

# BAMBOO JOURNAL

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ITALIAN BAMBOO RODMAKERS ASSOCIATION

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**Bamboo Journal n. 10 - February 2013**

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Front cover:	The shop of rodmaker Bob Clay - Kispiox BC
Photo on page 2:	Gabriele Gori President of IBRA welcomes the mayor of the Carcassonne

# Editorial

**Come now!** 2013 is finally here.

We're a little creased, battered and bruised but we made it.

That awful 2012 is behind us forever: many doubted we would make it but we did and this is our starting block.

IBRA has had difficult moments which were really the members' difficulties but let us never forget that IBRA is its members and it lives thanks to them

We had to forfeit the Rodmaking Course that had become a fundamental highlight of our association. A series of lessons, seminars, meetings and participation in National exhibition events were cancelled. The economic crisis forced many to renounce.

This economic crisis has discouraged most of us.

But now 2012 is behind us, it is the past

Now is the time to roll up our sleeves and look ahead with tenacity and hope.

It is like the aftermath of an earthquake – alas I have a long experience of them! – first the fear, then the bewilderment and in the end the dejection but if one does not react and start over looking forwards, the hope to overcome it wanes and everything becomes impossible.

If there are ruins it is the moment to rebuild, re-establish with a different view of things. On May 24, 25 and 26 there is the Italian Gathering..

It will be the time to meet, to see old friends and make new ones. Let us make this a gathering of enthusiasm, new energy and the confirmation of the great skills that the Italian Rodmaking has shown over the years.

It is also the chance to confront each other and evaluate what the Association will be in the future. A fundamental moment of the association will be the 2014 Elections, they are round the corner and I think it is the time to ask ourselves, all together, what kind of IBRA we want in the near future. But I dare to go beyond that, what type of rodmaking we want in the coming years! The directions, the functions, the logic Italian rodmaking must seek in the future!

I will leave you to the reading of the Bamboo Journal and I dutifully thank, without rhetoric or flattery, the writers that made the issue of the Bamboo Journal number ten possible.



# Happiness

di Giovanni Cio Nese



## **I saw a happy man. A rare event, considering it was Monday!**

Josè came to visit me about a month ago. He came to collect his bamboo rod. By now I am more confident with bamboo and I am aware of what I am selling but it is still a very stressful situation. Every time I compare it to my daughter's wedding. You have accumulated stress for twenty years, hoping she will leave the house and then when you see her leave you feel you have not completed her education, maybe it is not good enough for her future husband, perhaps in a few years she will come back home with a couple of kids, that maybe you are not the good father you thought you were...

Now, if you substitute the word "daughter" with "bamboo rod", I feel the same way.

Perhaps I'm not the great rodmaker I thought I was. I always start off with high hopes and big promises of rigour and then along the way I realize there is something I could have done better, something that is not as perfect as I had imagined and I accumulate stress.

At the end the varnish dresses up the rod like the dress does the bride but I know that underneath there is that tiny defect; he will not notice, only I know, but it is stressful. I examine it with a critical eye but I am fed up with it in my garage, stretched out, hung up, tied... I must give it away quickly or I will break it up in pieces.

The person that will pick it up is kept constantly updated on the work progress, he followed the construction phases and he is as tense as a violin, he will never spot the defect, he doesn't see it. It must be the same special lining we use for the eyes of people who fall in love.

Exhausted I give it away. But it is still stress.

I have read that artists react the same way with their work. Picasso was not like that. He was good. Better than anyone. Even if he did not invent a style, he made it his own and used it in a better way than the inventor. He was the best. And he knew it too.

I consider myself a modest artist, a very modest artist, one of those that once a work is done, they put it down with the idea of touching it up because it is not perfect. I know of many very famous examples: Leonardo carried the Mona Lisa with him half way across Europe, it was never finished, a work in progress.

But eventually money, the will to buy another piece of equipment to do a certain job better, imposes one to exchange: rod and stress on one side of a scale, money and happiness in exchange on the other. Nonetheless, after almost twenty years I sell a couple of rods a year. Only two have returned, those without nodes. It was not my fault... the glue failed. I managed to find a tube of glue that did not work. Luckily I only made two rods with it. None of the defects I am aware of and I know are hidden in the other rods have ever been noticed. Imperfect but long-lasting marriages!

Jose' comes with a few friends. I had met them fishing and we had chatted. The meeting was organised in time and there was the opportunity to try the rods, better than at the show. That time they not only tried the usual wooden rods but also my first "Cut and Sew" graphite rod. They didn't cast badly but I could tell they were not taught and they were lacking in application, the casting is not their first thought, one of the three is enthusiastic about the C&S. When at dark we stop casting, he is still holding it dismounted in his arms, as if cuddling it, a sweet image, unusual even for me who builds them. He gives it back unwillingly as if separating himself from it. It would not have been the first rod I gave away on a generous impulse but it is my first graphite prototype and I have a name as a bamboo rodmaker to protect. I take it back.

We finish our chat in a pizzeria with a new convinced bamboo enthusiast, an indifferent user of telescopic rods and an unhappy man.

The next day Jose' phones me.

Stress!

Everything is alright! The rod is fantastic, etc. but... Axxxxxx is in love with the S&C graphite rod. I tell Jose' again that I cannot give it to him but there is another blank the same as that one where I got mine and I offer to explain how Axxxxxx can build it, it is not difficult...

Josè refers and eventually after a few more phone calls I tell him I will build it for him. Axxxxxx is so shy he doesn't even phone me, I didn't think I was so intimidating.

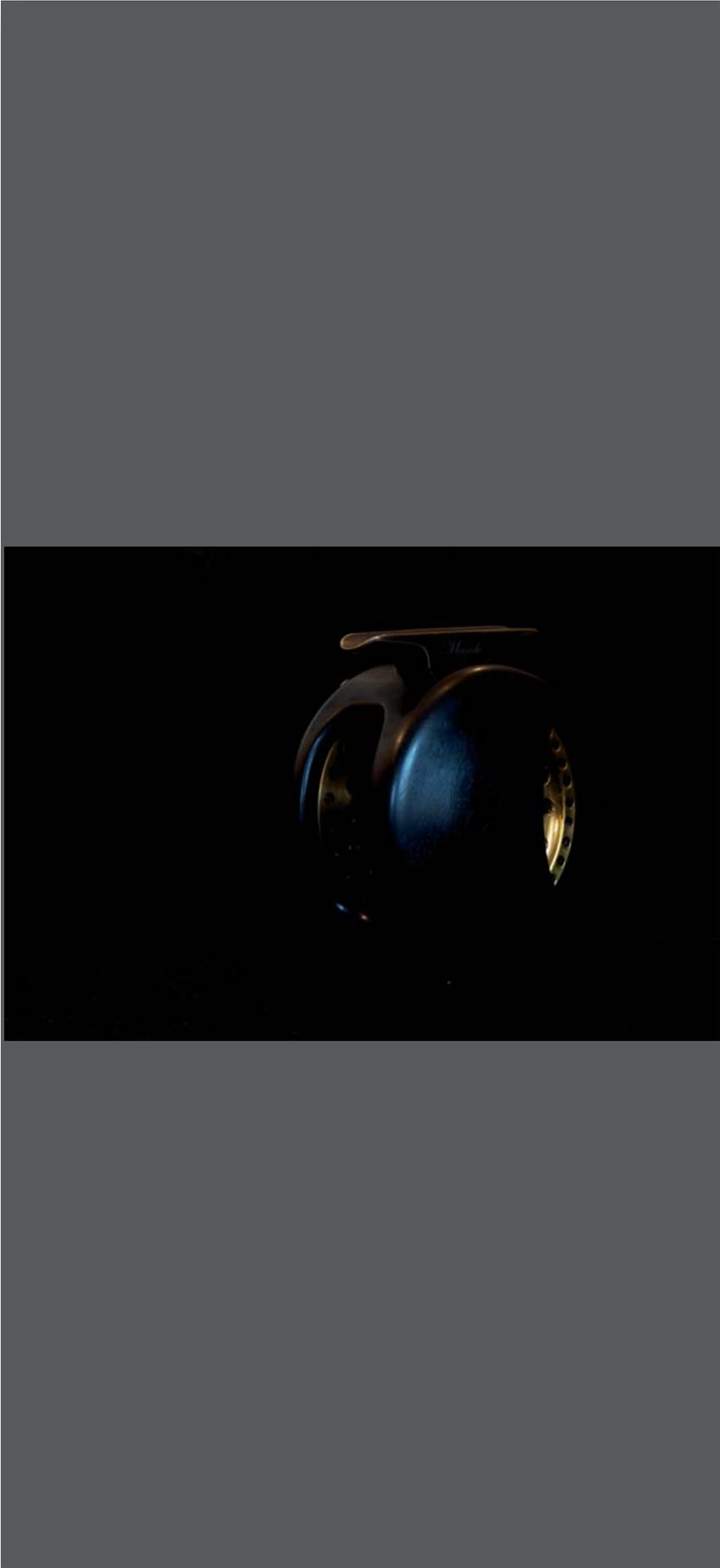
The following Friday I phone Jose' to tell him the rod is ready.

Monday when I put the plastic tube with the rod in Axxxxxx's hand he says "I haven't slept for two nights waiting for this moment"

He mounts the rod, he tries it and his face lights up.

Stress on one side of the scale, on the other there is only happiness, like a bride on her wedding day.







## Report di Alix Antoni

*A*fter Italy (twice), Switzerland and Germany, in 2012 France organised the 5th European Rodmakers Gathering.

Among the best Italian, Swiss, Belgian, Danish rodmakers met on 10th and 11th of November in the south of France at the feet of the medieval city of Carcassonne. Andy Royer, the importer of bamboo culms and who is well known by rodmakers all over the world came from the USA to participate to our meeting together with his partner Alice who speaks French perfectly.

For the event, the Mayor of Carcassonne let us use the best hall in town - a very spacious and well organised hall. We laid out our tables for the exhibition of the rods and we even managed to create a spaces for the meals and for casting without having to leave the hall.

*A*près l'Italie (deux fois) la Suisse et l'Allemagne, la France a organisé en 2012 les 5ème Rencontres Européennes des constructeurs de cannes en bambou refendu.

*C'est dans le sud de la France, au pied de la cité médiévale de CARCASSONNE que se sont réunis les 10 et 11 novembre les meilleurs constructeurs italiens, suisses, belges, danois, hollandais, allemands et français. Andy ROYER, l'importateur de bambou bien connu des facteurs du monde entier, a fait le déplacement spécialement des Etats Unis pour participer à notre meeting, accompagné de sa fiancée Alice qui parle parfaitement le français.*

*Pour cette occasion, le maire de CARCASSONNE avait mis à notre disposition la plus belle salle de la ville, très spacieuse et magnifiquement aménagée. Dans le même lieu nous avons pu disposer les tables pour l'exposition des cannes, une aire pour les repas et des espaces de casting qui ont permis d'essayer les cannes sans sortir de la salle.*

***The programme :***

On Saturday morning the participants occupied their spaces and laid out their wares and it is here that the contacts with the other exhibitors took place.

On Saturday afternoon. Pierre Perrot and Paul Agostini held a rodmaking laboratory for beginners. Straight after that, Christian Burger from Germany explained his method for constructing ferrules in carbon fibre and epoxy.

Jean SANTOS brought his whole engraving workshop and with extreme patience he let the participants try their hands with their fist engravings while he dispensed advice and information.

At 6 pm the IBRA president Gabriele Gori, introduced his association to the spectators helped by Moreno Borriero who translated into French.

While the participants were exchanging rodmaking experiences, the ladies were accompanied on a visit of the medieval city of Carcassonne.

The Gala dinner took place at 8 pm with a traditional regional dish: la cassoulet.

On Sunday morning Gabriele Gori held a brief seminar on the resistance of materials and explained the method used to calculate and design tapers. Jean Louis Taravella (Gino) had the difficult job of translating Gabriele's talk. After that Alberto PORATELLI presented his original concepts regarding bamboo ferrules.

The winning raffle tickets were drawn straight after lunch and there were 40 magnificent prizes offered by the participants.

