

the fish as it pulls line off the spool. Drag is adjustable and must be set so there is not enough resistance for the line to break.

YES! Do Try This Yourself

To set the resistance, hook a hand scale, (Boga Grip, X-Tools scale or other measuring device) to a fixed object. Tie the line to the hand scale, step back a few paces and pull the rod into a fish fighting position. The drag should be set to 25 per cent of the line's breaking point. That means the drag setting for 12 pound test line is proper when the drag releases at 3 pounds of pressure on the hand scale. It is important to get a 'feel' for this.

Ball bearings: An important consideration when buying a reel is the number of ball bearings. Ball bearings are used on various critical moving areas of the reel. The more bearings there are, the smoother and more efficient the reel will be.

Anti-reverse: The anti-reverse works with the drag. When the anti-reverse is in the ON position, the reel can not spin backwards. When the anti-reverse is in the OFF position, the reel is in 'free spool' and can spin backwards or forwards. Free spool is useful when the angler wants the fish to pull line off the reel without resistance, a common bottom fishing technique.

The reel body: The reel body should be graphite, graphite composite, or anodized aluminum. A painted reel has the least durable finish. Graphite is light weight, which can be a major consideration when casting all day. Spinning reels like spinning rods must be matched to the proper line weights. Line tests and amount of line the reel holds at that weight are printed on the reel. Reels, like rods, are classified from ultra-light through heavy. For best performance the reel, rod and line must match. When they do, the combination is said to be 'balanced.' Most spinning reels come with a feature that allows the handle to be placed on either the left or right side of the reel.

Line twisting: Spinning reels have a line twisting problem. It will be difficult for you to put line on a reel manually without some twisting, even when directions are followed explicitly.

Most every tackle shop has the proper equipment to put line on a reel without twisting, plus the angler only buys the amount of line needed.

Line twisting also is caused by reeling while the drag

is engaged. The reel should not be cranked while the fish is pulling line off the spool. Let the rod and the drag fight the fish.

Baits spin when retrieved and that can contribute to twisting. This type of twisting can be reduced significantly by using a ball bearing swivel between the line and the leader. Twisted lines can usually be relieved by playing the line out behind a moving boat and trailing it for a few minutes. Nothing should be attached to the line during this process.

BAITCASTING EQUIPMENT

Baitcasting reels differ from spinning reels in very visible ways. The reels are of completely different designs using a fixed line spool and



baitcasting a revolving one. In spinning, the reel and line guides are mounted under the rod. In baitcasting, the reel seat and line guides are on top. The line guides on baitcasting rods are considerably smaller than those on spinning. Baitcasting rods have a variety of handles while most spinning rods have the same type.

Baitcasting has increased in popularity because of new materials that lighten reel weight, and development of anti-backlash devices that work effectively.

BAITCASTING RODS

Baitcasting rods are made from the same material as spinning rods, that is, graphite or graphite in combination with fiberglass or boron.

One of the unique factors of baitcasting is the variety of handles available. The pistol grip was once popular, however now saltwater fishermen frequently prefer a straight handled rod with the handle at least 10 inches or longer.

Such length and shape allow at least three things to be done:

