

# Shakespeare

**G**etting started at fly fishing for trout in the south does not require a \$500 fly rod and \$200 fly reel. Those are pretty steep costs for those entering the sport, or for someone wanting to get a son, daughter or grandchild into fly fishing. If you are faced with this challenge, investigate the affordable, high quality Shakespeare Wild Series Fly Combo. At a MSR price of \$69.99, the new Shakespeare® Wild Series is an exciting all new premium line that is available in two different weights that are tailored for fly fishing.

One of the oldest names in American-made fly fishing tackle, the Shakespeare Company, was founded in the 1890s by William Henry Shakespeare, Jr. Born in 1869 in Kalamazoo Michigan, he was the son of William H. Shakespeare, Michigan's youngest soldier to fight in the Civil War. Few of modern era fly fishermen are aware that the Shakespeare Company name and trademark were at one time associated with products of the finest obtainable quality. The Shakespeare Company has always produced tackle with Everyman in mind, the company has also produced the highest quality tackle available at the time. Their line was broad including everything from jeweled casting reels and the beautiful "Miller Autocrat" big game salt-water reel, to wide range of split cane bamboo fly rods.



# e's Wild Series Comba



— Just Add Water



## fly rod review

During World War I, The Shakespeare Company factory was converted to manufacture mortar fuses and automobile carburetors. During World War II the company had contracts to build controls for aircraft, tanks, and jeeps. Just prior to that in 1939, William Shakespeare Jr. invented the "Backlash" Brake and made it available in his new Wondereel, one of the most popular reels to ever hit the fishing tackle market.

Bamboo fly rod making at Shakespeare began in 1920. Mr. Shakespeare bought three bamboo flyrods which were the finest available American rods of the times and sought to combine the best features of each of these rods into a composite fly rod. His bamboo fly rods were of 3-piece design that had serrated and blued nickel-silver ferrules, an agate stripping guide, and a polished aluminum and walnut reel seat. It had a swell of the bamboo above the grip, and delicate gold silk windings. Back in the 1980s when I chased after antique fishing tackle, I acquired a number of old Shakespeare cane fly rods as well as those made by South Bend, Heddon and Granger. Shakespeare's 9-ft Double Built Superba Fly Rods (1936) and 6 ½-ft B Diana Fly Rods (1931) are two of my personal favorite estate sale finds. Although heavy by modern standards, these old cane rods cast gracefully and are very forgiving.



In the 1950s when Tonkin bamboo could not be imported from China, Shakespeare's Wonderod "Tubular Glass" Fly Rods lead the way. Many fly rods still have and fish with these slow casting work horses.

Modern day Shakespeare is based out of Columbia, South Carolina, and is part of the mega-tackle company Pure Fishing. It departed from Kalamazoo in the late 1940s when the Steelworkers' Union declared a strike against the Shakespeare Company which didn't recognize the Union. Subsequently, all employees were invited back to work. Four weeks later picketers clashed with "scab" employees on October 11th at the entrance gate. Then later, a mob of 300 attacked the factory and wrecked it.







# fly rod review

Shakespeare's new Wild 5 Weight rod is great for southern mountain trout. Their Wild 8 Weight rod is perfect for bigger waters. While incredibly priced, it is better than 90 percent of the fly rods made in the late 1980s and 1990s that carried price tags in the \$150 to \$300 range. The first time we cast this rod, we were very impressed with its speed and accuracy. The Wild series uses a sensitive IM6 graphite rod that is durable for all different types of fishing scenarios you will encounter while out on the water.

IM6 graphic began the modern fly rod revolution, and while there are now IM7, IM8, IM6 is still regarded as the best and most versatile of them all. Graphite in fly rods is rated by "Modulus of Elasticity," referring to the relationship between stress and strain. It usually defines the stiffness to weight ratio of the fibers used to construct the rod blank. Generally speaking, the higher the modulus of the fiber used to make the blank, the lighter the resulting blank can be for any given stiffness. A graphite fiber called IM6 pretty much revolutionized the industry. With IM6, there was a high modulus, high strain rate graphite that made it possible to produce a lighter, more sensitive rod.



The modulus of graphite used in rods keeps getting higher and higher, making for more sensitive, lighter and more efficient rods. With that comes a tradeoff. There is no doubt that the higher the modulus rod, the easier it is to break and the less abuse that it can take. Graphite in of itself is very strong and the increasingly high modulus of top end graphite enables rod blanks to become lighter and more sensitive due to the ability to make blanks with thinner walls. Of course, the downside to this is they are much more susceptible to angler abuse. The thin walls just cannot stand up to rough handling and being banged around. The type of fishing that you do and the way that you treat your equipment should determine your rod choice, not hype or status. Durability is one of the key advantages we found with the Shakespeare Wild fly rods.



The Shakespeare Wild fly rods combo come with a pre-lined, Wild Series single action fly reel that has convertible left/right retrieve; on/off clicking drag system; rim control spool; and a smooth drag system. The Wild Series combos deliver exceptional quality giving you every chance to land trout on tailwater and mountain waters. All you have to do is add water.

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