***Le déroulement du programme :***

*Le samedi matin les participants ont investi les lieux, ont installé leurs matériels et établi les contacts avec les autres exposants.*

*Samedi après midi, après le repas, Pierre PERROT et Paul AGOSTINI ont animé un atelier de construction à l'intention des débutants. Puis, l'allemand Christian BURGER a expliqué son procédé de fabrication des viroles en fibres de carbone enduites de résine époxy.*

*Jean SANTOS avait transporté son atelier de gravure et, avec beaucoup de patience, a mis ses outils et ses conseils à la disposition des volontaires qui ont désiré faire leurs premiers pas dans le domaine de la gravure.*

*A 18H00 Gabriele GORI, le président italien de l'IBRA nous a présenté son association, assisté de Moreno BORRIERO pour la traduction en français.*

*Au milieu de l'après midi, pendant que les participants échangeaient leurs expériences de construction, leurs épouses étaient invitées à visiter la cité médiévale de CARCASSONNE.*

*A 20H, le repas de gala réunissait tous les participants autour du plat traditionnel régional : un cassoulet.*

*Le dimanche matin, Gabriele GORRI a fait un bref exposé sur la résistance des matériaux afin d'expliquer les éléments de calculs qui sont retenus pour la conception des profils de cannes. Le français Jean Louis TARAVELLA (Gino) a eu la difficile tâche de traduire les propos de Gabriele. Puis à son tour, Alberto PORATELLI a présenté son concept original de viroles en bambou.*

*Après le repas de midi, nous avons procédé au traditionnel tirage de la tombola. 40 magnifiques lots, offerts par de nombreux participants, composaient cette tombola.*

At 4 pm the participants said their sad goodbyes.

During the two days, some participants were happy to find old friends and the new participants discovered the spirit of conviviality that animated these gatherings. Everyone was surprised by the fact that there were no language barriers and so there was hindrance to the exchanges.

The organisers – the Club Mouche Audois, were rewarded for their 12 months of hard work by the great spirit of friendship that characterised the meeting.

We will certainly be back !!

*A 16H 00, les participants se sont séparés à regret.*

*Pendant ces 2 journées certains, habitués de ces meetings, étaient heureux de se retrouver. Les nouveaux découvraient l'esprit de partage et la convivialité qui animent les regroupements européens. Tous étaient surpris de s'apercevoir que la diversité des langues n'était pas un obstacle aux échanges.*

*Pour le Club Mouche Audois, organisateur du meeting, l'esprit qui a régné pendant ces 2 journées est une récompense au travail fourni pendant 12 mois pour la préparation de ces rencontres.*

*Nous recommencerons certainement !*



The prizes for the raffle.

*le lots de la tombola*



*A much coveted prize:  
a reel engraved by Jean Santos*

*Un lot très convoité :  
moulinet gravé par Jean SANTOS*



*The dining area*

*L'espace réservé aux repas*



Gabriele GORI during his seminary  
assisted by Gino for the translation.

*Gabriele GORI pendant son exposé,  
assisté de Gino pour la traduction.*



Pierre PERROT and Paul AGOSTINI  
during their demonstration

*Pierre PERROT et Paul AGOSTINI  
pendant leur démonstration*



*The rods on exhibition*

*L'exposition des cannes*



*L'atelier de gravure de Jean SANTOS*

Jean Santos  
and his engraving laboratory



The casting area

*L'espace pour le casting*



During the Gala dinner,  
the Italian ladies were entertained  
by the two best French participants.

*Pendant le repas de gala  
les belles italiennes étaient assistées  
par nos plus beaux représentants français.*



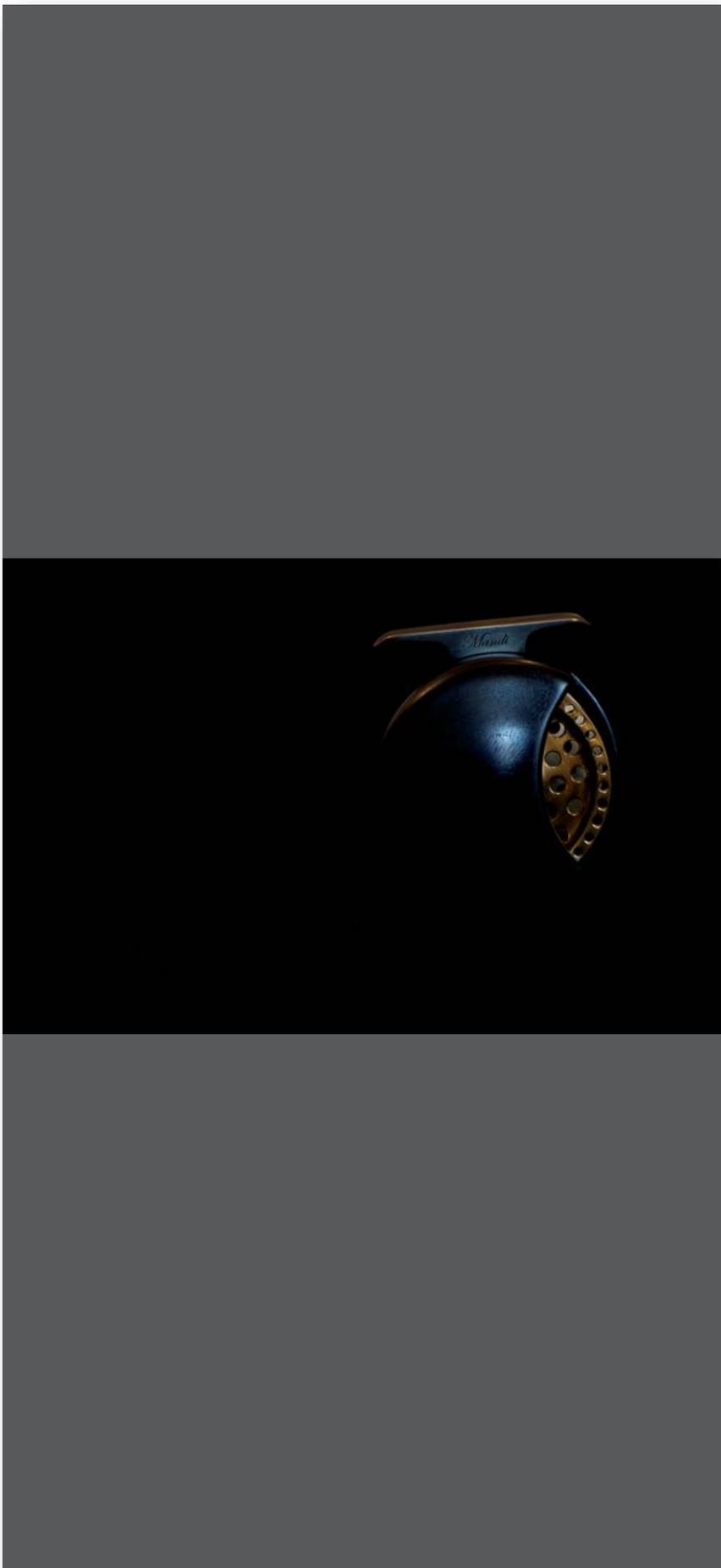
The group of participants

*Le groupe des participants*



The Italian delegation

*La délégation italienne*



## A BEGINNER AT THE CARCASSONNE GATHERING

BY OLIVIER BROSSET

Carcassonne!

The 5th European Bamboo Rodmakers Gathering. I have dreamed about it for months. Feverishly. With the doubt I may not be able to go. But after many uncertainties here I am.

How nice!

## UN NOVICE AUX RENCONTRES DE CARCASSONNE

DI OLIVIER BROSSET

Carcassonne !

Les 5es rencontres européennes des constructeurs de cannes en bambou refendu ! Des mois que j'en rêve. Fébrilement. Sans être sûr de pouvoir venir. Après bien des incertitudes, ça y est, j'y suis quand même. Bon sang que c'est bon !



I can meet those crazy people I encounter almost daily on the "Gillum Forum". I can see and touch their work. I can listen to experts' advice. I can take photos, film if possible. Observe, observe, observe.

The 10th of November I take advantage of every step that brings me nearer to the Salle du Dome. Not too quick, I must savour every minute. The night before I had found the address. It can't be too far.

Entering, I already imagine putting the faces to the names and the pseudonyms. It is true, we hide behind avatars, we invent strange names... only to realise this does not facilitate the identification of the participants. What a pity, I should have thought of it beforehand!

Je vais pouvoir rencontrer ces doux dingues que je croise quasi quotidiennement sur le forum de Gillum. Voir et toucher leurs réalisations. Ecouter les conseils de ceux qui savent, de ceux qui ont déjà fait. Prendre des photos, filmer si possible. Observer, observer, observer.

Ce 10 novembre 2012, je profite de chaque pas qui me rapproche de la salle du Dôme. Pas trop vite, faire durer l'instant. La veille au soir, j'ai repéré l'endroit. Ça doit être grand là-dedans.

En entrant, j'imagine déjà mettre des visages sur des noms, sur des pseudos. C'est vrai ça, on se cache derrière des avatars, on s'invente des noms bizarres... pour finalement se rendre compte que ça ne va pas faciliter l'identification des participants. Tant pis, fallait y penser avant !

With my first 18 strips under my arm, I feel comfortable and completely "awkward" at the same time. Even more when I see the huge tables laid out in front of me with beautiful rods on them. I was expecting this but it goes beyond my expectations.

- «Good morning. Olivier "Fox-589" on the forum. »

- «Welcome. Come, your space is over there! »  
I have a dedicated space? An exhibitor's badge? The members of the Club Mouche Audoise have organized this grandly!

- «Thanks a lot. »

I put my modest parcel down and I take time to have coffee. Along the grandstand in front of me they are trying some rods, extending lines. I like all this. At the end, on the left, there is a nice – very nice – exhibition that catches my eye. Very good! The prices for tomorrow's lottery! It is better than a Christmas window.

Quick, I must buy some tickets, one never knows. At the same time I feel a little ashamed. I could have offered something too. Obviously not a rod but a book, a bamboo strip, anything else. Next time I will not fail.

Ok, let's meet some contacts now. It is not difficult, everyone is here for the same reason.

- «Hello! Nice rods ». They look familiar. I saw them on the Gillum site obviously. At least one of them. Actually it is even better. A lot of work of Silverfly31. And here we see the master's touch in the construction.

I only have a little theoretical knowledge of all this. And I am lacking in many things – I know – despite all the hours watching videos in many languages I don't know very well.

- «No, it is not difficult. Not even the bamboo ferule, you'll see. »

- «All those that have built at least one rod, say the same thing. But it looks complicated to me ... mostly because I don't have all the tools yet. »

Mes 18 premières baguettes sous le bras, je me sens en même temps à ma place et complètement « à côté de la plaque ». Surtout quand je vois les immenses tables disposées devant moi et les cannes splendides posées dessus. Je m'y attendais, mais ça dépasse quand même mes espérances.

- « Bonjour. Olivier "Fox-589" sur le forum. »

- « Bienvenue. Venez, votre place est là ! »

J'ai une place attribuée ? Un badge d'exposant ? Ils ont fait les choses en grand, les membres du Club mouche audois !

- « Merci beaucoup. »

Je pose discrètement mon modeste fagot et prend le temps d'un café. Tout autour, ça discute gentiment. Le long des gradins en face, on teste des cannes, on étend de la soie. J'aime ça. Au fond à gauche, un bel - un très bel - étalage attire mon regard. Bien sûr ! Les lots offerts par la tombola de demain ! C'est mieux qu'une vitrine de Noël. Vite, acheter quelques tickets comme prévu, on ne sait jamais. En même temps, j'ai un peu honte. J'aurais pu offrir quelque chose moi aussi. Pas une canne évidemment, mais un livre, un tronc de bambou, quelque chose quoi. La prochaine fois, faudra pas louper le coche. Bon, maintenant établir le contact. Pas difficile, tout le monde est là pour ça.

- « Salut ! Jolies cannes. » Il me semble que je les ai déjà vues. Sur le site de Gillum évidemment. Au moins l'une d'entre elles. En vrai, c'est encore mieux. Un sacré boulot de Silverfly31. C'est là que je vois la maîtrise, tant dans la construction que quand il s'agit d'en parler.

