

My first rod ... with a bamboo ferrule

by Davide Fiorani

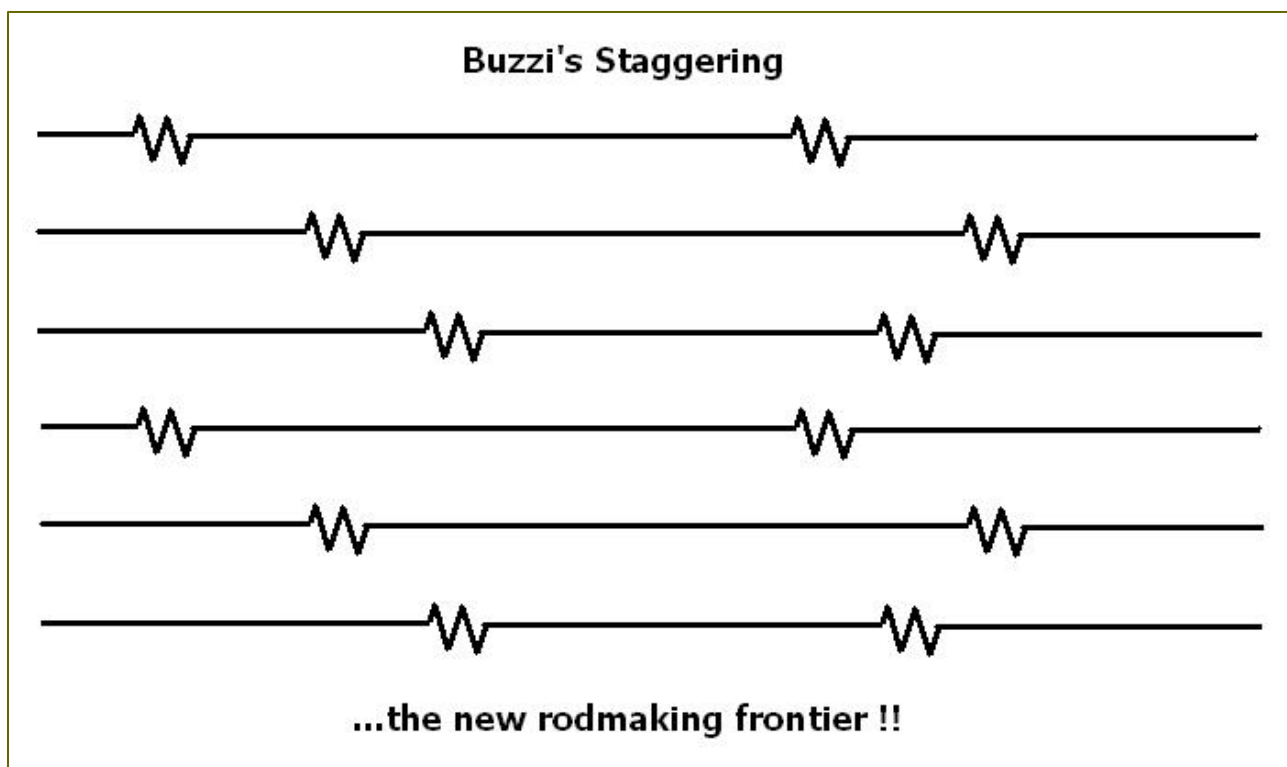
I was immediately fascinated with the idea of making a “*cane rod*” without using nickel silver: the continuity of the lines and the elegance conquered me from the first time I saw one...

After having tried the IRP at the show in Bologna, I promised to make one last winter Then I resisted and I began in April.



Since I am a newbie (my fifth rod), I made a couple of phone calls, sent some emails to clear up my doubts and I then started work: split the culm, straighten node and strips and started on my “new casting toy” using the taper of the IRP with two tips and a rigorously blonde look. To be honest from that culm I managed to make an 8' pike and shad rod with a bamboo ferrule...but this is another story. I asked my friend Buzzi to level the strips with his beveller and to heat treat them because my oven is not finished yet: cost of the operation a kilo of 28 month cured Parmigiano cheese, some jars of truffle honey and some green tomatoes and fig honey and a bottle of Franciacorta to wash everything down.

A small mishap caused us to risk the second tip, we were lost it. Having already paid my dues, and my friend having already consumed, he split one of his culms and made me two new levels. The intermodal distances were not really the same so we that we could not have a 2X2X2 staggering but were forced to have a variation and use Buzzi's staggering on tip n. 2. Below is a diagram for those who do not know it.



After some phone calls during the work with Gabriele Gori and Alberto Poratelli (I might add – how much patience they have with us nuisances!!) I begin with tip n. 2 – the one with Buzzi's staggering. With the help of a few 1.5mm thickness gauges I began working on the strips. I try the ferrule a few tips to prevent mistakes by binding it tightly and I get to the point: mmmh..... it seems a little wide.

You can easily imagine the stream of curses!

