
Subject: : Gear Talk

Topic: : Old South Bend bamboo fly rod

Re: Old South Bend bamboo fly rod

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URL:

I dabbled quite a bit in the classic-midgrade bamboo rod collecting game before deciding it was too rich for my blood, and a bad investment of my time and money...these days I do much better with fashion accessories, my dears.

But I still have some high quality cane rods, most of which I snagged off of eBay. (My favorites for fishing both need work- one has a ferrule click and needs gluing and rewinding, the other actually needs a re-plate of the tip ferrule. So I've switched over to glass for the time being.)

My experience is that if you hang around the Classic Fly Rod forum for a while- especially the Rod ID folder- and study the photos and the histories of the various makers and manufacturers- you will learn a lot about how to detect fakes and shortened rods, find sleepers (unmarked trade rods and unidentified rods) to pick up on eBay, and figure out what's worth picking up in repairable condition and what should be passed up.

I'd say that almost all shortened and banty rods made from 8 1/2'-9 1/2' originals are easily detectable with a little practice.

For that matter, most of the better examples of that type are openly advertised as re-worked and shortened originals- although the line size is sometimes advertised as one or two sizes smaller than what the rod actually throws best. It's rare that cutting an 8 1/2 ft. 6 weight down to 7 1/2 ft. gives you a 5 weight or 4 weight: usually you just end up with a lighter, faster action 6 weight.

btw, I don't think it's possible to make a believable fake of a Heddon 8' rod from a Heddon 9'. Even though the heaviest taper 8' and the lightest taper 9' share the same butt ferrule size- what Heddon calls "2F"- the 9' rod is just too heavy in the butt section. It won't trim properly. As for Granger or W&M rods, at least one of the ferrule sizes is different for each rod length. They aren't going to shorten properly, either. And the tip sections on most 9' rods aren't fine enough to pass as 8' light-taper originals when shortened. (Leonards are an exception. But please, please don't shorten a 9' or 9 1/2' Leonard that's otherwise in good condition!)

Beyond that, it takes a lot of work to re-wrap and re-finish a rod. I can think of many easier dollars to be made than by trying to fraudulently pass off a re-done cut-down rod as a shorter length original, just to make another \$200 or so off of it. Anyone who can wrap a passable fake would be much better off advertising their refinishing and repair work, imo.

btw, if you want a bargain Heddon, try to find an 8 1/2' 2F rod with a 2" short midsection. That taper has an Achilles' heel- the midsection was tapered too narrowly, and they have a pronounced tendency to snap right below the female mid ferrule. But the taper works fine and holds up well, once cut back and refitted. Nice 5/6 weight.

My other piece of advice for a cane rod that you value as a fishing rod is to reinforce the tip, by having a clear (i.e., white varnished) 00 thread wrap done between the last snake guide and the tip-top. Especially for Grangers 8 1/2' and less, and Heddons with tapers lighter than 2F.

And oh yeah, re-fit your ferrules using a modern glue, like heated Pliobond (if the fit is fairly tight when you pull it, re-set it by tapping the ferrule down with a rubber hammer) or epoxy (if you find that the ferrule is loose and/or built up with string.) After you clean up all of the old dried crumbly glue, you may need to build up a loose ferrule fit with string again, in fact. But you get to use dacron or nylon, instead of cotton. And modern glue. Altho if you use J-B Weld, you will never, ever be able to pull that ferrule again.