

TRICAST

FINESSE COMPETITION 15.7M

The Rochdale-based manufacturer has its sights set firmly on the flagship 'match' market with its new offering, so what do we think? **Pat MacInnes** takes a look...

I've used several Tri-Cast poles over the years and actually own two, which have served me well. The main thing about Tri-Cast's poles, though, is that, although many have been aimed at match anglers, they've displayed such awesome strength that carpers have taken to them in a big way. This means that many regard the brand as simply a manufacturer of out-and-out power poles. The Finesse Competition, however, looks set to change that.

Tri-Cast always produces poles that measure up slightly differently to the rest of the pack. This is no bad thing, though, and in reality I've yet to find one where you have to remove much carbon to fit the elastic, which can only be a good thing. On the match tops, take the No1 section out (which, technically, isn't the No1; Tri-Cast calls the No2 section the No1 and 'ignores' the actual No1... confused?) and you can fit a bush that allows the maximum-rated No10 elastic to flow freely.

On the power kits you'll have to remove just eight inches to fit a bush that will accommodate a No20 elastic. The kits are a good length and are without doubt some of the strongest on the market.

Tri-Cast also seems to have improved the finish of its poles lately. Once they featured a chunky, spiral weave but these days they are smooth but with no loss of grip, and the strength is definitely still there. The female joints are all reinforced with a carbon wrap that looks reassuringly tough.

This pole looks as swish as anything on the market at the same price, but where this model really stands out is in the supplied spares package; alongside the classy holdall and dedicated cupping kit (with cups), you receive the integral match top three in the pole, two Big Bore power top twos, plus an amazing four match top-four kits. You also receive a voucher for a free match or power kit. There are no short No4s or dolly butts included but not everyone is that fussed about them and, with those top-four kits included in the price, this is a genuinely brilliant package.

If you do want extra kits and regular No4s for setting up longer kits the prices are very competitive, especially when you figure in the fact that Tri-Cast poles are effectively 'hand-made' in its established Rochdale factory.

Match kits cost £82.99, power top twos cost £64.99, a No4 for the Finesse will set you back £54.99 and a 1.7m extension is £229. What these guys don't know about carbon isn't worth knowing, and when you take into account that it supplies carbon-fibre products to the highly technical aerospace and motor-racing industries you have to admire the craftsmanship involved.

Of all the Tri-Cast poles that I've ever reviewed, this is the best I've seen. The brand is going from strength to strength and gaining momentum around the UK as a pole manufacturer to be reckoned with, and this pole looks set to well and truly dispel the myth that Tri-Cast is simply a maker of heavy-duty kit.

**STREET
PRICE**
£1,499

Tech Spec

Length: 15.71m

Actual weight: 1,363g

Elastic rating: No16 on both power and match kits

Sections: 11

Spares: Four top-three match kits (equivalent to a top-four kit); two Big Bore power kits; cupping kit and cups; protective tubes; holdall

RRP: £2,299

Web: www.tri-castfishing.co.uk