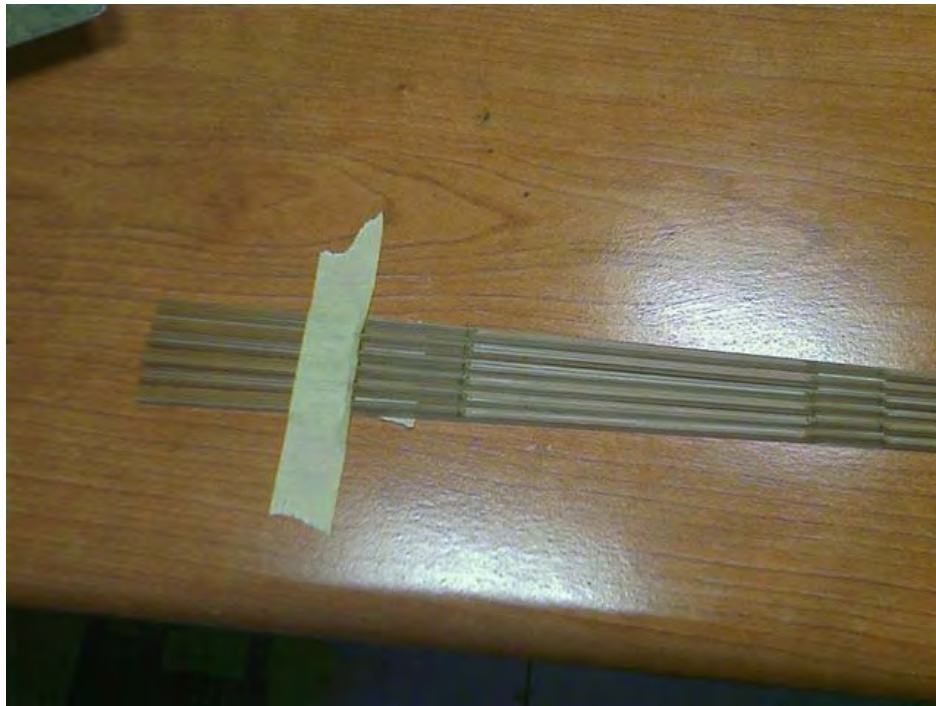
For the second tip, the n. 1, I do not make the same mistake and it seems to be a good job. I don't know how much I was off: to know this you would have to measure the ferrule internally all along its length. I just managed to measure the beginning of the ferrule with a micrometer for internal measurements. Anyway it was doomed. It was wide and I had to accept it and I reflected on what to do to solve the problem before gluing the strips.

At 4:55 the next morning: idea !!.....

I bind the oversized ferrule tightly under the flow of the hot air gun. I got this input from having read the method to make the male ferrule in the Streamlined® ferrule in an article by Alberto Poratelli. I have faith in the plasticity of bamboo when worked with the right temperature. I get up and go into the attic, put on my gloves and set the airgun. I bind the ferrule very tightly with the excess from the male of the butt section inside. I force the male part out with pliers and I leave it to cool down. I remove the thread and bind it again without forcing. I try:.....it seems to work. Now you need a little force to insert the male part in the female part.

I then glued the strips of the two tips. In my next call to Alberto he said that one of the IBRA members (I don't recall his name – forgive me) doesn't glue the strips in the area of the female ferrule and that just the silk binding it keeps it together. He suggested a 3/0.

So I thought. I have two tips. One will be glued in the classical way, and the other will be done as described above. During the operations, a thought went through my mind and it was the waterproofing of the male and the interior of the female; I spread some epoxy thinly using heat so that only a thin veil would be left. Some beeswax inside the ferrule and also on the male and the operation was finished.



For the reel seat, I thought I would use cork and the original length of the original IRP design; the same for the grip but I changed the design slightly. The positioning of the guides is the same and so are the sizes excluding the third one from the tip which is a 1/0 instead of a 2/0. I set up the rod with a line and reel and it shoots line out like a dream!!!!

I wrap the rod (rigorously transparent wrappings), asking for help from Massimo Giuliani, who is the patron of rod wrappers. I varnish and wait 15 days before trying it. Every now and then I would try the ferrule, just for the pleasure of hearing the sound that remind me of a champagne cork.

It weighs 87 grams.



The big day arrives. I set up tip n. 2 (glues ferrule and fixed by heating) and with a friend I try it! Everything seems ok...the tip stays in its place...perfect. After a few days we try the other tip: after an hour of trials I check and the ferrule has come out more than a millimeter.

I go home and reflect on this: is it possible that the ferrule with unglued strips deforms under stress? I could not feel any play in the ferrule during casting, so I tried it again and the damned thing did it again



The next day I set up the two tips to see if I can feel any differences between the two, but they feel the same....but something doesn't seem right.

I check the dimensions of the male ferrule: the measurements on faces 1/4 and 2/5 are almost identical all along its length, while face 3/6 is about 3/100 smaller.