Moi, je n'ai qu'une connaissance théorique de tout ça. Et il me manque énormément de choses – le ressenti – malgré les heures de vidéo visionnées dans tout un tas de langues que je ne maîtrise pas.

- « Non, ce n'est pas difficile. Même les viroles bambou, tu verras. »

- « Tous ceux qui ont au moins une canne à leur actif disent la même chose. Moi, ça me semble compliqué... surtout que je n'ai pas encore tous les outils. »

*«Stop complaining Olivier, you are in the best place to learn, so get a move on! I told myself. You have already met many people you know are masters of rodmaking. Go on, ask.»*

In fact, Alberto Poratelli is there, in front of me. To say that I admire his work is a euphemism. A week does not go by without a visit to his site, his twitter account to see his latest work. I introduce myself and I show him my strips. The defects I found. He throws out two strips and gathers the others. Six for the tip, six for the butt. He takes one of his 7' #4 rods and puts it next to my strips. «You must cut here. And here» With one hand movement after the other he aligns the strips, marking the reference points. «I will send you the drawings by email. An easy taper to build for a beginner. No problems.»

I was hoping to collect some advice. I was hoping that someone would tell me what to do and what not to do... and there, in five minutes, Alberto put me at ease. Pleasantly, simply. My eyes were sparkling with admiration. He? I think he was amused by the fact he had a fan like me.

A little later I went to see the demonstration of Paul Agostini and Pierre Perrot, of Christian Burger, of Patrick Maleig, Jean Santos and Mihai Stanciu. And then there were the discussions with Alix, Alain, Gino, Laurent, Gillum, Mr Hooligan, Sabryt, Moreno, Gabriele, Josselin, Gary ... and many others whom I thank for their kindness and availability.

There was nothing but meetings like these for two days. Simple, without prejudice. With only one idea in mind: sharing knowledge and experience. Thanks to all, without exceptions. Truly.



*« Arrête ton laïus Olivier, t'es justement au meilleur endroit pour apprendre, alors bouge-toi ! me dis-je. T'as déjà reconnu un tas de gens dont tu sais qu'ils sont des maîtres en matière de construction. Vas-y, demande.»*

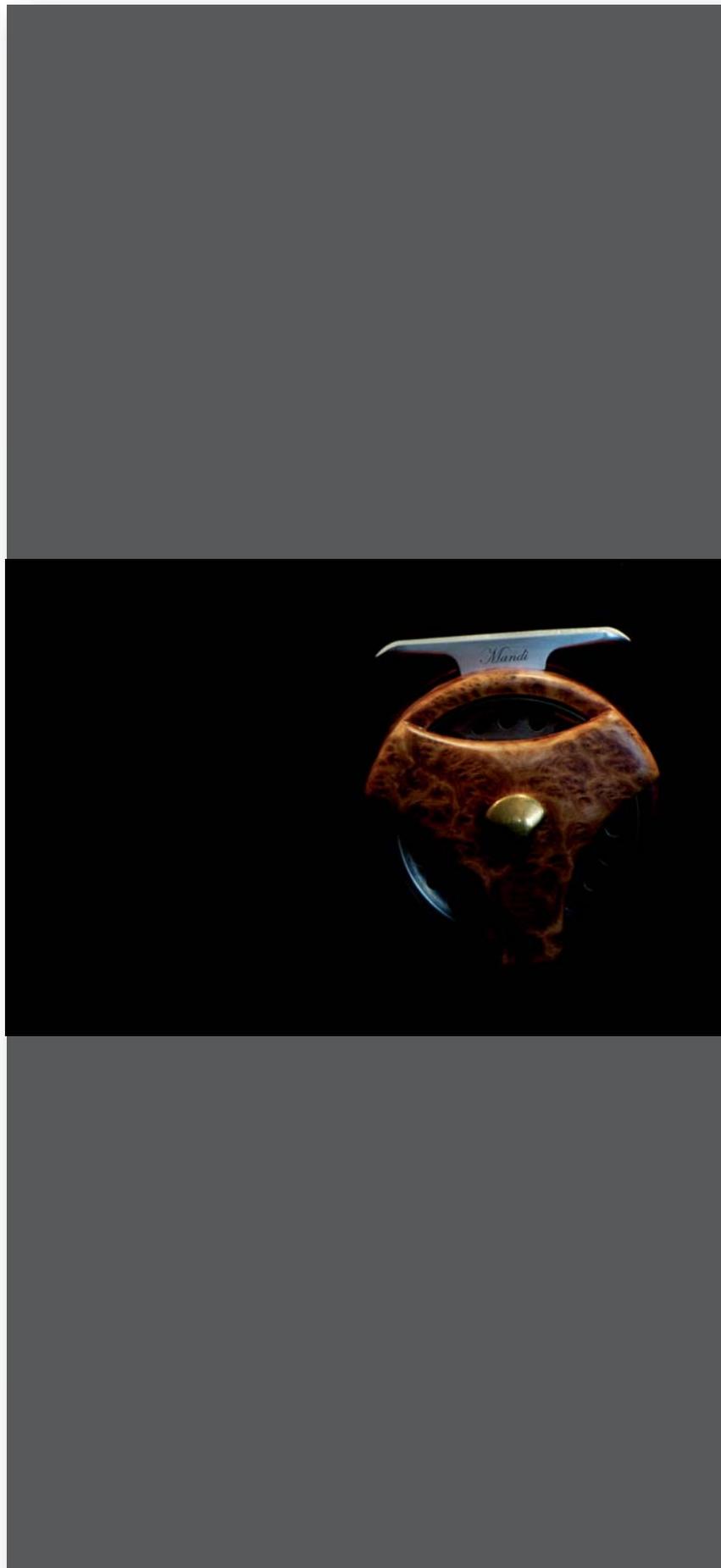
Justement, Alberto Poratelli est là, pile devant moi. Dire que j'admire réellement son travail est un euphémisme. Il ne se passe pas une semaine sans que j'aie fait un tour sur son site, que je consulte les tweets sur ses derniers travaux. Je me présente et lui montre mes brins. Les défauts que j'ai identifiés. Il écarte en effet deux baquettes, en regroupe d'autres. Six pour le scion, six pour le talon. Vous connaissez tout ça. Il prend une de ses propres cannes 7' #4, la place à côté. « Il faudra couper là. Et là. » D'un geste sûr il ajuste les brins, trace les repères. « Je t'envoie les plans par e-mail. Un modèle facile à réaliser pour un débutant. Pas de problème.»

Moi qui espérais glaner quelques conseils. Qui espérais qu'il y aurait quelqu'un pour me dire quoi faire ou ne pas faire... Et là, en cinq minutes, Alberto en personne m'a mis à l'aise. Aimablement, simplement. Moi, admiratif, j'ai les yeux en billes de loto. Lui ? Je crois que ça l'a amusé d'avoir un fan comme moi.

Un peu plus tard, j'irai voir les démonstrations de Paul Agostini et Pierre Perrot, de Christian Burger, de Patrick Maleig, Jean Santos et Mihai Stanciu. Et puis il y aura les discussions avec Alix, Alain, Gino, Laurent, Gillum, MrHooligan, Sabryt, Moreno, Gabriele, Josselin, Gary... et tant d'autres que je remercie pour leur gentillesse et leur disponibilité.

Pendant deux jours, ce ne seront que des rencontres comme ça. Simples, sans a priori. Avec une seule idée en tête : partager ses connaissances et expériences. Merci à tous sans exception. Vraiment.







*Patrick is a French rod maker from Moumour in south east Pyrenean France.*

*At the Carcassonne gathering I had the chance to admire the splicing block and he enthusiastically accepted that we publish the drawings of this tool.*

*Like many rod makers he is a man of few words and of great talent; he is not deterred by difficulties and has in fact adopted Mark Twain's motto:*

*"They did not know it was impossible, so they did it".*

*Moreno Borriero*

## Splicing Block

*by Patrick Maleig*

**D**epuis que j'ai adopté la méthode nodless, je n'ai cessé de chercher à améliorer l'outil qui sert à la taille du splice.

*J'ai commencé avec un bloc splice en nylon ( P.E) qui m'a permis de faire ma 1ère canne. ça marche très bien mais il faut le maintenir fermement plaqué sur la table avec la main gauche.*

*Pour une canne de 8', il faut compter 96 splices, et là, ça devient fastidieux.*

*Avec le bloc en métal sur l'étau, on gagne en confort et en temps, la baguette est bien maintenue et le coup de rabot est bien plus précis et efficace.*

**A**fter having adopted the "nodeless" constructive method, I have not stopped to look for the best tool to cut the strip.

I started with a nylon block splice with which I built my first rod.

This worked very well but I needed to keep it still on the table with my left hand.

To build an 8' rod you need 96 splices and it becomes annoying.

With the metal block in the vice, you gain in comfort and time, the strip is well fixed and the passage of the plane is more precise and more efficient.

*La petite gorge qui se trouve sur le dessus sert à éviter de toucher le bloc avec la lame du rabot.*

*La largeur de la rainure où l'on engage la baguette est fonction de la longueur de la canne que l'on veut réaliser.*

*J'avais mis 8mm sur un 1er bloc, et quand j'ai voulu réaliser une canne à saumon, j'ai dû en faire un second avec une gorge de 10mm. La profondeur de celle-ci ne doit pas dépasser 4mm pour pouvoir serrer les brins de faible épaisseur.*

*Sur les plans, je n'ai pas côté ni les ressorts, ni les guides, ni les supports, chacun fera en fonction de ce qu'il va trouver comme fourniture.*

*Par mesure d'économie, j'ai réalisé mon outil en assemblant 2 barres d'acier étiré de 25x12 et 16x12, mais on peut le réaliser dans la masse en fraisage.*

*PS: j'ai oublié de côté la longueur de l'ensemble: il fait 45cm de long.*

The small groove on the surface helps to avoid touching the metal with the blade of the plane.

The width of the slot where we insert the strip depends on the length of the rod to build.

I made it 8 mm on the first block and when I had to build a rod for salmon I had to make another one with a 10mm slot.

The depth of these slots must never be more than 4 mm to grip the thinner strips.

On the drawings I did not indicate the springs or the guides; everyone will put them according to what one will find more easily from one's suppliers.

For the purpose of saving, I built my tool by connecting two steel bars of 25x12 and 16x12, but it can be built by milling a whole block.

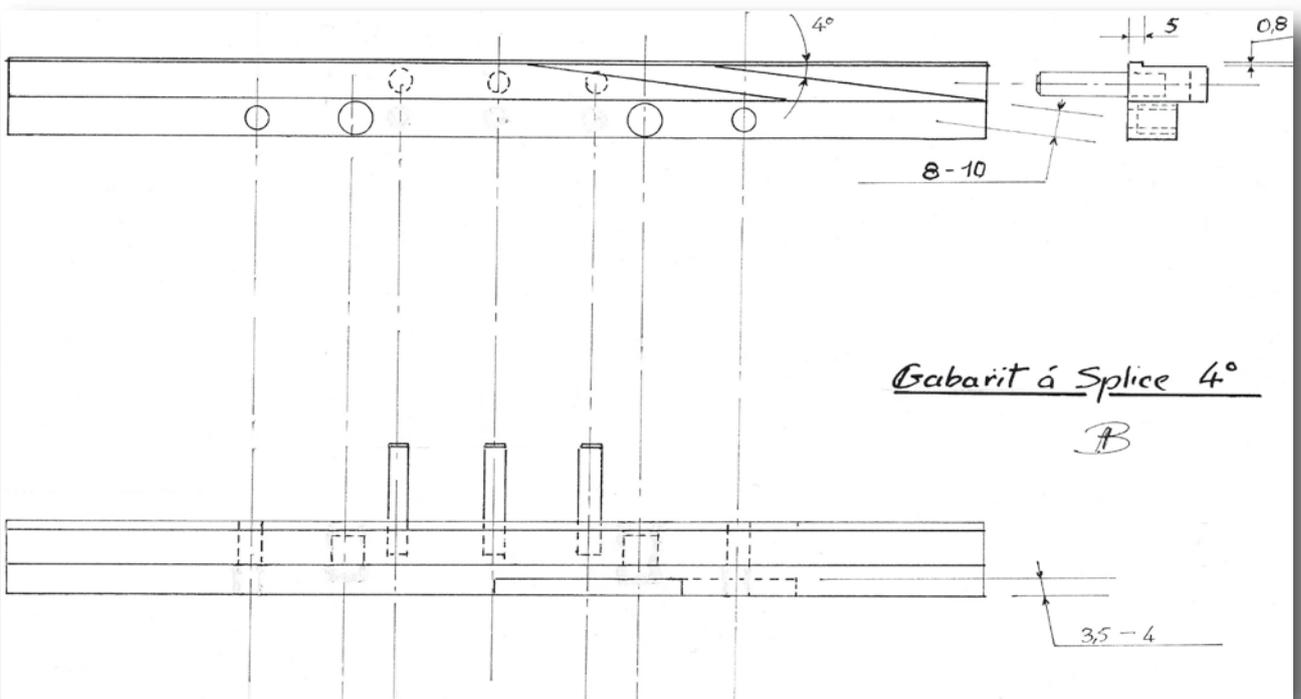
I forgot to indicate the entire length: it is 45 cm long.

