

Back Casts

Answers from the Experts*

*There are no real "experts" in the world of fly-fishing; in fact, most of those people to whom the term is often applied won't acknowledge it. But there are some talented anglers who get to fish a great deal more than most of us, and who have been responsible for a substantial number of fly-fishing innovations in recent years. As a special reader service, the editors will direct reader inquiries to those anglers, as long as those inquiries are brief, and center around a specific point.
THE EDITORS.

Cane Rod Care

Is there any special care that I should give my bamboo fly rod during the season and when I put it away for the winter?

CHARLES WILSON
Tacoma, Wash.

We directed your question to Walt Carpenter of the Payne Rod Company. His reply: "Yes, your cane rod should receive some in-season and end-of-season care. The proper care of your bamboo rod will take but a few minutes and will pay dividends for many years. The worst enemy of any rod, whether classic or contemporary, varnished or impregnated, is moisture. One small chip in the varnish finish of the rod allows moisture to get to the bamboo, starting irreversible damage. Impregnation practically eliminates this danger. Once or twice a season apply a small coat of paste wax—either Johnson's or Butchers—to the rod, excluding the cork grip, of course. You should also dry the rod after fishing, using a tissue and never put the rod away in its case unless the cloth bag and inside of the case are completely dry.

"When playing a fish for an extended period of time, rotate your wrist so that the stress is distributed evenly on different sides of the rod.

"The nickel-silver ferrules are precision-made and properly fit on most quality rods. If the rod has ferrule plugs, use them. This will keep foreign matter from sticking to the inside of the female ferrule,

causing an abrasive action that will wear away the male part and loosen the fit.

"In the off-season, store the rod in a cool, dry place—out of harm's way in a cloth bag. If this is not practical, keep the rod in an aluminum tube, but remove the cap so that the air can circulate."

Warmwater Releases

I realize that the topic of catch-and-release trout fishing has received a lot of attention recently. But I'd like to know if there are any special precautions I should take when releasing a trout in late-season warmer-than-normal water.

JOHN KELLY
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Although the value of catch-and-release as a fishery management tool has yet to be explored in many of the different angling situations in our country, there are numerous situations in which it is advisable, desirable or a matter of law. We directed your question to Ed Van Put, a New York State fisheries technician who has put in many angling and work-related hours on the Catskill streams and on the Upper Delaware River. Ed's answer: "When releasing trout in waters of marginal temperature for trout—above 68 degrees—the angler should be aware that under this circumstance the trout enter more easily into a distress situation. Like you and me, trout tire more rapidly in hot temperatures. It is always best to use a net, which enables the angler to gain a firm but gentle grip on the trout if he removes the hook while holding the fish in the meshes of the net.

"I've noticed that many of the trout that I've released in warm water will sink to the bottom and turn on their side. They look like goners, but they are merely resting. A fisherman should not try to revive the fish in this situation by holding or stroking or any manipulation. Just let him be.

"The angler should also avoid releasing the trout too close to the bank, where the water temperature is typically one or two degrees warmer than it is nearer to the main flow of the stream."

