



The Making of the



Rod Artist: David Headley

Program: Project Healing Water Conroe, TX

2019 PacBay/PHWFF Rod Building Competition

Caution! These threads are made of aluminum and can cross thread easily. Always ensure proper alignment. To reprint or find these instructions, please reference the USB drive included with the Stogie Stick



The included lighter is an automatic strike butane jet. To operate, slide the switch downward. The center photo shows a brass lever. This has been shaved smooth to prevent operation and to allow stowage in the reel seat. If moved to the right after lighting, the flame will stay lit. The far right photo shows the fill port and the flow adjustment ring. The lighter should only be filled with premium (Xicar) butane lighter fluid. The lighter should be shipped empty.



Below is the proper access to store the lighter. There is a small magnet built into the cap to help retract and hold while lighting. This compartment is not water tight and should be thoroughly dried before storage.



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The stogie stick was designed around the ability to store and enjoy a cigar while on the water. Please note that the entire reel seat will be removed in order to gain access to the humidor. To access the humidor, unscrew the reel seat and it will separate along the black line of the grip. On the top of the reel seat is the humidification system. Before storing your cigar, soak the green foam as seen in the bottom center photo in distilled water. Replace the humidification cap and reel seat before use.

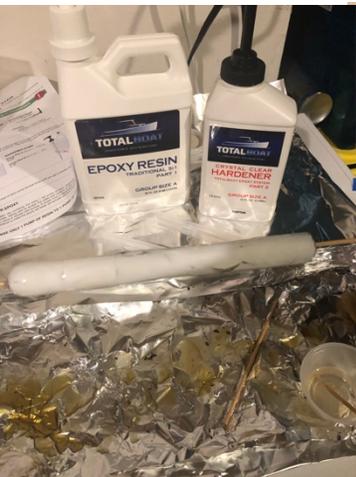
Prolonged exposure to heat will damage a cigar. Please keep the Stogie Stick in the shade and out of the heat to allow it to be used and displayed for years to come.



Documenting different Cigar Grip making methods. The cigars needed to be hard enough to withstand the forces of fishing and still allow a hollow section to be made to store a cigar



Many different solutions were attempted with varying success in making a grip from an actual cigar. For most of them, I used the rod dryer to rotate and level for a smooth cure



I wanted all of the hardware to match the copper reel seat I would be building so I found a products to refinish the parts. It was mesmerizing to work with. I then built a head to put all of the guides into so that I could turn them for an even coating. I last minute remembered to coat the tip which was already installed.



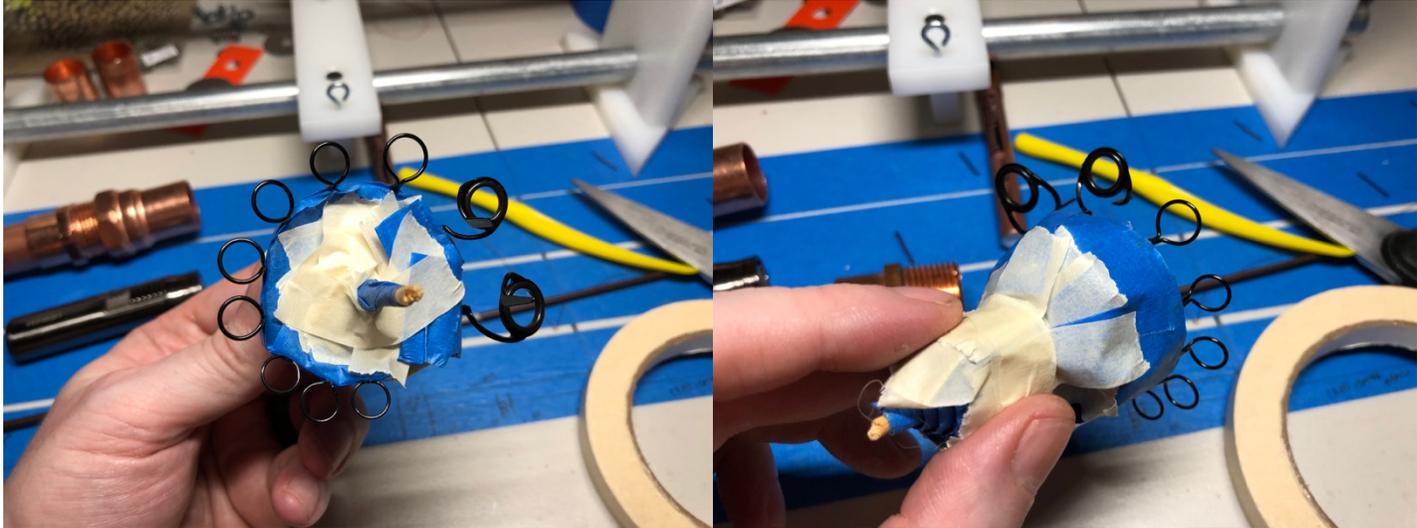
In the end, I made a blank to house the hardware for the humidor, the thread to hold the butt section of the blank and built up layers of epoxy to the desired thickness. It was then given its final shape with a Dremel and I ended up scuffing through the previously layers of thread work. I again used my cigar wrapping method to wrap a full length of tobacco.



