

The Moffitt Angling System

I had heard, through the grapevine, about the Moffitt Angling System but this is my first actual exposure to what seems to be a radical departure from traditional fly-fishing as it is understood today. Considered to be controversial in some quarters, the Moffitt System utilizes a *hookless* fly (or flies) attached, by a loop-to-loop system, to a leader which terminates in a single, short-shanked, barbless circle hook. When the fish takes the fly, the hook-set jerks the fly from the fish's mouth and sets the circle hook in the jaw, thereby avoiding hook penetration of the near-surface blood vessels in the tongue and interior of the mouth. The controversy lies in the contention of some that hooking the fish in such a manner constitutes snagging. Some state Fish and Wildlife Agencies, notably Colorado and Indiana, have ruled that use of the system constitutes a legal method of fly-fishing.

The promotional kit I received included the hook-removal tool, large enough to fit comfortably in the hand and brightly-colored enough to be seen without having to search around for it, and a half dozen flies, two each of a scud, a Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear and a Pheasant Tail Nymph pattern, already threaded onto the threading tool which is such an integral part of the system.

I haven't had many opportunities to fish with the system but I have practiced attaching and removing the flies, something that can be done surprisingly easily and quickly. Three promotional kits are available for \$14.99, \$24.99 and \$39.99. The Pro Intro Kits for Winter Steelhead, Early Season Freestone and Spring Creek/Tailwater are \$59.99 each, and contain 24 Moffitt flies, 5 threaders, 12 circle hooks and 1 Moffitt release tool.



Moffitt Angling

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Fuji Finepix Z33 WP Waterproof Camera



In a world that seems to be increasingly filled with electronic devices that are liable to disastrous failure when subjected to the occasional dousings that seem to go hand-in-hand with our sport, it gives me a great deal of peace-of-mind to have this waterproof camera that, incidentally, takes excellent pictures.

With 10 megapixels and 3X optical zoom this diminutive camera (3 3/4 x 2 1/2 inches and only 7/8 of an inch thick) has all of the capability one could wish for and is, in addition, completely waterproof down to 3 meters and fully capable of shooting pictures under water. In the macro setting it focuses down to less than 3 1/4 inches, opening up interesting opportunities for taking pictures of flies (both artificial and natural) and other super-close-up shots. I suspend the camera from a loop of cord long enough to hang around my neck and drop it inside the top of my waders or into a shirt pocket in order to give it a little protection from bumps and scrapes while keeping it readily to hand.

It takes a Lithium-ion battery and a battery and charger are included in the package. My first additional purchase was an extra battery so that I could have a fresh and fully-charged battery ready at all times. The camera has an internal memory of 50 megabytes but takes an SD data card which can provide multiple gigabytes of memory. I have a 2-gigabyte

card which, with the camera on its finest-quality photo setting, can store over 400 pictures. Prices seem to be pretty consistent in most stores I've visited. Take a look at your local camera or electronics outlets. \$179.95 (kit includes camera, battery and battery charger)

www.fujifilmusa.com

Headwaters Bamboo Fly Rods

In spite of the vast changes that have taken place in the technology of fly-rod materials and construction, there remains a certain indefinable allure to the cane rod. Truly an American invention, the first rods to be made entirely out of strips of split and glued cane are attributed to Samuel Phillippe, a Pennsylvania gunsmith and violin maker who created this innovation around the middle of the nineteenth century. Quickly becoming the construction of choice for all kinds of fishing rods, split cane remained the premier rod material until after World War II. In 1947, a US trade embargo against the Peoples' Republic of China choked off the supply of *Arundinaria amabilis*, Tonkin cane, the species of bamboo which had, over the previous century, proven to be superior to all others for the construction of fly rods. The lack of this raw material led to the development of substitutes like fiberglass and then graphite which have, since that time, dominated the industry. Nevertheless, the romance of cane remains and, while the number of small-scale (and some not-so-small-scale) manufacturers has grown in the past few decades, the price of such a commodity, requiring as it does such a large degree of handwork, has remained a barrier to many anglers who would otherwise like to enjoy the pleasures of fishing cane.

Headwaters Bamboo Rod Company has tackled this problem by having all of their blanks and many of their rods manufactured under carefully supervised conditions in China. The rod I was sent, the Deluxe Deschutes, duplicates the taper of the classic Dickerson 8014 and is as fine a medium-action cane rod as any angler could wish for. On receiving the rod, the first thing I did was to examine the cosmetics. The natural bamboo tone, the attractive, black-tipped, red windings, the high-quality, tapered cork grip, attractive and durable fittings, and flawless finish were indeed impressive.

The proof of the rod is, of course, in the fishing and I've used this rod extensively since I received it. Fishing for trout on the Yakima in spring and on some of my favorite sea-run cutthroat rivers since late summer I've encountered quite a few good-sized trout, and even a couple of unexpected coho, and the rod was fully up to handling all of them. The rod was rated as a 5-6-weight and I found a Cortland Sylk WF5F line to balance it very nicely. I expected a much slower action (most of my cane rods are quite old and perhaps a bit tired) and was surprised to find this rod to be as crisp and responsive as some of my slower graphite rods.

The full range of Headwaters rods includes six tapers and three ranges. The ranges (*Favorite*, *Deluxe*, *Peerless*) differ in components and in the fact that the *Peerless* range is finished by Headwaters' craftsmen in the U.S. The *Favorite* range is available in two tapers and comes with only one tip section. The *Deluxe* and *Peerless* ranges are available in any of six tapers and come with two tips. Each rod comes with a khaki rod sock, and a black, powder-coated rod tube is available for \$35.00. For those who prefer to "roll their own," two-tip, ferruled blanks are available for \$250.00. Check out their website for further promotional opportunities. *Favorite*: \$330.00; *Deluxe*: \$550.00; *Peerless*: \$770.00

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