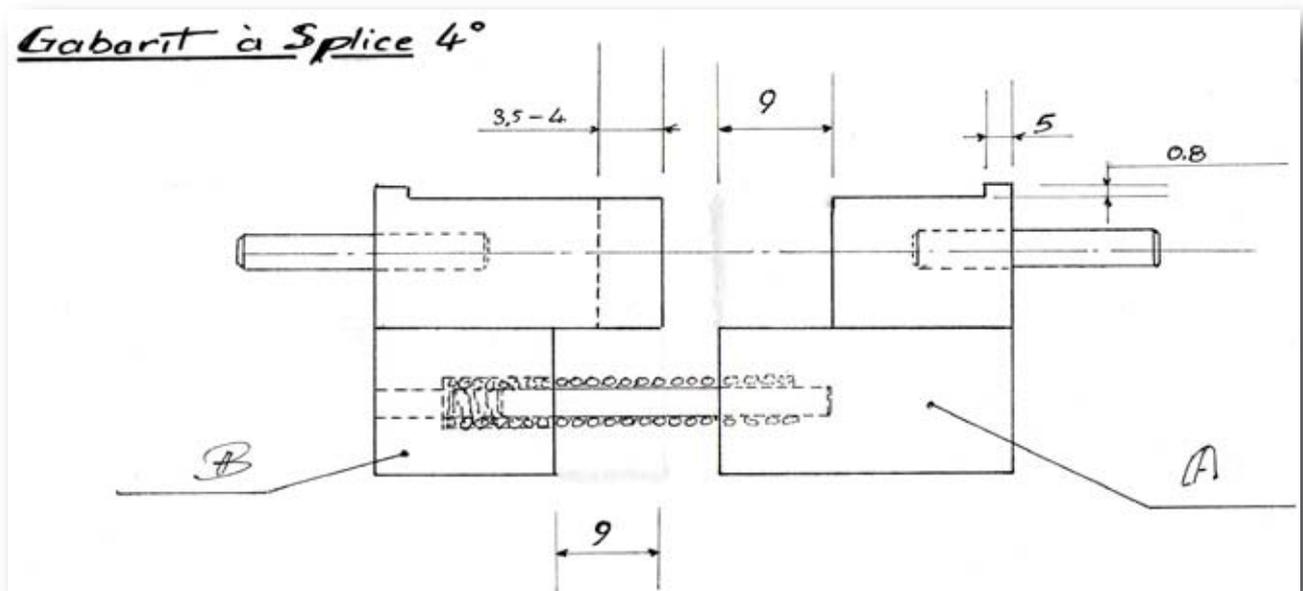
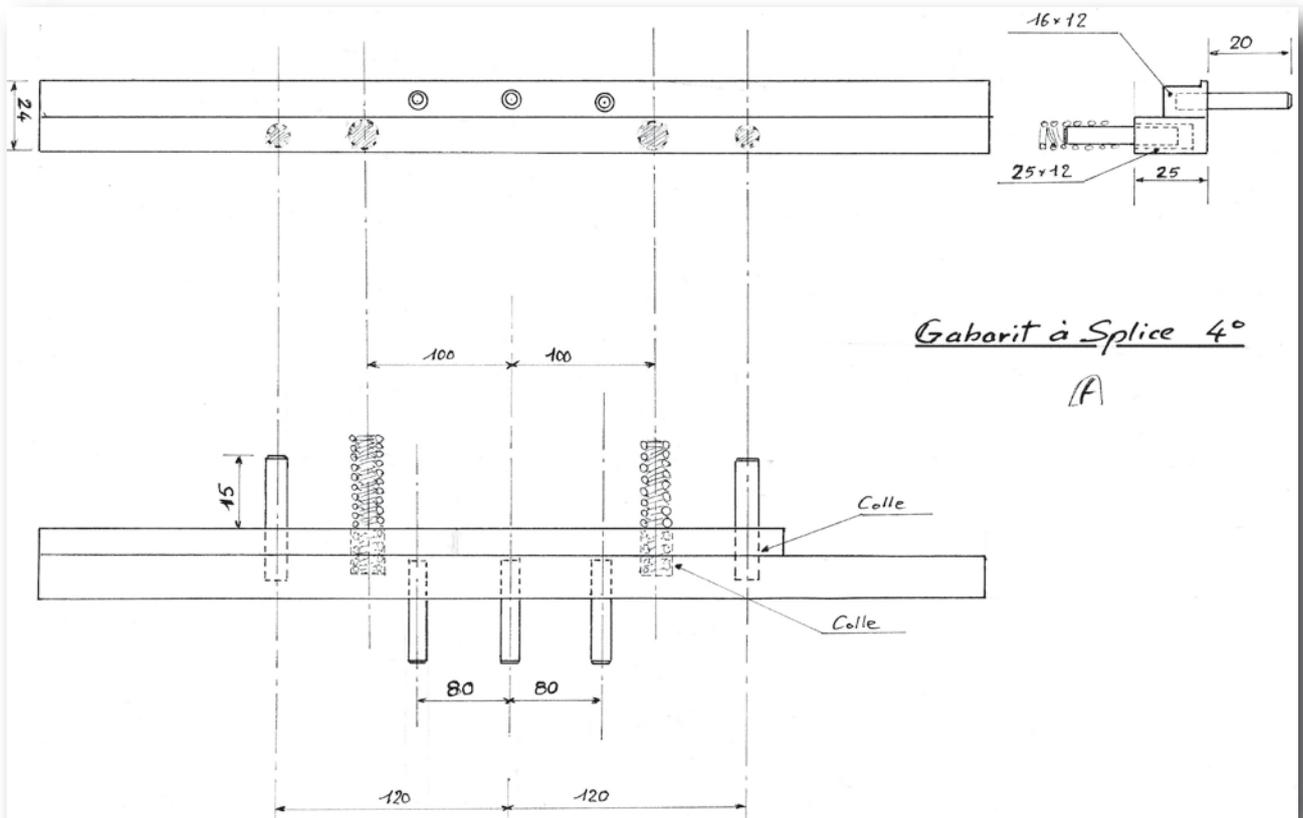
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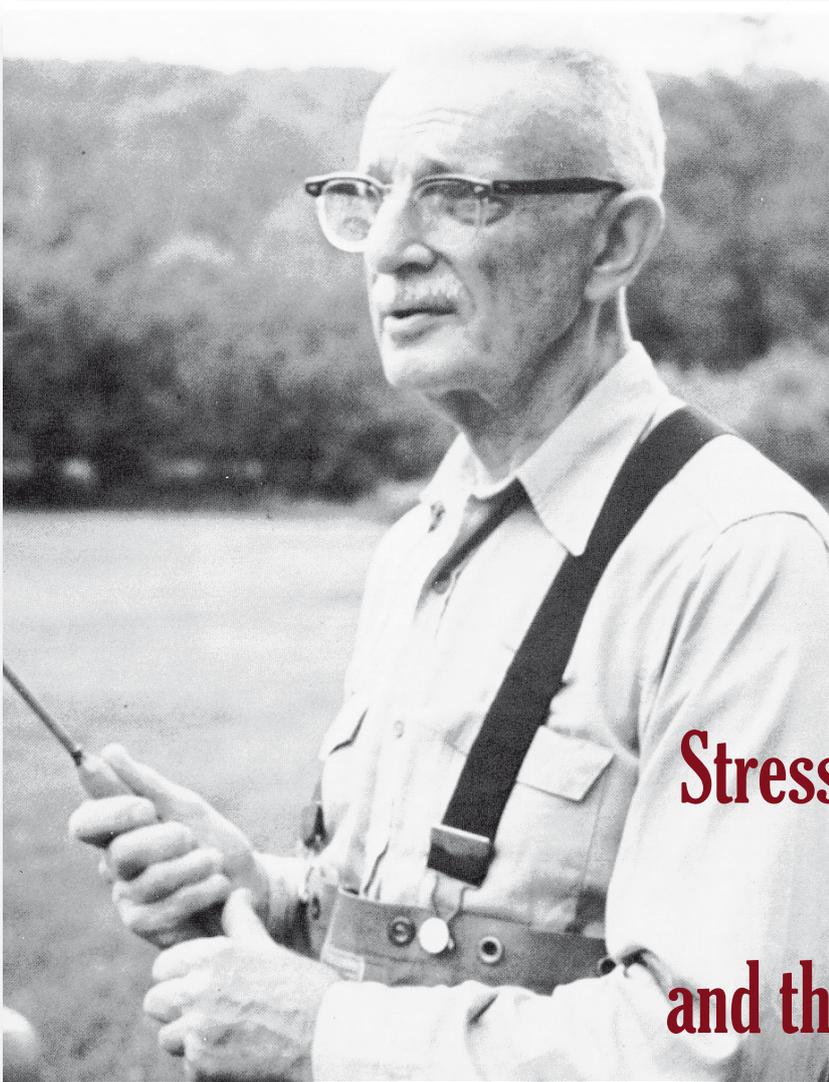












**Gabriele Gori**

## **Stress in bamboo rods, basic concepts, and the Garrison model**

§ § §

**T**he purpose of this work is an attempt to provide the basic elements of the stress in bamboo rods which are needed to interpret the diagrams one finds associated to the various tapers.

The basic concepts we will illustrate are also valid to understand and to use the most common rod design software in the International community of rodmakers, i.e. RodDnaDesign Larry Tusoni and Hexrod, with awareness of the facts.

In fact, although these programmes vary in offering the possibility to intervene in the design of the taper with different approaches, each with its good and bad points, they have one fundamental aspect in common.

Both are based on the Everett Garrison's calculation pattern.

I presume you have all read the book "A master guide to build a bamboo fly rod" written by Hoagy Carmichael

If not, it is time to read it: no rodmaker worthy of this name can go without knowing the work of the "master"

This does not mean that one must accept his “philosophy” on rodmaking completely or follow his methods slavishly in every phase of construction: it means, again, that a rodmaker worthy of this name must compare his work with that of the Master. IMHO naturally.

What is certain is that Garrison’s entire work is guided by reasoned aesthetical technical and functional choices, which are acceptable or not but they give the big picture of his work that we could define as Garrison’s rodmaking philosophy-

His approach to rod design is also particular: for the first time the design of the rod is tackled with scientific methods, i.e. with the analysis of a calculation model that although it is schematic and simplified, it represents the rod considerably well in some aspects.

In the last part of the book there are the detailed calculations that Garrison did manually with a slide rule and the patience of Job.

Today we have calculators that do that in an instant: as I mentioned previously, both Hexrod and RodDna Design are based on the Garrison model.

It stands to reason that to reach this goal one must understand how the Garrison model works.

I will not do the numerical calculations and I will only use mathematical formulae if forced to and anyway they will be as simple as possible.

