

As an intro to the following review posted on Bassfan.com I wanted to give you my opinion of the Fenwick Elite Tech Drop-shot Stix.

This past weekend was my first opportunity to fish the rod and catch small and big fish alike. Any of you that are familiar with Morgan Lake know that it has some quality Largemouth bass and that drop-shotting can be a highly effective way to catch them. The sensitivity in this rod is unmatched to any other drop-shot rod I have fished. Almost to the point it is too sensitive...every time I touched the rod to my shirt I had to look twice to see what I was feeling...there is no mistaking a bite. The handle on previous Fenwick rods I have used were not something I preferred however this rod is totally different than previous models. Without saying the same things that Terry said below I will only add one comment based on my experience last weekend. Most rods if they are sensitive enough to fish smaller weights don't have the backbone to fight a fish well yet allow the use of 4# or 6# line. This rod had everything you would want...sensitivity, an even bend and lots of backbone when you need it. The biggest bass that I caught on it so far was a 4# Largemouth and I did not even realize the fish was that big...the rod loaded in exactly the same place as smaller fish and when the fish ran from the boat, the rod gave just the right amount of load to keep the right pressure on. Having a rod like this that will handle big and small fish alike and allow the use of light line all at the same time is great. I'm looking forward to trying some of the other Elite Tech rods that Fenwick is offering this year.

The Right Rod
A Blend Of Balance And Bend

Reviewed by Terry Brown

Product: Elite Tech Drop Shot Rod

Company: Fenwick

Friday, October 12, 2007

A technique that's become overwhelmingly popular over the last 5 years is the dropshot. As BassFans know, it's basically a reverse Carolina-rig that's perhaps the deadliest technique for finicky fish, whether in deep or shallow water.

My first experience with the dropshot was about 3 years ago after a presentation and seminar by noted dropshotter Gary Klein. He spoke of the subtleties of the casting vs. vertical presentation. I appreciated that, because the vertical technique is effective, but is more suited to deeper impoundments than I normally fish.



But as with most new techniques, Klein analyzes all the piece parts to the most finite detail. When it comes to hooks, line or the actual presentation itself, he seeks to become the master.

In looking for the perfect dropshot rod, Klein noted, "I want a parabolic bend in my rod, which means an even bend from tip to handle. With the light line the angler doesn't have to have a hookset – the action of the rod sets the hook, fights the fish, and allows the angler to get far more fish in the boat.

"When the fish makes a surge or dives, the bend keeps the line tight and keeps tension on the hook."

For years, the Carolina-rig or big worm or jig had been my go-to technique for catching deep-water, bottom-hanging bass. I knew I was regularly getting bit, but I also knew that I was missing fish on these areas. The aggressive fish would hit, while and those that were a bit more finicky likely took a look at my offering and decided against biting. (Note: Don't get set in your ways – think out of the box for more bites.)

This is where the dropshot came in for me. After thoroughly fishing an area with my favorite techniques, I'd pull out a dropshot rigged with a finesse worm and small hook and fish the same areas again. The results were amazing. Sometimes I'd catch three or four fish off an area that in prior trips I'd deemed depleted.

From Pool Cues to Finesse Rods

As most anglers do when learning a new technique, I dropshotted with the rod-and-reel setup I had, instead of purchasing one for the application. Without hesitation, I can tell you that's not the way to go.

I initially dropshotted with a very stiff All-Star 6'6" spinning rod and an old Daiwa spinning reel. I also used a 1/4-ounce XPS dropshot weight – too heavy by my standards now.

Although it was easy to cast and feel the bites, this rig was more like a broom handle than a dropshot tool, and after a few trips I knew I needed better gear. It was available so I went after it. (Note: Don't be bull-headed where technology is concerned. If it's available, research the best models, buy them and use them.)

The Ultimate Drop Rod

During the period of my search, I researched just about every rod company going and shook a ton of rods. I knew what I wanted, but just couldn't find the right rod. I was looking for a very light, 6'10" to 7' rod with plenty of backbone and a soft tip. I bought several, but they were never right, until recently.

The new Elite Tech Drop Shot rod (ESDS610ML-XF), a brainchild of master rod innovator Steve Grice and built by Fenwick, is the perfect rod for this technique. At 6'10", it combines an ultra lightweight with great balance, a proprietary reel seat, Recoil guides that aid in casting and feel, and a no-cork foregrip.

The lack of foregrip cork increases the ability to feel the bite and it definitely decreases the weight. The conical fore-grip on this rod is blended into the blank and serves to amplify the feel.

Another special feature of this rod is the split handle. Not only does it decrease the weight of the rod, but makes the total outfit more balanced as well.

I matched this rod with a Mitchell 300 XE spinning reel, 10-pound Trilene 100% fluorocarbon, a 3/16 Tru-Tungsten Drop weight, and 1/0 Gamakatsu hook.

I found the most success with the 3" Gulp! Alive eel, but also fished a Zoom Finesse worm as well.

Casting this Elite Tech rod is a breeze. Even with a longer-than-average leader, the rod loads well on the cast, and long casts aren't a problem.

I had the opportunity to throw the drop shot, a grub, a small swimbait and a shaky worm on the rod and was impressed with the action and the power. The sensitivity on the bite is unmatched, and because the blank's very slender and lightweight, it can be fished an entire day without any problem.

The search is over. The new Fenwick Elite Tech Drop Shot rod is the perfect rod for dropshotting. I believe that you get what you pay for, and using technology as an advantage can help put more fish in the boat and make the fishing experience more enjoyable.

Notable

The Elite Tech Dropshot rod, which carries a 5-year limited warranty, retails for around \$239.95, for more information check out Charlie's Sporting Goods in Albuquerque, NM 505.275.3006.