My work table had a lot of preparation and measurements to stay within desired tolerances. I wanted the completed butt section to not extend too greatly to allow it to still fit within the rod case. I also used the blue tape to mark a memory of where my guide placement should be and how to plan the layout of the decorative wraps and weave of the butt section.

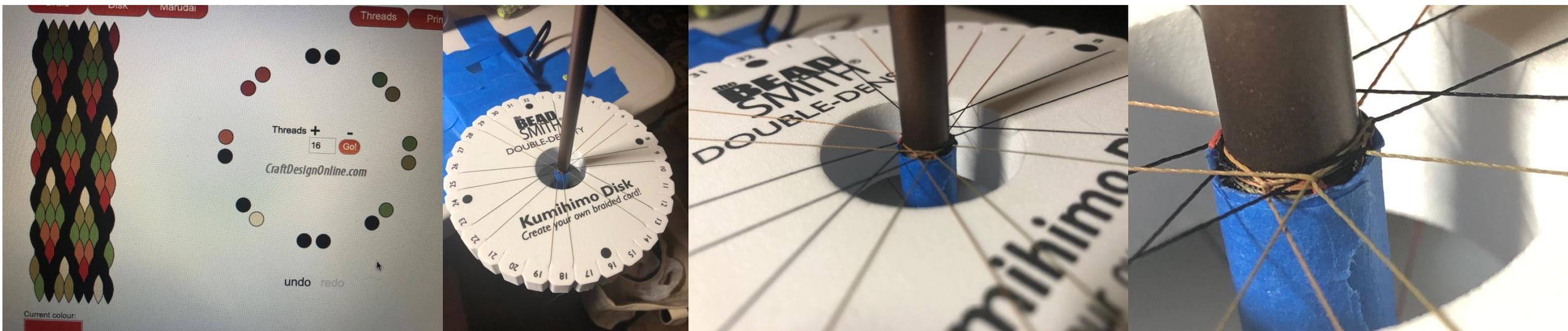


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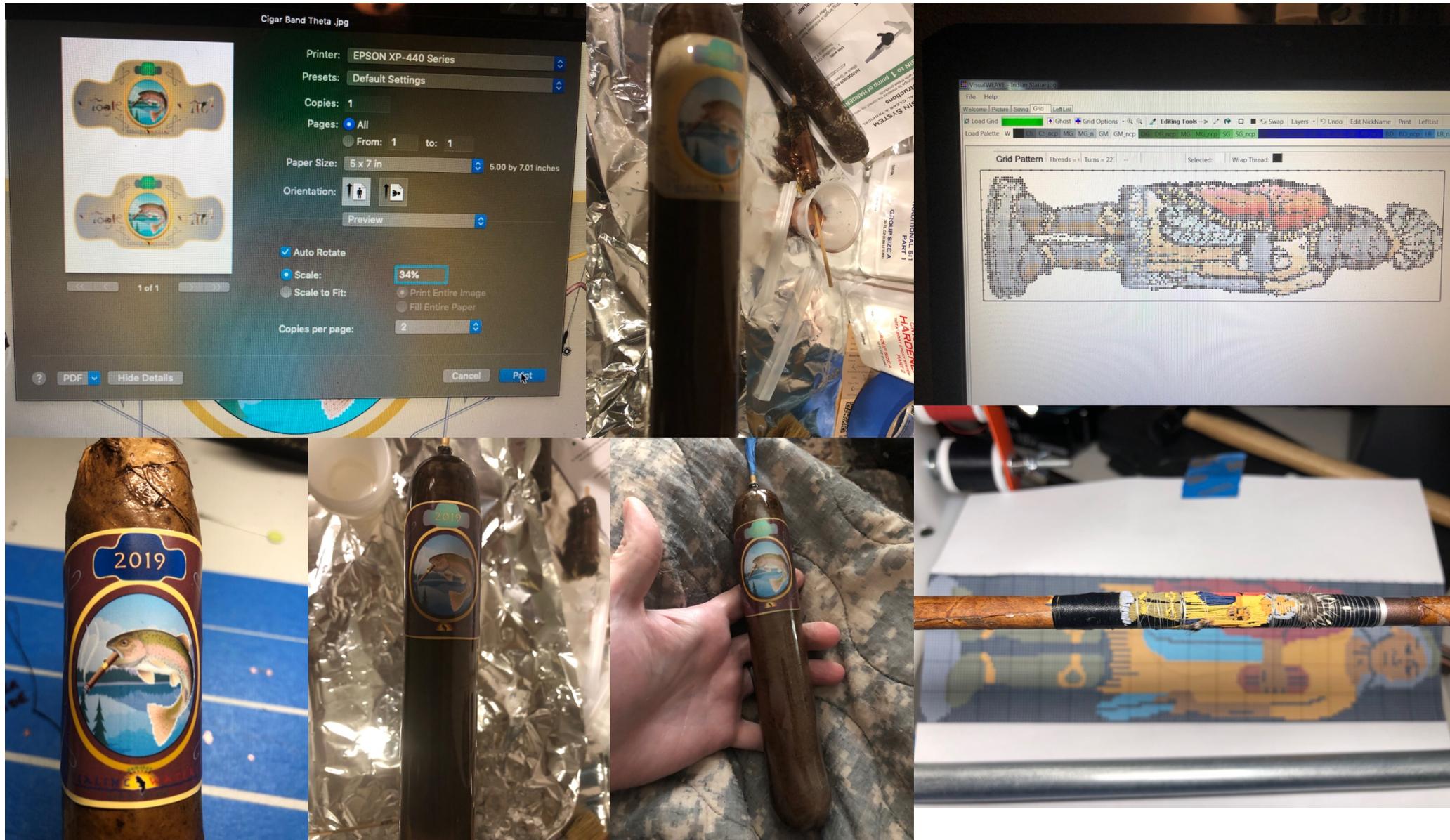