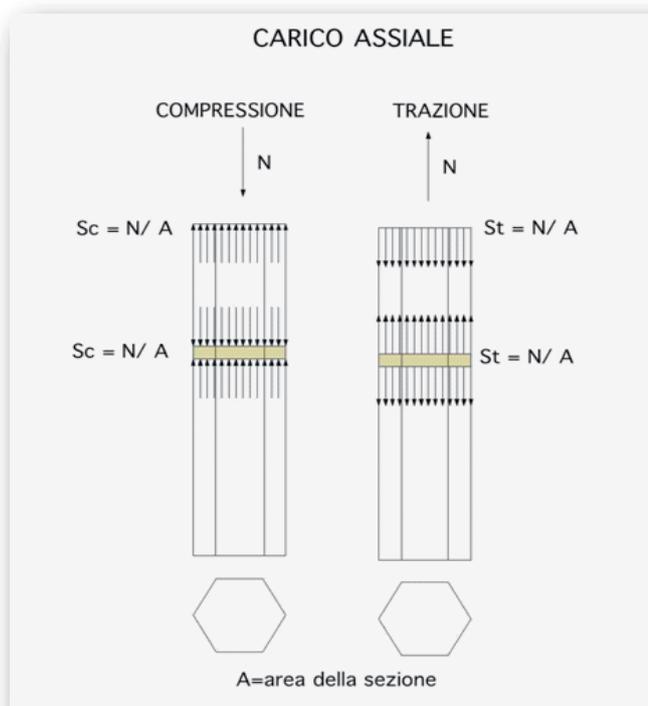
Instead I will try to illustrate the method followed by Garrison in a qualitative way: I hope to transmit those basically simple, indispensable concepts to use the RodDna Design programme with more awareness.

Unfortunately some basic concepts need to be clarified otherwise we cannot understand the terms used in Garrison’s model (or any other).

First of all we must explain stress because as you know the Garrison method is based on the stress graph.

The stress or “internal tensional state” is the strain that is created in the material of which a body is made when it is stimulated by an external action.

For example let’s look at the case of a pillar (in the drawing it has the shape of a hexagon ) stimulated by a vertical axial load  $N$ .

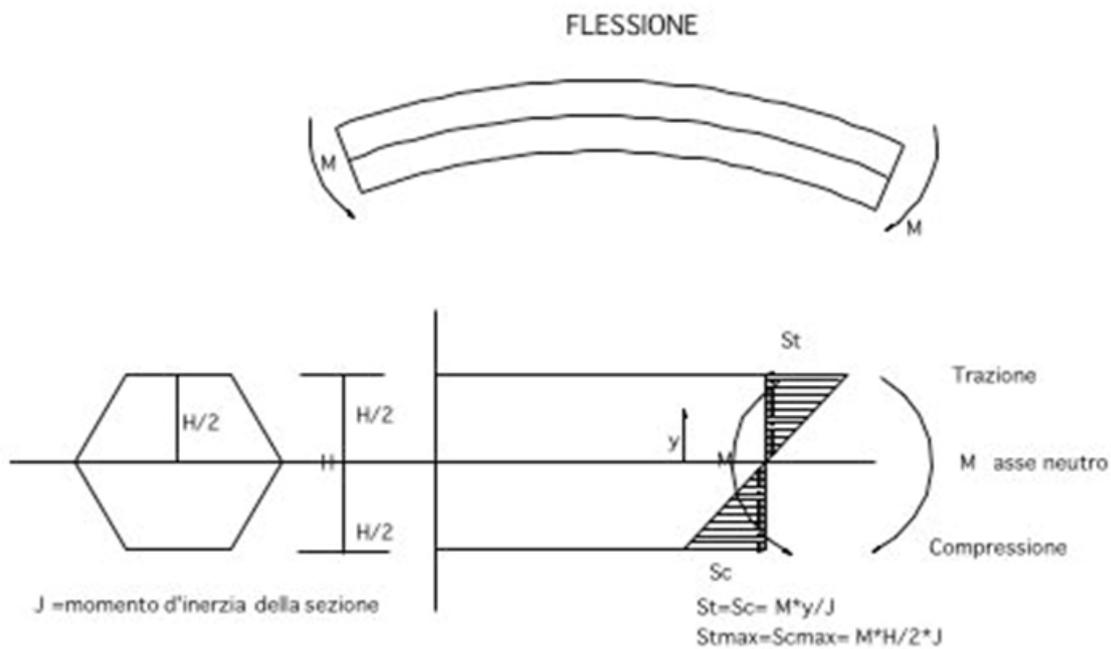


The material from which the pillar is made reacts to oppose the external force and to keep the static equilibrium: the internal stimulation of the pillar will be such to balance the axial load  $N$  and thus, if we consider that the whole section will react uniformly, it will be equal to  $N/A$  where  $A$  is the area of the section. This internal stimulation that has the dimensions of a pressure, i.e. a force divided by a surface is called stress.

If the stress is greater than the resistance of the material, the pillar collapses.

The stress can be of traction or of compression according to the action of the external force. Being pressure, it is measured in kg/square cm, oz/square inch, in pound/square inch, Pascal, Bar etc.

Let us now look at the flexing which is what interests us directly because, obviously, it is the main action of a rod.



If you take a beam, in our case a rod, and you flex it like in the figure, the upper fibres will be tense while the lower ones will be compressed: in other words tensions and compressions will develop inside the material to form a “torque” able to balance the external flexing.

In a symmetrical section like those we are interested in, they vary linearly (it is a simplification) from the maximum value on the edge to the zero value on the neutral axis of the flexure, in this case it coincides with the barycentre axis.

Another way of looking at it is that the upper fibres that are tense lengthen, the lower ones that are compressed shorten and those on the neutral axis remain unchanged.

The value of the stress, in this case equal on the compressed side and the tense side, is given by  **$St = Sc = \frac{M \cdot y}{J}$** , where  $y$  is the distance from the neutral axis and  $J$  is the inertia moment of the section which we will mention shortly.

As mentioned previously, the value of the stress increases from zero on the neutral axis to the edges where it reaches its maximum value.

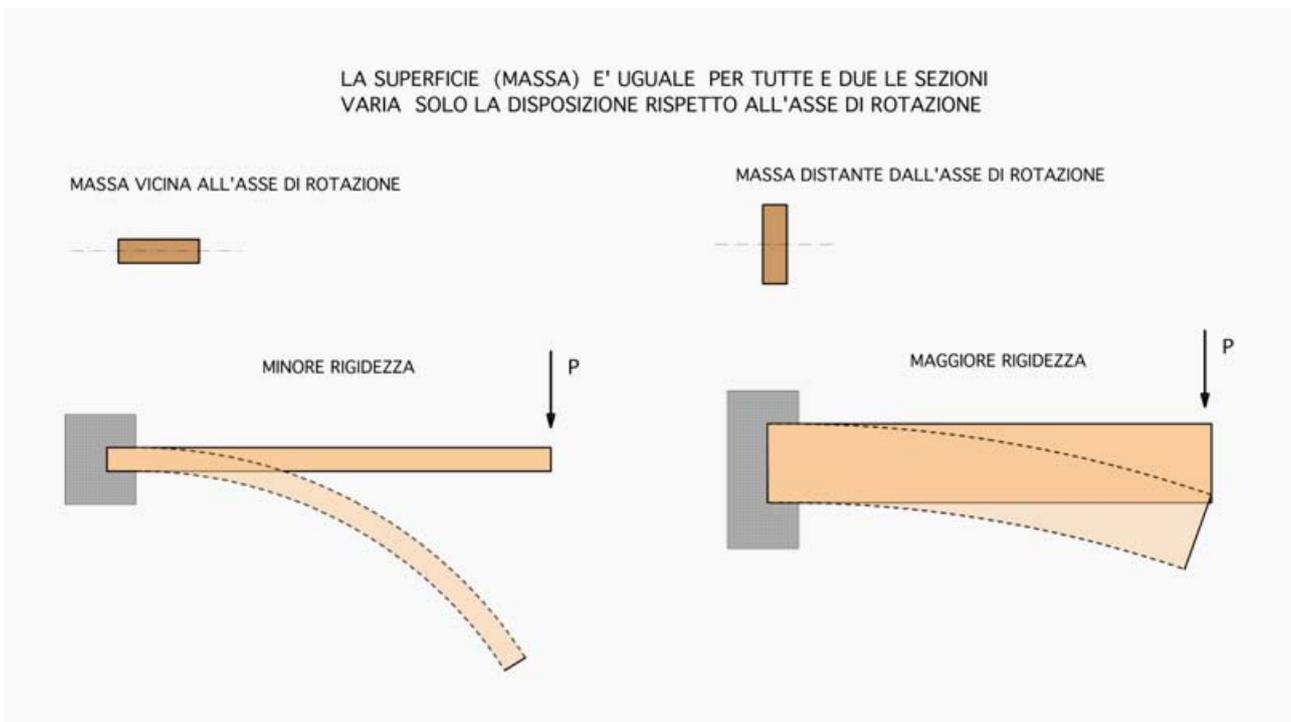
If the beam height is **H**,  
 $S_c = S_t = M \cdot H / 2 \cdot J$ ,  
 because on the edges  $y = H/2$

It is easily seen that the value of the stress decreases with the moment of inertia of the section, that is to the denominator.

The moment of inertia of a geometrical figure is a largeness that defines its resistance (inertia) to rotate around an axis.

It considers the shape of the section, i.e. how the mass of the section is distributed related to the barycentre: it is everyone's experience that a strip with a rectangular section is a lot more rigid if one tries to flex it on a plane as opposed to a perpendicular one.

**The area is the same (weight) but the rigidity is very different.**



In fact one can imagine the moment of inertia as the sum of infinitesimal areas that constitute the section multiplied by the square of the distance from the axis.

Once and for all if a beam has a transversal section that as a moment of inertia double that of another, the latter will flex double the former, subject to the same flexing action

Each geometrical figure has its formula to calculate the moment of inertia, like it has its formula to calculate the area.

With equal surfaces, each geometrical figure; square, pentagon, octagon, empty square has a different moment of inertia because the mass, although it is the same, is distributed differently.

For our purposes suffice it to know that if we take a series of strips, each with a different shape, triangular, hexagonal or other, all of the same length and of the same material and we subject them to the same load after having blocked one end in a vice, all the strips will deform in the same way, if they have the same moment of inertia.

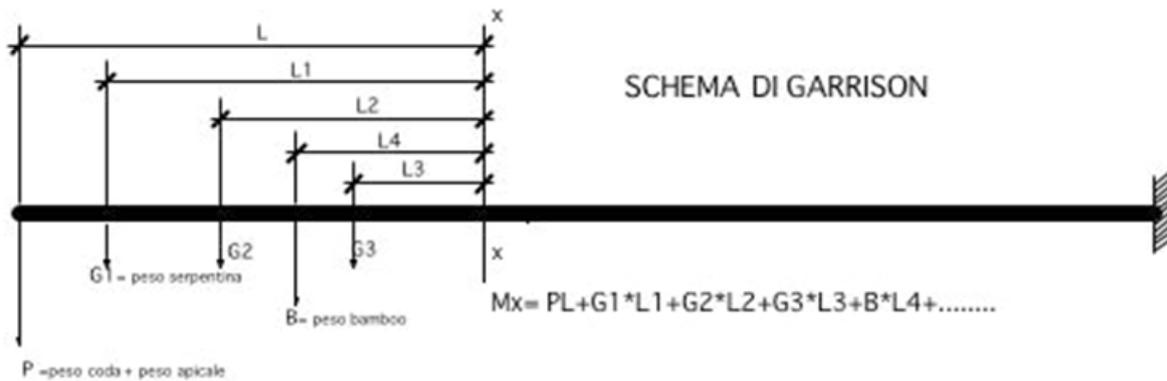
As many of you know after having attended the German Gathering in Waischenfeld in October 2007 or the 1st European Gathering in Sansepolcro in 2008, the study in the various sections of a rod and the relative chart of the “Comparison of Sections” are in fact based on this concept: the various typical sections of our bamboo rods, different one from the other, full, hollowed, fluted and so on, if they have the same moment of inertia, with other factors equal (length, taper, material) they will have the same rigidity in the flexure and thus they will deform in the same way.

### THE GARRISON MODEL

The Garrison model is rather simple: it illustrates a rod like a shelf blocked at the handle and free at the point.

This rod is then subjected to a system of loads that are:

- A concentrated load on the tip top which is the weight of the line and the tip top
- One or more concentrated loads which are the ferrules
- A distributed load which is the varnish
- A distributed load which is the weight of the bamboo itself.
- A series of concentrated loads which are the guides and stripping guide



All these loads induce an action in every section of the rod called torque that stimulates the rod with bending actions and it is done with the single load multiplied by the “arm” i.e. the distance between the point of application of the force and the section in which we have decided to calculate the torque.

