



Carping around with Solar

Extreme carp fisherman, writer and Select Solar customer Jake Langley-Hobbs explains how he uses a 32W Flexi panel.



“My name is Jake Langley-Hobbs. I am a full time carp angler and writer. I am currently undergoing a very long fishing trip around Europe, with my two Dobermans and travelling companions; Charley and Flash. So far we have fished in France, Germany and Italy and we are just one year into a five year adventure.

I use a vast array of electrical equipment whilst I fish, in order to catch my quarry and to help me survive weeks on the bank. This equipment is essential to my success and keeping it powered and running was becoming a big concern of mine. To give you an idea I use: an echo sounder, a GPS system, a 12v boat motor, two cameras, and an HD DVD recorder. Plus I have things like a shaver, a portable DVD player and most importantly, my laptop.

I have recently started writing a daily carp fishing blog whilst I fish, reporting live from the bank! I recall my captures and the highs and lows of getting there. In addition I relay an ongoing story to the reader, enabling it to be read by keen anglers from their office in the day or at home in the evening. Since I started writing the blog, it has been difficult keeping things charged and ready to use. I have a generator that I use to charge my leisure batteries, but this is noisy and expensive to run. I needed a better solution, so I contacted SelectSolar. I gave them a brief of my situation, and asked them to come up with a couple of solutions.

I wanted a solar system that would keep a big leisure battery, that I keep in my bivvy (where I sleep and write my blog), charged for the duration of my session; that would allow use of my laptop for a couple of hours each day, and also for charging of other small items.

I also wanted a big system for charging my leisure battery that I use for my boat. The boat is a useful tool for a carp angler, especially on big waters. It is sometimes used many times a day for taking out bait, and for also dropping rods into position. Extreme range is not uncommon. All of this drains my battery quickly, so I wanted a powerful panel that I could quickly connect and disconnect; which would recharge my battery quickly.

I received a reply from SelectSolar very quickly, and was offered two systems that would fulfil my specific needs. The first solution was for my bivvy battery. They offered me the new **Flexi 32W** amorphous solar panel. As the name suggests this panel is fairly flexible, meaning it is extremely versatile. It can be hung or draped over most objects and using the strong eyelets, fitted in the edges, it can be cable tied or bound very quickly. Carp angler's bivvies are dome shaped, so it sits on top of this structure perfectly. I secure it with bungee ropes to stop it blowing off in strong winds. It looks a real quality item, and is very durable and waterproof. It comes complete with cabling and an IP68 (moisture resistant) connector block. This then leads to a charge controller, before finally connecting to your leisure battery. The charge controller is very important and its job is simple. It stops the battery overcharging, and helps keep your battery in peak condition. It also prevents the battery discharging through the solar panel. In a word, it regulates everything. From going on by my daily usage, I was told by SelectSolar that this panel, would put enough charge back into my leisure battery each day. So does it work then?



Yes is the answer! The great thing about this particular panel is the fact it is amorphous. This means it does not need to be in direct sunlight in order for it to work. It is designed to work in low level light conditions. This suits my requirements even better, as unfortunately the sun does not shine all the time when I am fishing. Even in low light, the panel has kept me going. This is partly because I am very sensible with the times I use my equipment. For instance I tend to write my blog in the evenings. This means the battery gets maximum charge time during the day. However, if I need to use the laptop during the day, I always

have enough charge left to use it. To conclude, I have been fishing in the same place for five weeks using the same battery for all my 'household' needs. My generator is no longer needed and is sitting in the back of my van!!

The other solution SelectSolar came up with, was for my boat. They sent me the big Sunsei 65W polycrystalline solar panel. This is a hard standing panel, and when in use I tend to support it with my camera tripod. It operates better in direct sunlight, so I tend to move it slightly a couple of times a day, so it is always facing the sun. Because it is 65W it gives out a lot of output and recharges my leisure battery in a short period of time with good, strong, sunlight. How quickly it recharges depends on the size of your leisure battery, and the strength of sun. I can connect this to my boat battery very quickly using crocodile clips. The charge is monitored and controlled with a separate Sunsei regulator. The Sunsei is a specialist panel, and not for everyone, but if you fish for long periods of time, and frequently use your boat, then I would recommend it. It is big, but then most carp anglers carry too much equipment anyway!!



If you are considering just one solar panel for carp fishing use, then out of the two I would go for the Flexi 32W panel. Its use is more versatile, due to its low level, light working benefits, and it could easily be attached to the side of a boat, meaning you could have it permanently charging your

boat battery, even when you are using your boat motor out in the middle of the lake! Because of the convenient connector block, it can easily be moved around, and used for charging other batteries; a bivvy one for example.

Thanks to Selectsolar I am pretty much self sufficient now. The sun is free and I am using it to my best advantage. I still have my generator for emergencies, should they arise; but it is simply not used anymore. This just remains me to thank SelectSolar for providing a great solution to my carp fishing solar needs. You're highly recommended."

Jake Langley-Hobbs and his two Doberman dogs!

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