

DAIWA REGAL X CARP £49.99

DESCRIPTION. 12 ft 3 lb test on glossy-finish carbon blank with abbreviated handle, low profile soft touch grips, half hood FPS reel seat and aluminium oxide guides.

PERFORMANCE. Reasonable standard of finish. Reel seat accommodates big pits comfortably but at 68 cm the handle is a little long for my liking although the minimalist grips are comfortable for casting. Three legged guides are robust and well spaced with a butt and four intermediates. Medium-weight and profile blank handles leads to 4 oz with the medium to progressive action better suited to fish playing than distance work, although there is enough tip speed to deliver a good punch with a straight lead or bag.

VERDICT. Nicely priced and well appointed entry level carp tool.

Features ★★★★★☆

Performance ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

SCORE: 22/30



30 PLUS V2 POWER TOOL £89.99 lowest srp £49.99

DESCRIPTION. 12 ft 3 lb test on matt finish, spigoted carbon blank with MPS 18 screw reel fitting, abbreviated low profile anti-slip handle, 30 Plus guides and free rod bands.

PERFORMANCE. Built around a medium profile carbon blank. Reel seat is sized 18 rather than 20 but housed my big pits. Guides three legged and durable with a butt and four intermediates. Handle a good 63 cm with comfortable front grip and smart shrink wrap-type lower handle giving excellent non slip grip. Action leaned towards the progressive with a slight tip end bias and delivered leads to 4 oz and bags well to the middle distance.

VERDICT. A decent all round rod capable of multi-tasking to the middle range.

Features ★★★★★☆

Performance ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

SCORE: 24/30



NASH HOOLIGUN XS £74.99

DESCRIPTION. 12 ft 3 lb test slim, spigoted carbon blank in matt finish. Finished with abbreviated handle, EVA butt grip, MPS 18 reel seat, and Aluminium Oxide guides.

PERFORMANCE. Slim but reassuringly powerful blank nicely finished with understated graphics and tasteful trim. Reel seat and grips comfortable and suitable for big pits giving a particularly well balanced feel. Guides three legged and robust with a butt and four intermediates spaced for distance. Handled leads to 4 oz very well to the medium long range with a medium fast to progressive action and coped well with heavy bags and light Method balls too.

VERDICT. Powerful tool which delivers a good performance for the carp fishing newcomer.

Features ★★★★★☆

Performance ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

SCORE: 24/30



SHIMANO HYPERLOOP BX £69.99

DESCRIPTION. 12 ft 3 lb test on a matt finish, lightweight, put over blank fitted with Hardlite guides, abbreviated handle, DPS 18 pipe reel fitting and line clip.

PERFORMANCE. Stylish with a smart, understated finish. Handle a little long at 68 cm but comfortable with a secure reel fitting capable of housing all big pit models. Well balanced action complemented with robust and well spaced three-legged butt and four intermediate guides. Action progressive, putting leads and Method feeders to the middle distance yet remaining a perfect action for under the tip.

VERDICT. Choice between fish playing and long casting action gives brilliant versatility on a well appointed and well-priced grass roots rod.

Features ★★★★★☆

Performance ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

SCORE: 26/30



THE Fox Warrior ES is a tremendous rod for under £50.

QUICK COMPARISON SPECIAL FEATURE!

NORMARK NOVA £59.95

DESCRIPTION. 12 ft 3 lb test on spigoted, matt finish carbon blank with large, lined guides, abbreviated handle with Duplon grips, half hooded screw reel fitting and line clip.

PERFORMANCE. The tip to middle action delivers enough speed to drive leads and bags to 4 oz well past the middle range but there is a nice balance of give and power at the lower end to bully big carp safely into the net without popping the hook. The reel seat and foregrip accommodate big pits and smaller reels but is ill-matched to the slim blank, feels wrong in the hand and detracts from overall casting performance. Guides are three legged, robust and functional but ugly and the overall finish is not that easy on the eye.

VERDICT. A nice blank spoiled somewhat by a poor choice of finish and fittings.

Features ★★★★★☆

Performance ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

SCORE: 22/30



Angler's Mail BEST BUY

FOX WARRIOR ES £49.99

DESCRIPTION. 12 ft 3 lb test on a lightweight, matt finish, spigoted carbon blank with SLIK guides and line clip. Abbreviated handle with Fox CR18 half hood seat, Duplon grips and shrink wrap centre.

PERFORMANCE. Butt and five intermediate guides gives good distance performance. Combined with a powerful yet lightweight rod with tip to middle speed it delivers well to 100 m-plus but with enough give in the butt not to be a liability at close range. Reel seat houses all models and the rod feels balanced with big pits and smaller free-spools alike.

VERDICT. A tremendous and stylish rod for almost any venue - and for under 50 notes.

Features ★★★★★☆

Performance ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

SCORE: 27/30



JRC LIBERATOR £55

DESCRIPTION. Slimline, 12 ft 3 lb test put over, matt finish blank with full length Duplon handle fitted with DPS 18 reel seat, low resistance guides and line clip.

PERFORMANCE. Deceptively powerful carbon blank which delivers real power at the top through to the middle to drive big leads and Method feeders to long range whilst remaining forgiving enough for big carp at the net. Reel seat is comfortable and secure for big pit and freespool models with comfortable, non slip full Duplon below. Balance is exquisite, guides are three legged with a well-spaced butt and four intermediates.

VERDICT. Lightweight, powerful and stylish blank for the budget conscious carper.

Features ★★★★★☆

Performance ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

SCORE: 26/30



FOX WARRIOR ELITE £69.99

DESCRIPTION. 12 ft 3 lb test rod on a lightweight carbon blank with carbon weave butt and low profile SLIK guides. Abbreviated handle with Duplon grips and Fox CR20 seat.

PERFORMANCE. Similar action to the Warrior ES but delivering sharper blank recovery for more accurate distance work. Whether that warrants the extra £20 cost is open to debate! Finish smart with 20 mm reel seat accepting all reel sizes and the handle giving comfort and power to drive the cast. Action is tip to middle with tough, low profile butt with five intermediate guides. Stiffish butt section but enough flexibility under pressure to cushion hook holds. Balance is excellent and casting of leads to 4 oz-plus is effortless.

VERDICT. Similar specification to the Warrior ES and a great starter rod delivering faster recovery and improved casting performance - though at extra cost!

Features ★★★★★☆

Performance ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

SCORE: 25/30