There are also axial stimulations (negligible) and cutting stimulations which are not negligible but are not considered in Garrison’s chart.

Once the torque has been found for every section of the rod, Garrison stated that his rods must be stimulated in each point equally, i.e. the stress of the material will be constant for the entire length of the rod.

He defines the maximum safety stress as 170.000-180.000 oz/si (approximately 800kg/cm<sup>2</sup>) and an average of approximately 150.000 oz/si (about 660 kg/cm<sup>2</sup>) and with the inverse formula he calculates the diameter of each section.

So Garrison's rods are designed this way, to have constant stress on the whole rod, of course when they are loaded according to the Garrison load chart.

The author defines them as "progressive" and it is the only correct way to associate the term "progressive" to the action of a rod.

Is the chart correct?

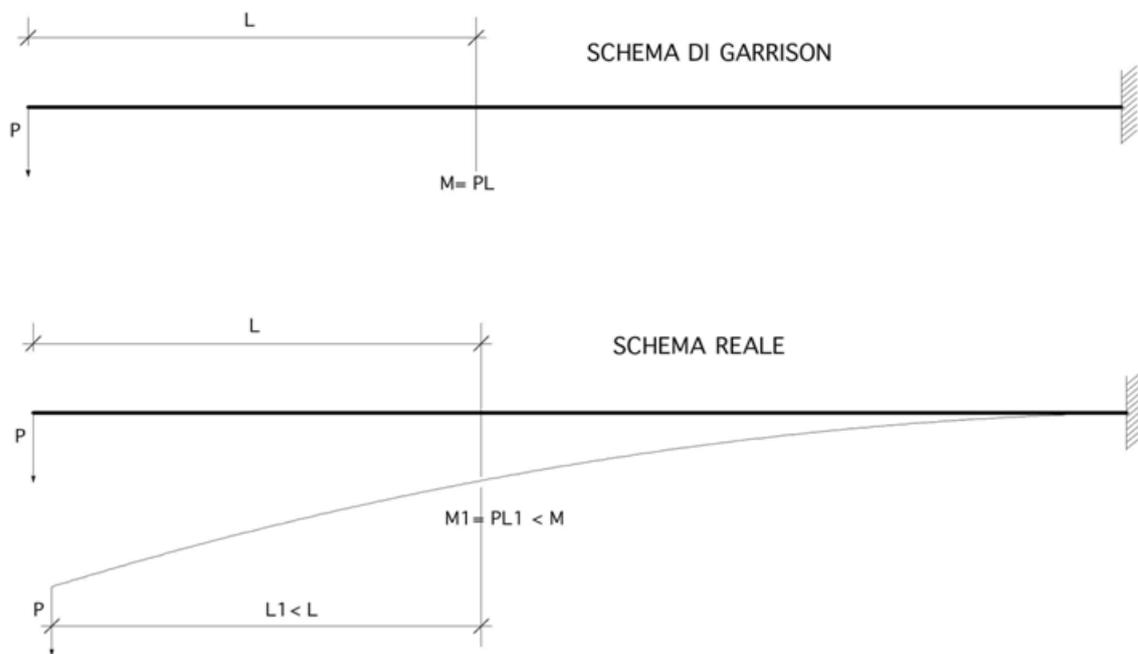
For one let us lay down that no calculation model is absolutely correct:

there are models come more or less close to reality.

Garrison's one is frankly rather rough.

Garrison was a civil engineer and as such was comfortable with calculations relative to structural constructive elements.

In this type of technical sector, the real deformations of the structure are very small and allow one to not consider certain effects with negligible errors



Garrison's hypothesis is that the rod, subject to static loads will not deform or better, will deform very little: it is clear that this hypothesis is quite far from reality.

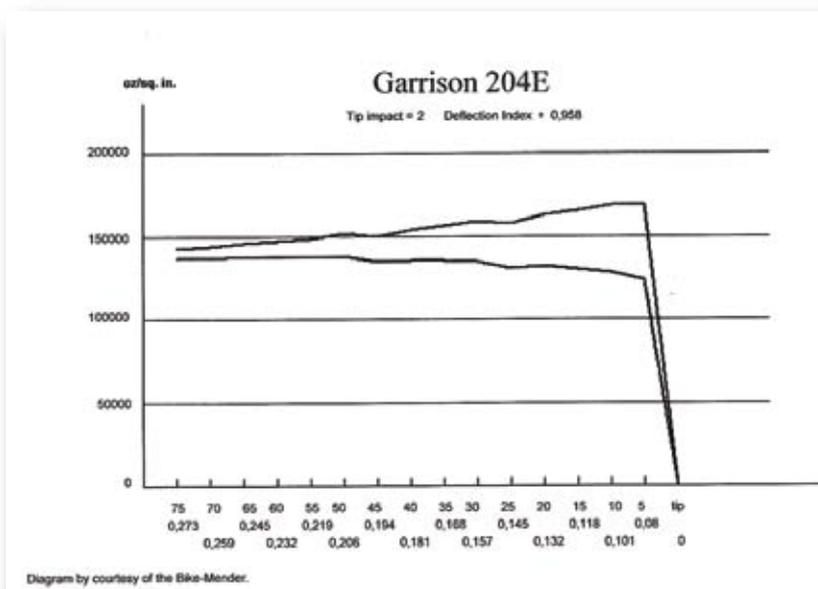
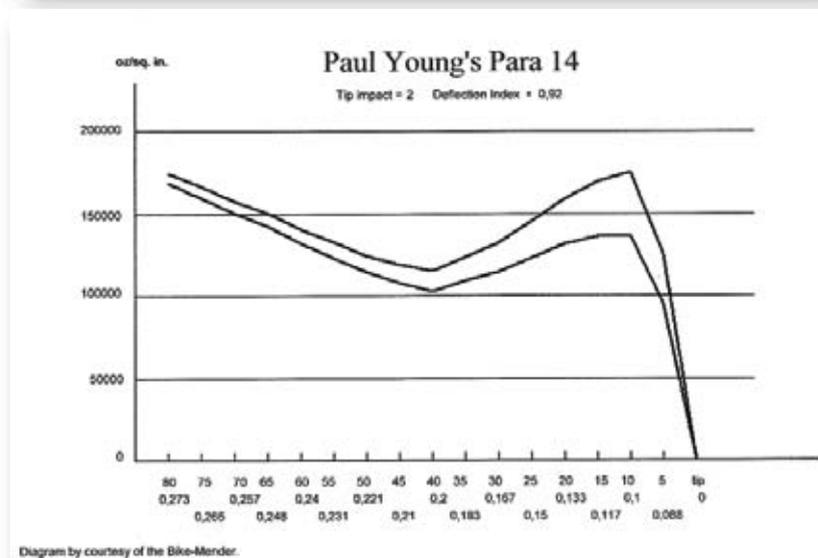
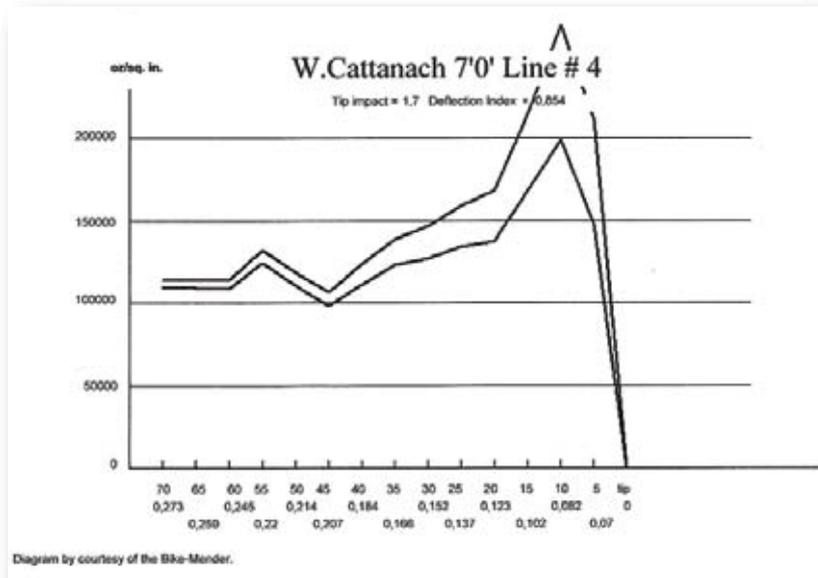
The rod deforms a lot and the stimulation state changes considerably.

The rod subject to the load deforms and consequently the point of the application of force changes

This results in the moment calculated with the Garrison chart being greater than the real one.

There are more refined calculations to resolve a structure, for example the Eulero-Bernoulli ones that take into account the great deformations.

Hereunder is the Garrison stress diagram (upper line) and the one calculated taking into account the real deformation of the rod (lower line), for three typical rods with tip action, parabolic action and progressive action.



The current version of RodDna Design provides the stress curve calculated with the Garrison method and the one calculated taking into account the deformations of the rod, while Hexrod only uses the Garrison.

It is immediately obvious, as previously explained and as must be expected, that the stress is lower than the stress calculated with the Garrison method (because the flexure moment is lower).

However, on the other hand one notices that they are very similar in terms of flexing. Thus we can say that the stress curves calculated with the more correct method (great deformations) round off, per se, the ones calculated with the Garrison method and all in all they underline less the characteristic of the taper.

Let us consider that the curves calculated with the Eulero-Bernulli method also refer to the Garrison static chart and they too are quite far from reality:

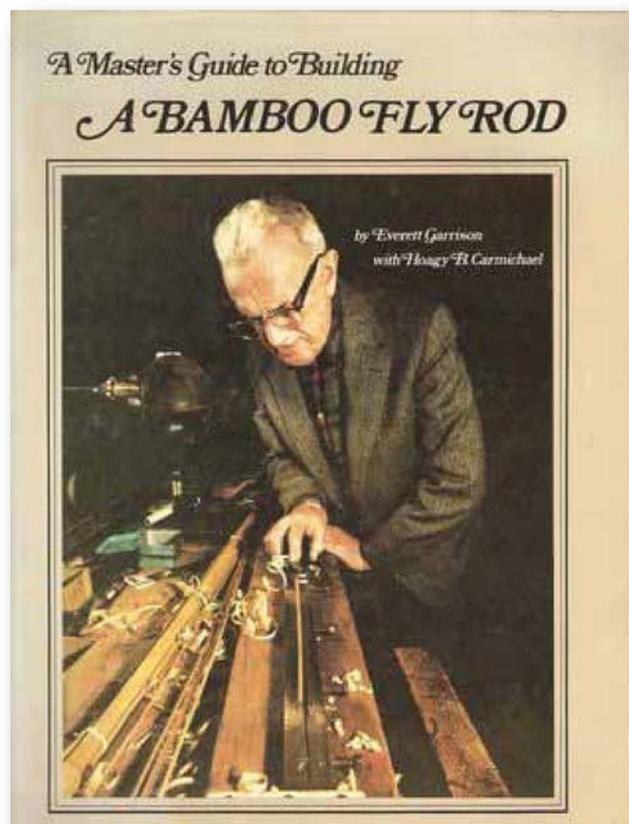
during the casting the rod is stimulated by dynamic forces, and not by static ones, that involve the inertial aspects and the resistance of the air.

In conclusion, in my opinion, the calculation method used by Garrison cannot establish the exact distribution of the stress in the various points of the rod.

It can, instead, provide the stress curves that represent well the action of the rod and that allow the experienced rodmaker to understand (and predict) the real behaviour of the rod.

For this reason I believe that a non rigorous method like the Garrison one was accepted by the rodmaker community and it continues, even today, to be used: because with a quite simple chart, it provides results which are usable in the design of a rod.

*Gabriele Gori*







**I** believe that bamboo rods can be considered “timeless” human achievements like paintings and sculptures.

Timeless because they never age and because the logic behind them and the building techniques speak to us about an era – a way of life and a special way of considering fly fishing. Bamboo rods inevitably transmits to those who hold them a sensation of respect and deference and this, I believe is aptly demonstrated by the episode I’m about to narrate and that happened to me.