While building this rod, I wanted to try all sorts of ideas that I had not seen done before in a fly rod. This is one of the things that didn't quite work as planned. See the virtual build on the far left compared to the result around the blank on the right.

I wanted to learn kumihimo braiding for a section of wrap. I spent hours researching and then setting up the jig and thread. After trying to vary the tension, I concluded I had the wrong size threads to give an even appearance. I will attempt this technique again in the future as I know it can be done.



Throughout this build, my design continued to evolve. With so many elements, I knew the idea and concept but knew I should balance the idea to work within predesignated design area. Here are photos of some color variations during the build that when testing the result, they didn't quite match how they were intended. Any time I thought I could test a new method, I would find a way to try it. Here are photos of me comparing colors of the Cigar band and the colors of the cigar Indian



Every good cigar shop has a cigar Indian. This would be what would setup and make my color pallet for the rod and was designed first.

I made my own weaving jig and then learned the software to create a left list. With several trips back to the drawing board, I simplified a few steps that didn't warrant the desired detail and then wove feathers into the hand and headdress.



The decorative portion of the butt section would be something wild I had not seen before. I wanted a base layer of tobacco to show through and also have some multiple dimensions of thread and feathers on top.

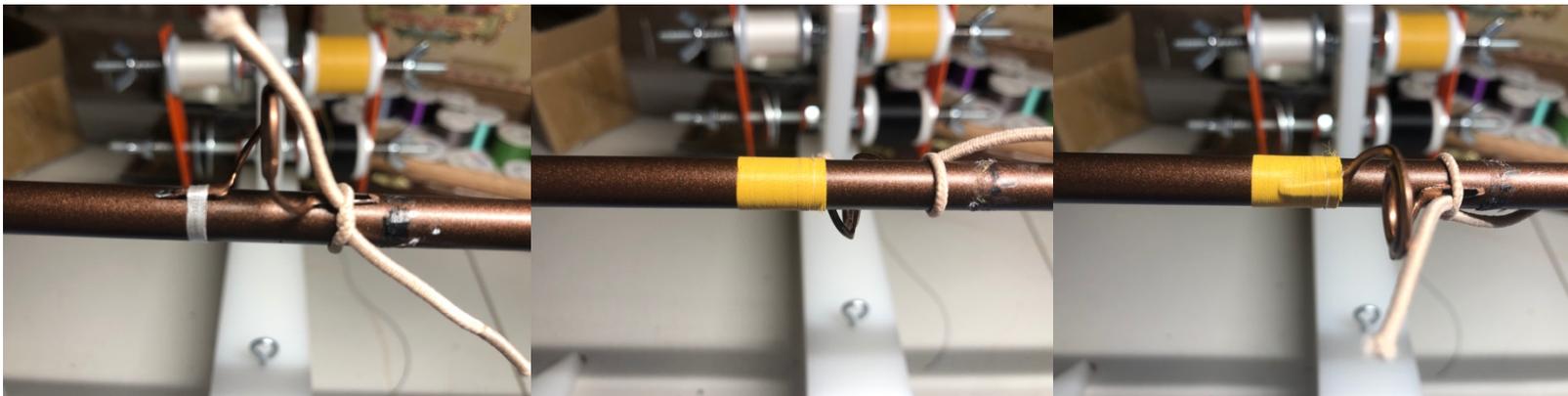
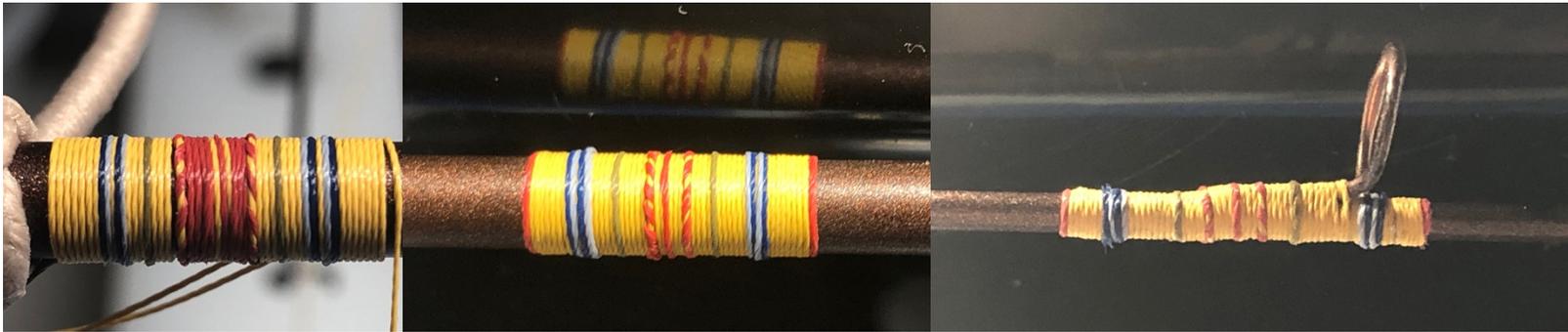
Here you can see some of the initial stages of the tobacco being set, the feathers placed, and some of the sacrificial threads to give the spacing desired for the end result.



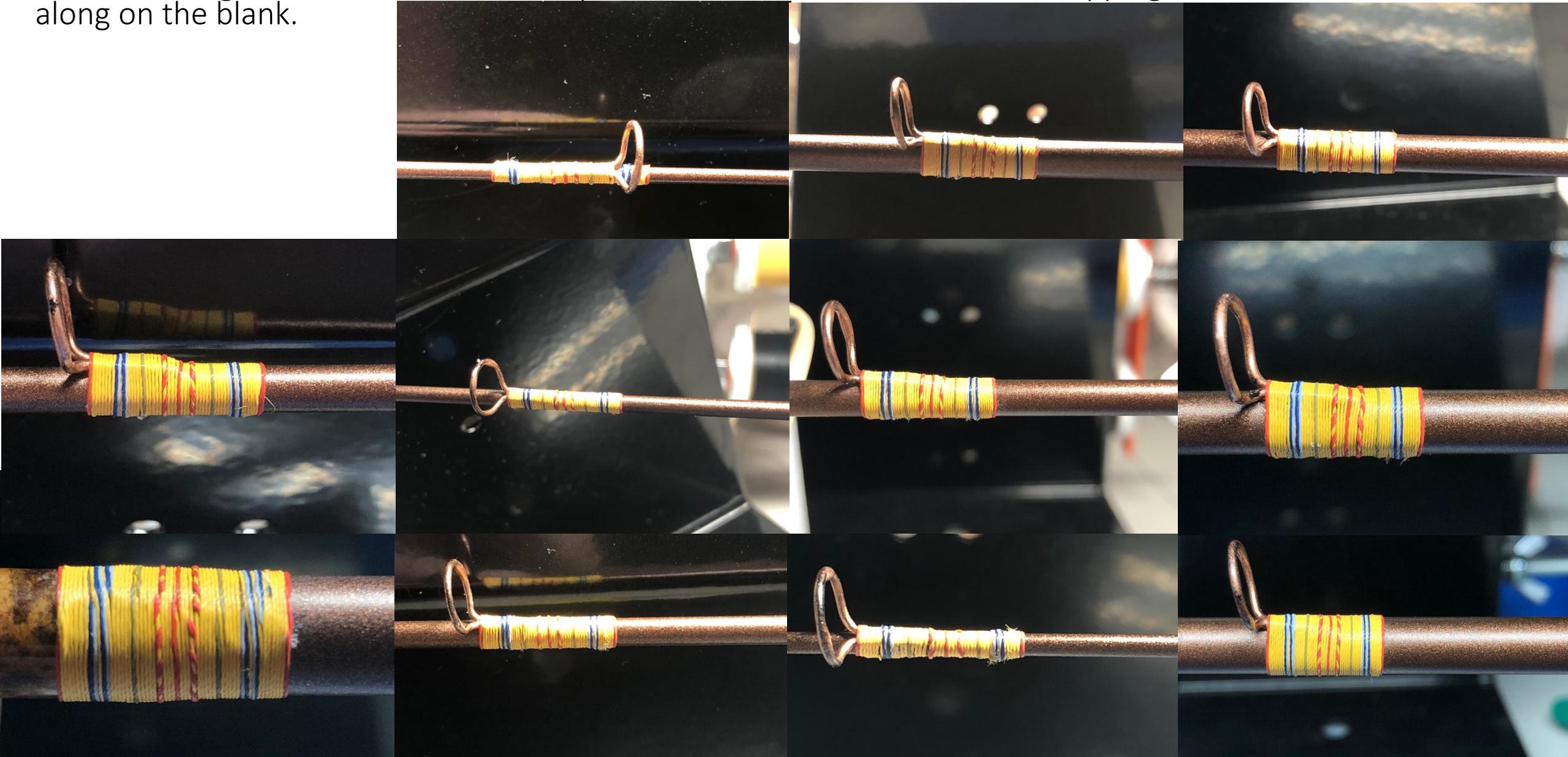
In this rod build, I wanted to creatively tackle two problems often dealt with by rod builders with a single solution. The problem, Guide spacing getting in the way of doing a ferrule wrap and how to do the alignment dots. My solution allows for the guides to to be placed 180 degrees by aligning the feathers of the butt and second section to be in either a fish ready or display ready assembly. I also wanted the ferrule wrap to be as intricate as the guide wraps and was faced with a whole new challenge of keeping tension around the blank. Can you spot on the blank how the feathers are attached?



