

AnglingTimes TackleNews



MARK SAWYER'S EXCLUSIVE NEWS AND REVIEWS ON THE BEST NEW GEAR TO HIT THE MARKET... ➔

Maver's 'pole with no name' worth the wait

SUB-£1,000 OCULUS 999 IS STUNNINGLY GOOD

BESIDES being most anglers' dream job, the role of tackle editor does give you a unique insight into exactly how and why companies develop their products.

That's pretty much what happened when a chance visit to Maver HQ last year saw their boss Phil Briscoe handing me an unnamed and unfinished 16m pole. He was hoping to develop it into the best of its kind for under a grand.

My first thought was that the raw pole was good, very good in fact, but at its full length it had a little bit too much mid-section softness. As a result, the tip section had too much movement - so its backbone would need stiffening up a bit if the top section were to have more recovery speed.

Moving on a few months, I again found myself at Maver's Redditch base, this time to cover their excellent product launches for 2016. As you would, I asked Mr Briscoe if the pole with no name I had seen a few months ago was ready to be unveiled.

"We're nearly there with it, Mark," Phil replied. "It's been a bit of a long slog, but well worth it. Here, take a look for yourself!" - and he handed me a holdall full of sections. Those as-yet unadorned carbon tubes came together with an altogether different feel to the last time I had handled the pole. Now it felt really stiff at its full length, with little discernible movement post-strike at the tip.

I remember thinking that Phil had accidentally handed me a flagship three grand model, such was its rigidity. It boasted Teflon joints on its third, fourth, fifth and sixth sections for added longevity, and just like all good modern-day poles, it came with pre-fitted PTFE side slotted top kits.

The technical side of its construction was then fully explained to me, and without sounding overly geeky and

dull, it's pretty impressive. The pole is made from high-tensile Japanese carbon, reinforced with toughened epoxy resins, before being treated to another strengthening process.

Add Nanolith fibre technology and the bottom line is that this is one tough cookie. Yet its lightness and finish make this pole just as much at home speed fishing for silvers as crunching out commercial carp.

All that it lacked was a name and some graphics, and Mr Briscoe promised me that as soon as he had a finished sample he would send one

through to Angling Times. Lo and behold, two weeks ago a large package arrived from Maver.

It's called the Oculus 999. I don't know about the Oculus bit, but 999 no doubt refers to the fast-response services this pole offers the serious angler.

A few hours spent with it at Lincolnshire's impressive and pristinely kept Westwood Lakes fishery saw the Maver Oculus slicing its way through shoals of ide, roach and skimmers at 13m using light

elastics, small hooks and maggot rigs. Then, later in the day, and used at its full 16m length up against an island with heavier elastics and winter corn rigs, it proceeded to trawl its way through carp of all sizes. Faultless, completely brilliant.

I simply cannot believe that a pole of this stature, with so many admirable qualities, can be owned for just a penny under a grand.

Come to think of it, that probably explains its 999 configuration more accurately than my own take on it - and as for 'Oculus', well, it's an eye-opener well worth looking out for!



LIVE TEST
MAVER
OCULUS 999
16m POLE

Straight and true - Maver's Oculus 999 pole.

ON TEST THIS WEEK

▶ **Maver's amazing new Oculus 999 16m pole**

▶ **Clothing, pellets and quivertips**

▶ **In-depth look at Sensas Gunki lures**

TURN OVER

MAVER SOFTSHELL JACKET

MAVER has just released this stylish and warm Softshell jacket. Tailored in the company's black and green livery, it offers superb protection from the elements while you're fishing.

Thanks to its hard-wearing yet lightweight material, the ultra-comfy jacket not only looks great, but will withstand all but the most extreme British winter weather.

Price: £59.99



BROWNING SPHERE QUIVERTIPS

FOR those of you lucky enough to own a Browning Sphere Feeder rod, check out these two new heavyweight Sphere carbon quivertips with 4oz and 5oz ratings.

Ideal for Method feeder work or use in fast flowing rivers, the colourful tips have a small amount of play and are a perfect marriage with Sphere rods.

And if you're looking for somewhere to store all your spare quivertips, Browning also offers a burgundy coloured, fully zipped Feeder Tip Bag with protective rubber ends.

Price: Sphere tips £19.95, Feeder Tip Bag £10.95

RINGERS F1 LIGHTS

RINGERS Baits boss Phil Ringer has launched these new F1 Lights 3.5mm Expander Pellets after extensive field-testing by his team of experts including brother Steve.

Ideal for winter use on all commercials, their light colour and small size makes them the perfect hookbait when feeding micro pellets.

Easy to prepare with nothing more than a single quick pump, they are perfect for F1s and skimmers.

Price: £2.99



E-S-P SUPER GRADE JACKET

THIS new design is slightly longer and roomier than its SG predecessor, featuring a tough yet quiet rip-stop shell and a lining of the same. With exceptional breathability, other features include an adjustable peaked hood that can be rolled up into a snug collar, handwarmer pockets with a protective rain baffle, zipped internal security pocket and full-length YKK zip protected by a Velcro sealed rain flap.

The adjustable cuffs have neoprene inners that prevent water ingress when casting. In all sizes from Small to XXXL.

Price: £119

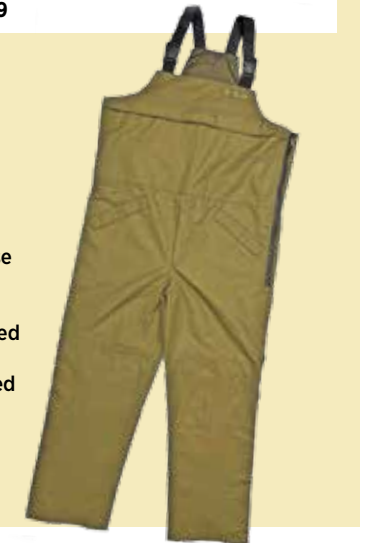
E-S-P SUPER GRADE SALOPETTES

THESE newly-designed Super Grade Salopettes provide exceptional protection from the elements.

The clever water-resistant side zip makes them easy to put on and take off, and because there is no long central zip down the body there's room for a capacious zipped chest pocket protected by a rain baffle, and a baffled zip fly.

Other features include adjustable elasticated shoulder straps, handwarmer pockets, reinforced double-layered knees and water-resistant boot zips. In sizes Small to XXXL.

Price: £129



TECH SPEC



This pole is 16m of pure performance.

Price: RRP £1,335 SSP £999.99

Package: Oculus 999 16m pole, one Match kit housed inside the pole, five Powerlite Power kits (pre-slotted and bushed), Mini extension

Elastic rating: 20-plus

Extras: Three EVA Clean Caps, deluxe pole holdall and protective tubes, informative DVD

THE VERDICT

MAVER'S Phil Briscoe set out to make the best all-round pole on the market for under a thousand pounds, and in my opinion he's done just that. Yes, I know it's all been said before, but technology marches on and pole production techniques are still evolving.

Take my advice, if you're looking to upgrade from your current pole, or you have a budget ceiling of £1,000, get yourself down to your nearest Maver dealer, take a long hard look at it, then tell me I'm wrong!

For under a grand, Maver has produced a masterpiece of a 16m pole. Check it out!