Most fishermen have had some form of a more or less serious misadventure. Trees and branches. My last misadventure goes back to September 2011: I was fishing Steelhead in BC with a group of friends and one day while drifting down the Kispiox River, the person who was supposed to know the river well took a wrong turn and we found ourselves in some rapids which led to a great barrier of tree trunks and branches.

Four hundred meters of tumultuous descent, trying to control the impressive force of the water with our paddles, only to land up against the barrier of branches

My waders got full of water and this made me as heavy as an anvil and I was forced to a superhuman effort to free myself and to drag my legs, which were as heavy as rocks and that were pulling me underwater, onto the barrier of trunks made slippery by the moss growing on them.

I lay on my back exhausted and I looked to my right where I could see my rod, my 12’ bamboo rod which was caught up in some branches about 10 metres away from me.

Lying on the branches, I looked at it...it was on the opposite side of where I was and where I would have had to crawl to get out of the raging torrent under me.

Attempting to save it would have meant risking to land up in the water again and I did not have the strength to fight the current again. I took one last look at it and I crawled along the barrier in the opposite direction towards the bank.

A few hours after having reached the bank, I found my fishing friends who were also exhausted after having fallen into the river. They too had lost their rods but likewise were happy to have made it.

That evening we spoke about what had happened in front of a cup of hot coffee and a bottle of whisky. We were all sad for having lost three two handed rods that we would have never seen again.

Mine was not on the bottom of the river like the other two but had become part of the barrier of branches and trunks and who knows where it was going to land up after the first spring floods that would have washed everything away.

It was a beautiful blonde rod with green wrappings and reel seat. It was strong and powerful. Now it was going to finish its existence in the forests of fir trees in BC. After all it is a beautiful place.



Time passed and in my log book where I carefully write all the particulars about the rods I make – I wrote - “Lost in BC” and forgot about it.

I continued making rods for a while until one day, after 15 months I receive a mail.

It was Bob Milward – a Canadian rod maker who wrote

*« Dear Alberto, An angler has found a double handed rod near Smithers, British Columbia ... Is it yours or did you sell it to someone? ... The butt is O.K. except one amber line guide and a few snakes need to be replaced. The middle section has a serious bend which will require heat straightening. The tip section has a severe bend and some bamboo is missing completely from the middle. The whole tip section must be replaced.” ... “What do you want me to do?—Mail it back to you, or repair it for the finder?»*

It is she!

She has spent 4 seasons in the woods and now a fisherman has found it and taken it to a rodmaker for repairs. But first he asks if he can keep it or if he should send it back to me. That is the respect I was talking about earlier – the respect that every fisherman has for a bamboo rod.

This fisherman is 9000 Kilometres away.

He could just keep the rod and nobody would ask where he had got the rod, but he has respect for it and asks whether he should send it back to me.

*«Dear ... I will be happy if you repair the rod and if it becomes your rod ...»* was my answer.





## The Heat Treating "Mystery"

by Massimo Paccotti and Marco di Lorenzo



In our magical bamboo world, we are sometimes faced with constructive phases that seem banal and quick but to which we must pay utmost attention and precision. One of these is surely the heat treatment, a chemical/physical phase to modify the structure of a part of the organic components of bamboo; the components of the lignin, in this process, pass from a single bond to a double bond by polymerization and thus making the bamboo stronger, more elastic and more reactive.

These bamboo characteristics are very important in terms of fishing results and according to us they are directly proportional to the way we execute the right heat treatment. For want of a better explanation, if we glued a non heat treated blank, the result would be a "soft" rod, without back bone, lacking the essential requisites of a good tool. Instead, with the right heat treatment, the sugars contained in the good fibres "caramelize" and once the strips cool down they harden to the point of transforming the soft rough wood into an elastic, functional rod. To obtain this an initial drying phase is important (especially if, like us, you work in an ambient with high humidity) and a second heat treating phase, both executed at the right temperatures, otherwise the work would be in vain (later we will see the best way to perform them).

Unfortunately nowadays the culms we receive are not always perfectly seasoned, with some humidity in them; in other words our bamboo is too damp to construct excellent fishing rods so we will have to not only store it in an open and ventilated environment (certainly not in a cellar or a tin shed),

obviously protected from the rain but also heat treat it to the best of our ability once we have chosen the culm and smoothed the strips.

Now we come to our experience in the matter: we realised that some rods, once they are glued, did not have an instantaneous return or better, subjecting the tip to bending, it tended to remain strangely curved, bending it the other way would restore its original linearity.

At this point there were many doubts regarding the causes of this and by asking the opinion of someone more experienced than us, we resorted to blaming this defect on the glue that was not gripping the strips correctly, maybe due to the temperature of the drying times or the humidity in the strips (we use epoxy glue).

Re-gluing produced the same result; the rod did not have a good return as if it were lacking "back bone". At this point we began to do some trials in the oven, our problem could have been the heat treatment which was not executed properly and after having spent a day sacrificing a few strips, things finally started to change.



We insert the smoothed and tied strips in the smaller chamber of the cold oven, we turn on the gun that feeds the large chamber and we bring the internal temperature to 110/120 degrees; we remind you that it must be uniform for the entire length of the oven (this is guaranteed by the presence of two thermometers placed at the two ends of the oven). Once we have reached the temperature, the strips are kept to dry for about an hour (this does not affect the molecular composition of the bamboo or the colour of the rod), being careful not to let the temperature drop below 100 degrees

**Our procedure**

We start with a ventilated oven about 2m long composed of a double chamber fed by a hot air gun. Some rodmakers use ovens powered by a resistance with excellent results, the most important thing is to have perfect control of the internal temperature.

In the past, we too used this type of oven but we could not - due to our construction errors - uniform heat and the risk of burning the strips was ever present.

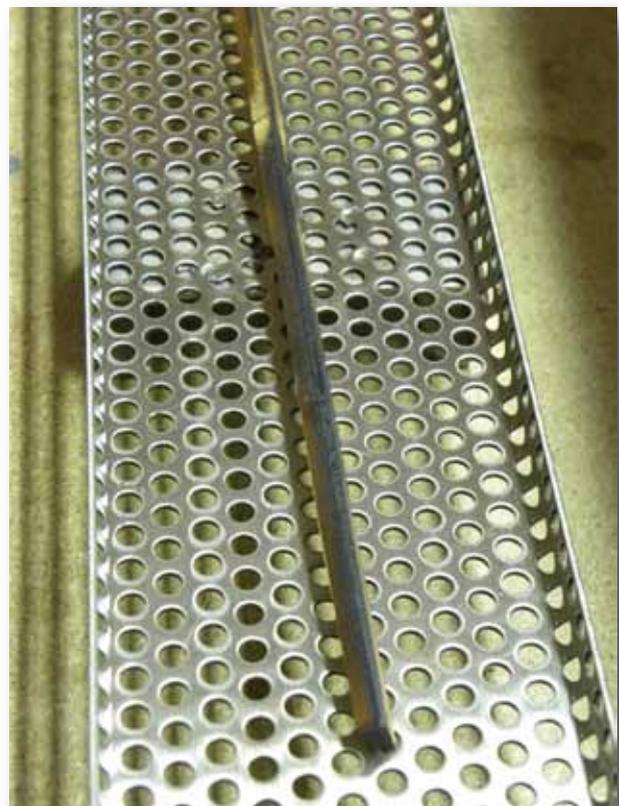


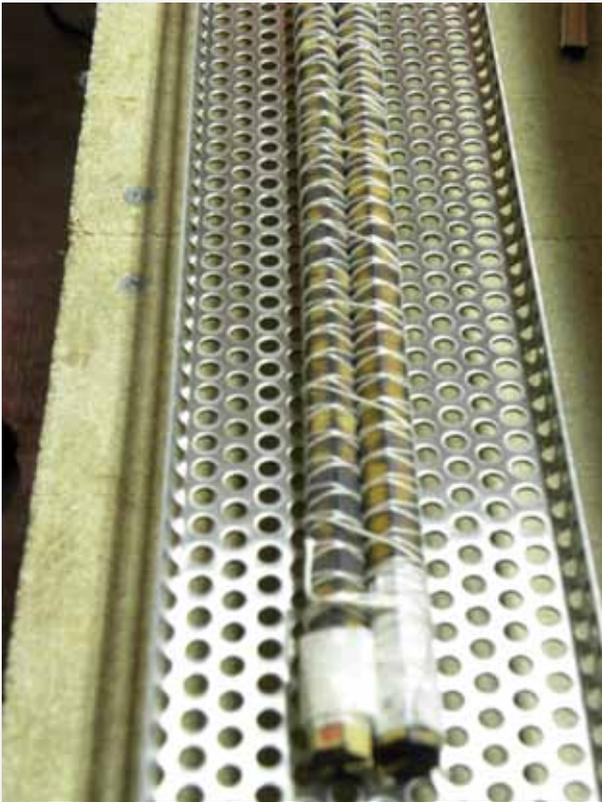
(this allows us to let the excess water in the bamboo evaporate). At this point we decide if we want a light coloured rod a slightly amber coloured; for the first option we remove the strips from the oven and we raise the temperature to 190/195 degrees (careful not to go over this temperature) and we put the strips back into the oven for eight minutes,



this time for the heat treatment. The other option entails leaving the strips in the oven while we raise the temperature with our thermal gun which will - with its hot air flow - colour the rod.

This time too, once we have reached 190/195 degrees, after eight minutes, we will have treated the strips. Now, when they have been removed from the oven, it would be detrimental to untie them and immediately start planing them; if we saw the inside of the strip immediately after the heat treatment, we would notice that the fibres (the dark, good side of the bamboo) are compact, almost "caramelized" and our strip that is still warm, is soft and supple (think of the straightening process).





The best thing to do, in our opinion, is to keep them tied on a flat surface at least one day; this will give the strips enough time to cool down and to harden without deformations after the thermal shock during the tempering in the oven.

Now you can test it: take a heat treated strip and a strip from the same culm that has not been subjected to this procedure and apply the same flexure to both and you will see that something has definitely changed (you will also have difficulty in straightening some small imperfection in the strips).

In conclusion, we do not want to affirm that our method is the only one or the best one, in fact the more experienced rodmakers will maybe contradict us but it certainly has given us excellent results.





**Andrea Satto**  
Wood Reels Maker

Andrea Satto is the creator of wood reel published in the previous pages.

# THE “SECOND” FIRST

by Enrico Francioni

**T**he day after I was handed my rodmaker certificate (at Podere Violino in Gricignano, Sansepolcro AR - Italy, on 30 November 2011), [photo\_01: My rodmaker certificate] I felt invested in the role and charged with a certain responsibility that went beyond a light commitment (for that matter taken with awareness and conscience), to prove ... but – note well – to prove to myself first of all, that I too was really able to organise all the material and to start thinking about building my first real bamboo rod: obviously “second” first.



One of the things I thought I would be able to keep in mind, as if in an only image or in a sole sequence of actions, was the entire work plan that punctuates almost “religiously” what goes into the building of a bamboo rod: I assure you that – at least in my case initially – there is nothing more difficult to control all at once, everything looks so complex and the whole course is so articulated ...!

To be truthful, I still had to complete the varnishing on my Heddon (“Folsum” 7’ #4 2 pc), built at the IBRA 2011 course.

Once I had bought the Cecchi products (Spinnaker and thinners) I redid the varnishing and the sanding (grain 600) of the wrappings, I signed it with a nib and black China ink and finally the meticulous brush varnishing – perhaps the most simple method (in the spontaneous sense) but at the same time the most difficult to obtain an excellent result ... (I am comparing it to the immersion varnishing that ensures better results right from the first trials).

The sacrifice for the construction of the Number 0 rod, the Heddon, would soon be rewarded by the beautiful sensations given by the fascination of casting with the new material, bamboo, that replaced graphite and by some noteworthy catches that also gratified the fly fisherman as well as the novice rodmaker!



It was mid-December and my hands were itching to start a new one all by myself ...

My debut would have to wait two more months: this was the time it took to organise a satisfactory, suitable space and to buy the necessary material, practically everything!

With my inseparable notebook and thanks to the constant help of competent and patient people like Poratelli, Giardina, Giuliani, Gori and Fiorani (literally flooded by my emails and I listed them in the order of the amount of messages I sent them), I was learning about the various models of planes, blade sharpeners, stones for smoothing, comparators with points and bases, Japanese saws, the various European and overseas producers and distributors ..., and then comparing prices for the right quality-price balance in buying the material, which sometimes is just Utopia ...

