

I figure that since I was making these wood handles, I should have them on my wife's and my rods. I've got more than enough rods the way it is and really didn't want to buy 2 more high end blanks just to have new wood handles, so I came up with a way to retrofit a new handle on a old rod. Maybe the grip we're talking about has been damaged in some way, something like it was used as a hook keeper way to many times,

I read all the suggestions I could find about removing old grips. Most all were geared toward saving an existing grip which involved pulling the grip off the front of the blank. I really didn't want to strip the whole rod and start over so I came up with a way to remove the old grip and install a new one from the butt. I'm doing this on a rod that I want an Fugi IPS reel seat on. The process will be similar for a fly handle but much easier since the fore grip doesn't need to move.

First you have to get rid of the old grip –VERY CAREFULLY!! You don't want to damage the blank. If you do scrape it a tad, the good news is that once you get done it will be incased in a solid mass that will offset the nick. But let's try not to press our luck.



I used my band saw. You could use a table saw, handsaw, or sander. Just make sure that you go slow and at don't get into the blank. After cutting the butt cap off, I set the fence so that it was strong of the blank. We'll take the rest off pretty quickly in the next step.

Now that you have the majority of the old grip gone it's time to deal with the remaining old stuff. Wrap a piece of masking tape around the blank where the old handle ends. This will serve as a guide and also to avoid any damage to the blank in the "visible area". I use a wood rasp to get the bulk of the material off and then sandpaper.



Next we need to make the blank the same diameter from the but to the front of the seat. Fiberglass dry wall tape is excellent for this. If you need to fill a lot, make sure to work your epoxy in as you wrap the tape. You want to make sure that the epoxy is bonding with the blank. On the reel seat I installed graphite arbors and bored them out so I wouldn't need as much tape to make arbors.



Next step is to bore the grip to the size of the butt of the blank. I will bore this for you if you give me the diameter. The fore grip needs to be bored to this size also. I will leave the trim ring off the front and you will install these later. Do a dry run of installing the grip to make sure you have enough, but not to much tape on the blank and that everything will fit.

Mark where the front of the fore grip will rest and wrap some masking tape around the blank again, marking where the tip will rest. This probably needs to be done with the reel installed. The tape will keep the glue from possibly sticking to the blank as you install the front trim rings. The tape will also serve to center the trim rings on the blank. Measure the diameter of the blank at the point you just put the masking tape and drill a hole this size in the trim rings. You will need to do this step to make sure the fit is just right.

Next step is to break the trim rings. By breaking these in half the glue joint will not show. Break them with the grain not across grain. Test fit these pieces to make sure they fit and that you have a little clearance.



It time to start assembly. I'm going to suggest that you use Rod Bond. It has a long open time. Other slow curing epoxies will work; just make sure that you will have enough open time. You don't want it setting up before you get everything positioned. Put the fore grip on the blank far enough forward to be out of the way for now. Liberally apply epoxy to the tape in the area that the seat will go, working it in to make contact with the blank. Twist the seat on the blank in the same direction that the tape was wrapped. This will help to squeeze the epoxy into the voids in the tape and will keep it from unwinding on you. When this is roughly positioned, apply epoxy to the rear grip area and twist the grip on. Apply epoxy to the mating surfaces of the grip and seat and draw these together. Glue and insert the butt plug provided. Wipe off any excess at this point.



Bring the fore grip into position with the mark on the masking tape made earlier and glue the trim ring on the front. Lastly apply clamp pressure. Wipe off any more squeeze out of the epoxy. Use denatured alcohol for this. The last step is to make sure the grip is oriented correctly to the guides. Let it sit in the clamps until the epoxy is fully cured.

Now it's time to shape the trim rings. Back the fore grip down on the handle as far as it will go and wrap the blank with masking tape to guard against scratches. I started by knocking off the corners with the band saw. If you use a hand saw of some type, I would suggest that you backup the front of the rings with a scrap block of wood. This will provide support to prevent tear out and from breaking the trim from the fore grip. There isn't a lot of glue surface left at this point.



Next comes some sanding. I used a dremel tool starting with a course grit and then turning to a finer grit. The final sanding is done by hand. Apply remove the tape, you're done ever be the wiser.



used a dremel sanding drum The final finish and no one will