

the Handy man



Wood Rod Case

by
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After finding a good buy on some pre-war Tonkin cane blanks in an ad in *American Angler & Fly Tyer* last winter, I built a half dozen fly rods. The price on the blanks was right but by the time I added the cost of the ferrules, reel seats, and other rod components, things started to get out of control. Fortunately, a rather limited budget forced me to not run out and buy the kind of rod tubes usually associated with cane rods.

I was also fortunate to have some birch and oak rippings left over from a recent job, so the case design just sort of evolved. As with most new ideas there were some trials and errors, some rejected concepts, and some improvements which came after an idea that looked good on paper didn't turn out so well in wood.

There were two predominant obstacles. The first came in reducing the bulk of wood to the point where it would be light enough yet still have the strength found in an aluminum cylinder. The second problem was in making a detachable end cap.

Rather than going over the rejected ideas, I will mention a couple of the potential solutions which may work better for someone with different materials or tools to work with. The case could be made up into a hexagonal shape either by gluing and clamping six components, or by shaping and routing two pieces and gluing them together. The shape could also be round and of two piece construction if the proper shaper cutters are available. For the end cap there is the possibility of making wood screw threads with the proper tools. There is also the belt and buckle or belt and velcro method of holding the cap, or you

could use a hinge and catch of some kind. I used a 3/4" by 9" strap of leather with a heavy duty snap fastened to each end and four small screws to attach the strap to the cap piece.

The design I settled for is shown, along with some sketches and suggestions as to how to build your own case for your particular rod.

The dimensions indicated are only representative of the three cases shown in the photograph, and each of the cases is a slightly different size based on the fly rods it contains. The three shown are for 7', 8', and 9' three-piece rods. The case length should be approximately one inch longer than the rod sections.

When measuring your fly rod to arrive at the proper inside case dimensions it is important that you measure the diameter of the sections at the front of the

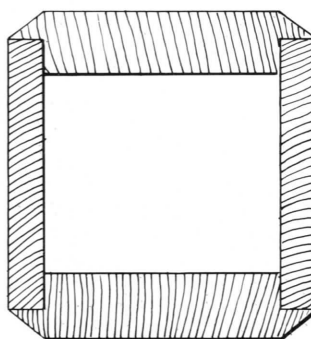
grip. For example, if the front of the grip is 12" from the butt of the rod, be sure that when allowing for the taper of the case you have adequate clearance at this point.

For stability, and to prevent moisture absorption it is a good idea to finish the inside surface of the wood prior to the gluing and clamping operation. Use Weldwood Plastic Resin glue for a water resistant case.

After the components are glued together you can scrape away the excess glue and begin the sanding operation. The corners are chamfered with a router bit or on the jointer, followed by a final sanding overall. Finish the case with an exterior clear varnish over a stain of your choice. Spar varnish will give a good weather resistant surface capable of withstanding a lot of handling.

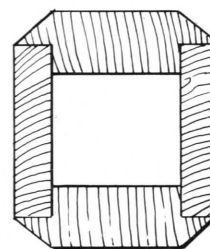


CAP



TOP

INSIDE DIMENSIONS:
1 5/8" X 1 3/8"



BOTTOM

INSIDE DIMENSIONS:
7/8" X 3/4"

Material is 7/16" X 1/4" thick hardwood. Cap and bottom are cut to the outside dimensions, and rabbetted 1/4" deep to match the inside dimensions.