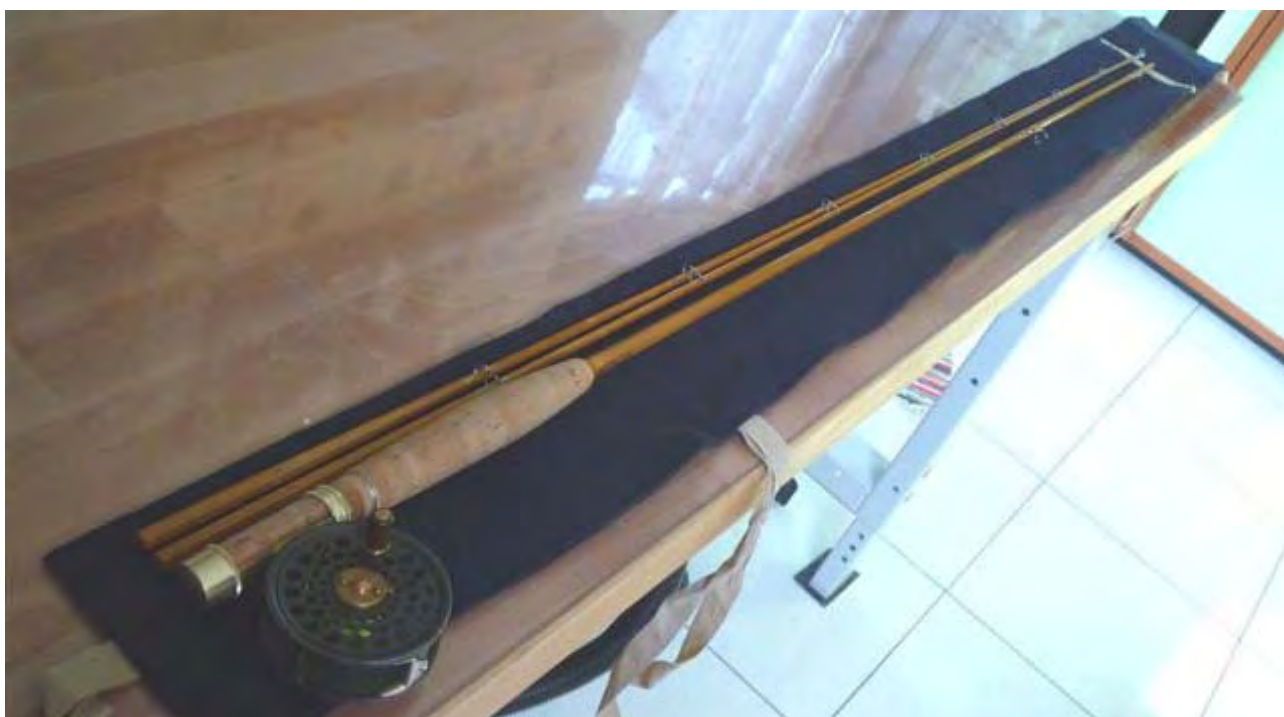
I remove the wax and prepare some epoxy. I heat it up and heat up the ferrule slightly and spread a thin layer on faces 3/6. I spread it nicely and let it dry a few days.

I apply some hot beeswax, I clean the excess and try to insert it. I do not feel an real difference and the force needed to lock it feels the same as before.

I try casting it and the tip doesn't come out anymore...perhaps it's the wax that keeps it together?. Is there more than before or perhaps I handed sanded the layer of epoxy last time and it was too smooth?

Sincerely I haven't understood yet. Being able measure the inside of the female would take away all my doubts: if the females were the same and within certain acceptable tolerances, I would like to blame the unglued strips. One must also consider that the connection with a bamboo ferrule is very unstable....but very elegant.

In any case I was so enthusiastic that at the next group purchasing, I bought no ferrules but only a lot of great silk



Now all that remained was to test it on the water fishing before taking it to Colorado.

I'm off: the trout are waiting for me in the riffles...the levels are drought ones....I've just tied the flies (rigorously Rororani style) ...I know how to cast...also to fish...I know the place like my pockets...if the rod was made well then I'm OK.

This has probably happened to you too while taking the rod out of the bag (sown by mom and shamelessly copied from Hardy), the usual stranger comes out from behind the car and he wants to see the rod and after three minutes want to buy it. I have no time to waste, I greet him in a hurry and disappear into the woods.

I go down to the stream, tie on a fly and take a rapid look at the situation and I cast along my bank – 5 – 6 meters next to a large granite rock with a frothy current along both sides. The tip of the line is lying on the rock and the fly drifts on the right hand side with the leader curved upstream. It drifts like a raft and then...disappears as if swallowed by the water. I hook my first rainbow of the day ! One jump, then a second one then it races upstream in the current. It comes downstream about a meter below me and stops in a pocket behind a white rock. I try to move it towards the bank pumping the rod....nothing doing. I decide to go downstream a few steps and then it's off towards the opposite bank and across the central current. I try to contrast it by holding the rod low down and downstream and parallel to the river. I have a 3X tippet and I pull with force. It crosses the current towards my bank and lets itself go downstream transported by the current. I manage to pull it towards the bank and to net it. I take the fly out, a brief reanimation and it is off to hide under the rocks.

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The first thing I do is check the ferrule. It seems OK. I begin trusting the rod and I continue fishing without further checks. I will do this at the end of the day. I reel in the line listening to the click of my Hardy reel and I move to the next hole.....I bet I'll catch a bigger one! Then I wonder ***what about Colorado???***

