peggers on commercial fisheries, we were struggling to make any more impact on the points scoring. Our biggest threat came from Andy Dargue, who was scoring well on his local river circuit towards the end of the season and was quickly becoming a major threat.

A big semi-final being held at Lindholme Lakes was a bit of a saving grace for me, because with lots of anglers there practising it gave me a venue with a guaranteed 50-peg turnout to head to for the last few weeks of the season. It was well worth the 200-mile round trip from Teeside!

Another venue within travelling distance was Langwith Lakes, and with this also having 50-plus peggers every Sunday, it meant that I had a match every Saturday and Sunday for the last month of the competition.

Leading into the penultimate weekend I had scored just one more point, which still left me four adrift of Gary. By now Andy Dargue had just overtaken me on 29 points. It wasn't looking good but I knew that anything could happen in the last three matches.

Having spoken to my friend Joe Carass a lot during the week leading up to the final full weekend, we were both certain that Laurels and Willows would be the dominant lakes at Lindholme. On these two pools, the lakes' trout population (yes trout!) averaged

2lb and were proving the key to good weights. Joe let me in on a tactic that he and some of his Barnsley Blacks team-mates (who were soon to become team-mates of my own) had sussed out for catching the trout. Although, as of yet, I hadn't drawn on either of these two lakes, this information was going to be of great use that very weekend.

Saturday was to be my last match at Lindholme, and with the semi being the Saturday after I was going to have to make this match count. At the draw I ended up picking out Peg 45 on Laurels; the right lake but, according to a lot of the locals, not a particularly good area. Despite this information I went to my peg full of confidence, and with my newly gained information I was positive that I could score points.

I started the match fishing pellets for F1s on the long pole and had a steady start, picking up small stockie F1s along with an odd better fish. I'd also been priming both edges from the start with small balls of chopped worms, fed in the soil that they come in to really leave a cloud in the water.

With an hour of the match gone, John Allerton, who was pegged behind me, seemed to be netting a trout every time that I turned around, so now was the ideal time to try and exploit my own margin swims. On my first drop-in down the side I snared a 2lb trout on the drop and by continually feeding the cloudy worm mix and moving my rig about, the next hour and a half produced several more. After two and a half hours I had 15 or 16 trout, plus some F1s for an estimated 40lb-plus, and seemed to be faring very well.

The second half of the match wasn't quite as prolific but by combining both my long pellet and edge lines I managed to catch small F1s steadily for the rest of the match, along with another five of those all-important trout. At the weigh-in, 50lb was winning my lake and when I heard that Bonsai Pool had fished hard I felt that I was in with a chance. Interestingly, Andy Dargue had also »

FEBRUARY THURSDAY
27
 SEPTEMBER THURSDAY
6

At just 21 years of age, Adam Richards has already achieved accolades that most anglers can only dream of!



ANGLER FILE

ADAM RICHARDS

Age: 21

Occupation: Student

Lives: Teeside

Sponsors: Browning/Bag 'em Matchbaits

Pole: Browning Xitan Z9

entered this match and the rumour was that he had caught well on Willows.

Fortunately, my 64lb 2oz was enough to win the match and Joe's information had definitely paid off. I needed that result because Andy Dargue finished third overall. I'd now moved a point ahead of Andy and drawn level with Gary at the top of the table. It was now all to play for, but with only one big match left the following day I was praying for a good draw at Langwith.

The Sunday started off pretty well with a phone call on my way to Langwith from Andy Oldham asking me to join the mighty Barnsley Blacks. I was just hoping for my day to continue as well as it had started.

Like most venues, Langwith can be peggy in winter but if you're on a few fish it's brilliant fishing. The weather was horrendously windy, though, so most people were hoping

for some form of shelter. I ended up drawing Peg 1 on Bethany's Lake, which is a good peg, although I would say that there were probably eight to 10 better ones on the venue. Importantly, I had the wind straight over my back – a luxury that some of the better pegs wouldn't have. With the conditions as they were and knowing that I was on a peg that held a few fish, I really felt that I had a great chance of scoring more points, which could potentially lead to me climbing to the top of the table.

Starting the match on the usual pellet across to the island, I caught a couple of fish

fairly quickly. Although there seemed to be plenty of fish there, foul-hookers were becoming a real problem and catching them was proving very difficult indeed. With bites slowing down, a quick look down the middle was called for, but when this produced nothing I was really in trouble and the match was slowly beginning to slip away from me.

Being a corner peg, though, I had another option in the shape of a lovely reed-lined margin. While setting up, these reeds had been knocking and throughout the match there was an odd reed moving around. I had this

corner to myself but I didn't want to push the fish along the corner and out of reach too early, so I had deliberately resisted trying down the side

until now. With nothing left to lose I decided that it was time to try and exploit this area. I had indications pretty much straightaway up to the reeds and by starting fairly short at six sections I managed to follow them further along the reeds as they backed off. By doing this I managed to keep bites coming steadily for the rest of the day.

I left this margin alone a couple of times to rest it and decided on another look up to the island. This resulted in an occasional fish but foul-hookers were still a problem. Come the end of the match I had 33 carp in the net

I had come joint second on the day and had a seven-point weekend.




The humble maggot has played a large part in Adam's successes.

and, with them being between 1lb and 3lb, I reckoned on having around 60lb, a good weight given the conditions, I thought.

I knew that I hadn't won the match because Mick Sykes behind me on Kevin's Lake had caught from start to finish and was admitting to more than 80lb. He finished up weighing in a tremendous 100lb to win the match and I just hoped that no-one else had beaten me. I weighed in 64lb 12oz and anxiously followed the scales all the way

around the lakes. I was lying in second place with just Emma's Lake left to weigh in. There was one big weight, which amazingly was exactly the same as mine! This meant that I had come joint second on the day and had a seven-point weekend just when I needed it.

A couple of phone calls revealed that both Gary and Andy had not scored any points, so I was now in the lead with one match to go.

The last day of the season was uneventful. With none of us scoring any more points that dramatic seven-point weekend had sealed the title. I was crowned the youngest ever Kamasan Matchman Of The Year Champion. What a weekend! 



The Kamasan Matchman Of The Year trophy inscriptions read like a who's who of big-name anglers.