

**Rod Building 108B:
Thread Function
By Larry Lee**

This is the second of two articles discussing how the use of thread can aid in the performance of a rod. Thread can be utilized for more than aesthetics. Thread windings work as an integral part of casting the line and fighting the fish with the rod. Thread is also used to strengthen portions the blank. These items are discussed in more detail below:

Blank Action Changes

In an earlier article we discussed selection of a blank based upon the desired action. For example, if the angler wanted a rod that could power through the wind or cast long distances, a fast (stiff) or extra fast (very stiff) blank should be chosen. Or if the angler wants to make shorter, softer casts, a slow (very flexible) or moderate (flexible) action blank should be chosen.

Blank actions can be dramatically altered by the length of thread wrapped on the blank. The more length of thread wrapped on the rod, the stiffer the rod (in addition to a small weight gain). When a shorter length of thread is used, the rod action will tend to be softer or slower (more flexible). When single foot guides, the length of thread used is half of the amount used for double foot guides. This makes the rod action softer and slower. If double foot guides are used, the thread wrap length is twice the amount used with single foot guides, which makes the action faster and stiffer.

Strengthen Ferrules

With the manufacture of glass or graphite rod banks, ferrules are installed so that the fisherman can take the rod apart in pieces, which allows for easier transport. When the blank is manufactured, it is impossible to strengthen the female portion of blank adequately, so the rod builder must wrap each female portion of the ferrule of the blank. The length of the wrap on the female portion of the ferrule should be a minimum of ¼ inch long or a maximum distance of however far the male portion of the blank can be inserted into the female portion of the blank. The longer the wrap of the female portion, the greater factor of safety from breakage at the ferrule is built in on the rod.

Strengthen Blank Near Tip Top

To strengthen the blank near the tip top, the rod builder should apply approximately ½ inch of thread from the tip top down. The blank is very thin and fragile near the tip of the blank and a thread wrap will help significantly to prevent breakage of the blank in that area.

Strengthen Blank in Butt Section

If the rod builder is considering fighting very large fish with 11wt. to 15 wt. rod, he/she may want to consider using a thread wrap of several inches immediately above the cork grip. An alternative to the thread wrap is the addition of a cork handle located about 3 inches above the existing grip. This method distributes forces to the blank in a more uniform manner than a thread wrap, which means a lesser chance of rod breakage.

In summary, the rod builder will have to make some decisions as to when and how to wrap the rod for aesthetics and when and how to wrap the rod for functionality. Being able to make these decisions allows for a more durable rod with better performance.

If you have any questions, ideas, or suggestions, please feel free to mail me at larrylee@L3rods.com or telephone me at 916-962-0616.