Not to mention the constant contacts with my rodmaker friend Simone Paci, whom I thank for his incessant availability.

I admire his precision and his generosity in exchanging/ comparing advice and solutions; he is also my purchasing partner.



Luckily I found a corner in the garage under my house and that is where I stacked the first things I got to start the work on my own: a well-lit work bench with a vice, some tools I considered indispensable in the first stage of construction and then obviously drawers with different types of gloves, files, sandpaper and various other tools



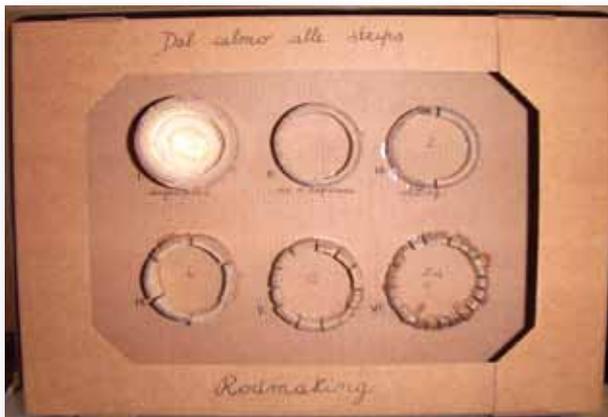
While waiting for the arrival of the material to start (wooden planing form, plane – a Dictum: an absolute novelty - blade sharpener, stone and steel planing form) I was carefully going through the notes of the course and I was starting to measure the cuts of my first bamboo stalk: on one side the butt and on the other the tip while trying to resolve the question of the “nodes”: three on the butt and two on the tip (that is how it is normally), to have the best possible division.



After a round of consultations I chose my taper (keeping the 7' length as we were advised at the end of the IBRA course) – it was a Lyle Dickerson 7012,

and so after many measurements with a measuring tape (rigorously in inches) and various felt tip pens in hand, I decided to cut the culm with my brand new Japanese saw, to split it with a kitchen knife and then with the nail fixed in the vice, I divided the strips in their classical sets (1+1, 3+3, 6+6, 12+12).

As a further reminder I had made a small (recycled) cardboard case where I had copied the splitting procedure on a section of a bamboo strip.



Nonetheless I immediately made some mistakes: I extracted material for only three rods ... (sigh!), three butts and three tips; probably a defect in the inclination of the strip on the nail: maybe the operation was done in too much hurry, well, I don't understand ...

I will not bore you with the description of the next passages in the construction but I will say that in all the phases I trod very carefully, like "walking on eggshells"; I could feel everyone staring: the rodmaking world, my friends and family who in the construction period looked at me with an expression I would describe as supportive but with a hint of scepticism regarding the results I had announced.

After the staggering I moved on to the treatment of the nodes and the straightening of the strips, very busy phases: firstly because there are at least two or three different methods tied to the order in which to do these two operations ....

And secondly I was carrying some errors in the splitting which hadn't been done quite right ...

Before filing the nodes in my strips, I decided to square them a little better in the 90° guide of the wooden planing form with my brand new Dictum, to get a section as rectangular as possible or slightly isosceles-trapezoidal:

this operation would greatly facilitate the next phase of the first roughing



The choice (autonomous this time) was the right one and the perfume of bamboo heating with the air pistol made me feel more like a rodmaker!

I must confess that another phase I thoroughly enjoyed was the roughing (i.e. the planing of the levels) of the 12 strips; the plane with a new, sharp blade was moving smoothly and confidently, the shavings accumulating and the work, although tiresome, was particularly enjoyable. Only after a few days did I notice that the new blade I had used in the Dictum was sharpened at 25°.

I tied the two sets of strips manually and without the use of the Garrison Binder and after a couple of days I was ready for the heat treatment in Simone's oven, the temperature was right and after two passages out came fuming tip and butt. I was ready for the next phases.



Unfortunately I didn't have my own personal depth gauge, so once again I relied on Simone's generosity who kindly lent it to me.

With the taper measurements under my nose, I set my planing form for the butt; the planing form that I had previously cleaned, greased and polished for the occasion.

After cleaning the enamel, I would proceed to planing as precisely as possible but I needed a sharp blade in place; considering I had had the good sense to buy the Dictum with a second blade, I decided to use this second blade exclusively for the precision planing (obviously the first blade would be dedicate to the roughing, this is my current "economical" alternative to buying two planes).

Now was the moment to sharpen it properly and I have to tell you how it went!



Respectful of the experts' advice and with the best intentions I spent a whole afternoon sharpening my blade to the 35° inclination.... I was not aware of the blade's 25° inclination yet and that I could have sharpened only a part of the blade.... but I was not satisfied: I wanted to see a mirror finish on all the cutting edge of the blade..... imagine how much extra work! To follow bevel and micro bevel and the cutting test; the result seemed satisfactory and the next day I proceeded to the planing of the strips in the steel planing form.

I must admit that working with the plane is not an effort for me – perhaps this made me already feel like a rodmaker? – and this time too I enjoyed this activity of movement and precision combined.

I put together the six butt strips and six tip strips and I was ready for the first test of the measurements from the taper with my digital display Vernier calliper



The few thousandths of inches in excess were corrected by the resetting of the planing form and I achieved the measurements that, even according to the experts, satisfied my conscience; the error was contained between an oscillation of  $\pm 0.001$  inches!: I was satisfied and could now think about the glue.

**TAPER - DICKERSON 7012 - 7' #4 2pc**  
**DIFFERENZA VALORI DOPO LAVORAZIONE SU PLANING FORM D'ACCIAIO (DIMA)**

**TIP**

stazione	differenza valore (rod dimension) - espresso in millesimi di inch
0	-0,08
5	0
10	0
15	-0,16
20	-0,33
25	+0,25
30	+0,75
35	-0,08
40	-1

**BUTT**

stazione	differenza valore (rod dimension) - espresso in millesimi di inch
45	+0,16
50	+0,91
55	-0,08
60	-2,16
65	-0,66
70	-0,83
75	0,00
80	-0,08
85	-1,66

Perhaps time is the critical element to face during the gluing operation.

Obviously this problem is tied to the drying times, but also, as in the case of the two component glue Cecchi (C-Systems 10 CFS), to the amount of thickener and thus to the desired thickness



In this operation I received help from none other than my wife: her support has been fundamental; even though it was clear to me that in future I would have to think about a different strategy to enable me to do everything on my own. I thought of the "wise" construction of a Garrison Binder...

Anyway, after a few minutes the two sides were glued, tied, "rolled", hung and subjected to the vertical rolling with a bottle of water, tomato, tuna cans, books and anything else ...



While waiting for the glue to dry, I meticulously went over (for myself) the complex phases of cutting the rough pieces for the mounting of the ferule (see notes from the Building Course 2011).

During the 2011 Course Massimo Giuliani



when we reached this phase had warned us against "cutting": a thousand measurements, one cut only; in fact, for safety reasons he had more than once encouraged us to mark the cutting point with tape on the tip and on the butt ... "there is plenty of time to cut", he repeated.



So after untying and cleaning the blanks, according to the constructive requisites, here was the moment – measurements at hand – to mark the cuts.

To be truthful and to avoid misunderstanding, the two blanks had been on the work bench for two days before the definite cut; then came the work on the ferrule before the gluing with the two components glue.

After a few hours the ferrules (appropriately machined) were in place and the cork discs of the latest Purchasing Group



were waiting for the construction of the handle; the construction work of the handle is really fun but first, to have a satisfactory stock, I drew on a sheet the outline of the handles of fly fishing rods I had in the house;



just to have an idea of the dimensions, the shapes and the number of discs to use ... I decided on 27 discs, perhaps too many for a 7', although at this point – according to everyone – the quantity is rather subjective and is substantially based on the grip as well as the position of the reel (up or down locking).

Once I had chosen the appropriate glue, water resistant, Vinavil D3,



I made a hole with an 8mm die in the discs and then inserted them in a threaded iron bar for the compression, ready the next day to be mounted on the drill for the shaping with sandpaper.

The “pear” shape of the handle came quite naturally but it also gives the handle more solidity, it was pleasant and it reminded me of many rods from the 50s or some Paul Young handles



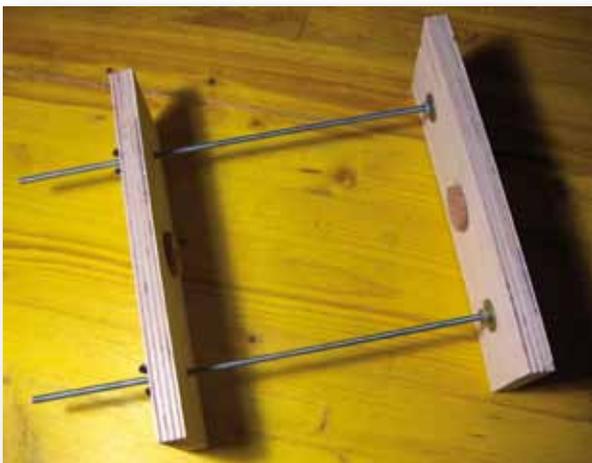
Simone and I had decided to work in such a way as to create our own models of reel seats: little blocks of burl (Thuja and Amboyna are still the favourites), small lathe, drill bit for the mortise, guiding tool to construct the mortise, filler and immersion in final varnish.

After a few days my reel seat was ready to mount;



I must admit that this element requires a lot of work: after choosing the type of reel seat (up locking or down locking, with or without mortise), one chooses the type of wood, the shape, the length, the diameter... and then the type of hardware to mount. Thus, this element can complicate the construction process considerably.

Well, once I found the thorns (in the tip and the butt) I was ready to glue, with the Saratoga two components glue, the handle and the reel seat. Everything was carefully gripped – but not too tightly – in a homemade press



I placed the guides on the rod and with an eye on my dwindling spools of silk, I thought of the tying models I had played around with in my head and I chose this one, even if it seems a little too elaborate as a first original tying.



Honestly, I was a little disappointed in the result after the varnishing; in my opinion the varnish I use in this application acts alone, in the sense that it darkens all tones very much; seeing the tip and butt with the tying varnished already gave me a minimum of satisfaction and a little pleasure.



For the very delicate last phase of the work, i.e. the immersion varnishing of the rod, I had once again teamed up with Simone and together we had calculated the mixture to use of varnish and thinners, the tube to use and the cabinet where to store the varnished pieces.

We studied the movements, where to work, the timing, the materials and the substances to use for the preliminary clearing of the varnish, the number of immersions on each side, the precautions and remedies to adopt to reduce the dust in the environment ...



Finally after twenty long days, the time necessary for the polymerization of the varnish, I was beholding my first rod, i.e. "the second first", complete, built on the Dickerson 7012 7' #4 2pc taper



From this first, solitary (or almost) experience, I have perhaps begun to really understand the meaning of the expression "rodmaking is not an exact science", a statement made by the greatest Italian constructors; the best part of this activity is indeed the fact that each rodmaker can put his own personal skills into the work: in each phase of construction, in every small detail or trick to use, even if, in my opinion, it is important that this methodology and creative freedom be within the limits of the classical construction phases.

Man, what a satisfaction to be able to go fishing with one's own first creature! Walking along the river I felt somewhat important; with each cast I was aware that I was holding between my fingers the idea that was now - not without sacrifices - physical, it was transformed into matter; it was of the same material that for several months every day I had seen and handled with my hands; this for me was a great gift that alone still suffices today to make me feel fulfilled on the river, also as a man.





## **The 6th European Rodmakers Gathering 2013, Switzerland**

***From 4th to 6th of October 2013  
»gespliesste.ch« will organize  
the 6th European Rodmakers Gathering  
in Charmey (Freiburg), Switzerland***

In 2013 the Meeting will be held in the small village of Charmey,  
in the french speaking part of Switzerland.

The program is not yet fixed,  
but as in the past meetings we will have talks on different subject.

Taper-design, ferruling technics, finishing are just some examples.  
Next to the seeches we will present different practical workshops.

If you have some special interests, don't hesitate to write a mail to

[info@gespliesste.ch](mailto:info@gespliesste.ch)

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