



Great Bay Rod Co. - ProTeam Australia Saltwater Fly Rods Review by Nial Logan

The ProTeam Australia Series of fly rods will be sure to see a growing group of followers looking for a quality piece of gear in the mid price range.

For this review, I was provided with a 8 weight PTA904 (nine foot / 4 piece) model in this series. Each rod and blank are made in the USA and are individually deflection tested to ensure both proper guide spacing and overall quality of finish.

The first thing noticed after opening the aluminium rod tube and taking the rod from the sock is the look of quality we have come to expect from more expensive brands. The rod features a matte black blank with two SIC titanium framed stripper guides, titanium snakes and is bound in dark green with gold accents. The titanium tip guide is a large size, allowing the leader knots to clear easily. Apart from looking very smart, the ALPS triangular reel seat makes it easy to locate the reel foot under the hoods and the flat surface allows a secure foundation for the reel with no movement once the double uplocking rings are tightened. Each ferrule is marked with a dot to make lining up the sections a breeze. The rod comes standard with a fixed fighting butt and hook keeper. The ProTeam is available in weights 7 through 12.

Options available at no additional charge include a treated cork finish and/or an inscription of the owners name. As with many rods these days, there is an original owner lifetime guarantee with a \$50US charge plus post. Minor repairs, if needed, will be done here in Australia by a master rod craftsman.

The rod is described as a fast action, but it is not a broomstick that is tiring to use. If anything, just the opposite is true. After testing a number of lines (floating, triangular taper, intermediate and a 275 grain wet tip express) the rod was found to be crisp and responsive, handling both short and long casts with ease. Many flyfishers upline the intermediate line to a 9 wt. to make quick presentations to moving fish and to help overcome windy conditions. Doing this, the rod allowed one cast presentations at distances of 60 to 80 feet, making it ideal for estuary or flats use. As for the power of this rod, there is more than enough to punch a fly into the wind as well as handle bulky flies like Dahlbergs. The PTA also has ample power in the butt section to apply plenty of pressure to lift a fish from under a boat or stop a fast running plegic.

I don't usually recommend a rod as there is no doubt that we, as opinionated flyfishers, could provide you with logical reasons why the rod we use is best. That said, the only way to select a rod is to cast a number of brands and see how they perform and feel to you. If you are in the market for a saltwater or estuary rod, give the ProTeam a try. I am sure you will be impressed.

For more information and purchasing options, visit Derek McKenzie Outdoors at www.flyrodreel.com.au.

Nial Logan is an internationally recognised FFF accredited casting instructor with a wealth of knowledge gained through spending many years in the remote areas of Northern Queensland. His business, "Try on Fly" is based in Queensland and caters to the sport of flyfishing with an emphasis on saltwater sight casting from shore, beach or boat. Please take time to visit his website at www.learntoflyfish.net