The guide wraps for most builds I have seen become less intricate the smaller they get. I wanted the challenge of making them all appear identical. Although I wanted to include some copper threading, I found that the metallic thread I have is not suitable and frequently unwound making it too difficult to work with. I then tried to repeat the pattern of a sawblade (top left) without metallics and it did not have the same desired effect. I then went with what seems to be a common method of doing a JTOB that I studied intensely from YouTube videos. To make it more difficult, I wanted to add a single trim band. (top center). Counting my wraps to make every band the same, I practiced rapping the smallest guide first. I learned something. The threads don't compress when there is no tension on them. This elongated the pattern and you can see the pattern was completed above the guide. I had to now develop a method to hold the guides in place to decorate them with 5 colors and also wrap them from the guide over the foot and onto the blank. The bottom row is one of my first tests to try very fine silk and then wrap over it. The results work as it left very little bulge in the wrap but was hard to hide the silk underneath. How do you do your guides?



Once I figured out how to wrap the guide in reverse (from foot to blank) I was able to confirm that I could then make every guide evenly spaced. Every guide required 52 turns of threads and 45 minutes of work with one exception. The smallest guide has fewer turns total but still maintains the overall dimension of the inlay threads. This guide took 2 hours to complete. There are over 13 hours in wrapping these decorative bands along on the blank.



Here my design evolved after making some unwanted mistakes that flawed my finish. The cross wraps were ground away partially by my Dremel when shaping the cigar. To conceal this portion, I mimicked the headdress of the cigar Indian and made a larger one. I wanted to add some copper in this section so the headband was placed. I gave the edges of the copper foil ruffle cut and ended up not liking the overall look. I initially did not want a decorative band next to the cigar as it would look like it could conceal the end of the cross wraps. Whelp, it got the band treatment and in the end does not disappoint.

Additional mistakes were found in the softness of the under wraps of the tobacco on the stripper guides that weren't apparent until the guides were placed on and had tension. This was a problem in the butt section as well but I was able to cut away each imperfection before applying more finish.

The single foot guides were coated in copper before shaping them to a smaller profile to not bulk up the threads. While handling each guide, some of the copper came loose, I've left them in this state as time did not allow for me to find a way to refinish all of the guides to prevent this from happening in future use. I plan to try other methods in the future of color matching the guides.



Finishing the build led me to strip down a USB drive and decorate it to be themed the same as the rod. I finished it and the butt cap with layers of rod finish, feathers, and nail polish

