

BAMBOO BUILDERS

THE FOUR craftsmen who have between them 80 years of experience hand-crafting bamboo rods for the R.L. Winston Rod Co. of Twin Bridges, Montana, simultaneously submitted their resignations late last year. Jerry Kustich, Wayne Maca, Jeff Walker, and former Winston co-owner Glenn Brackett—the entire staff of the Winston bamboo rod shop—said they would complete current rod orders and finish working for Winston effective Feb. 1, 2006. The rod-builders say they decided to resign after company CEO Woody Woodward rejected Brackett's choice for an apprentice rod-builder.

Brackett, who has built bamboo rods for 33 years and has recently been outspoken in the press about Winston's



Glenn Brackett

overseas production of graphite rods, says Woodward and Winston are putting profits ahead of quality.

“Winston’s good name in the marketplace is definitely going to suffer from this,” he said.

Woodward says the resignations came as a surprise. He has moved three employees from the graphite rod shop to the bamboo shop where they are being trained by Brackett and the others.

“Our goal is to continue to build the best bamboo rods in the world right here in Twin Bridges,” Woodward said. 