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Dave Dozer [00:00:09] Yeah, why? My father loved to fish and I have a twin brother. And so he got my brother and I out all the time. He'd come home from work and he would say, let's go out and fish someplace and would haul us out the car. And so we were fishing at a very early age and a lot of evenings in the summertime were. And once we got to probably about eight years old and I'm still surprised my parents let my brother and I do this. They let us pick my brother and I pick where the summer vacation was gonna go. We had a little book that was fishing at Oregon or fishing in Washington. And we would some through that book for weeks trying to decide, OK, we're gonna go to this lake and we'd load up the trailer for a week and off we would go to this place so that we growing up as it is. As a kid getting into junior high, we did that a lot. And it was every summer we did that. I got my first fish at the age of three. I was I still remember it. We were fishing the Yakima River up in Washington and with night crawlers. We got it. Got it in. And I remember cradling it in my arms. We had to take it home to show mom, even though it was a carp. And I was walking up the bank to the car and the fish flopped out of my hands and right back into the river in a way. So lost that first trophy, but fished a lot. After that, growing up camping up in Washington, a lot of fishing, a lot on the Washington coast. Some saltwater fishing, too. And my father had a fly rod that we used to fish with night crawlers on and bait. But I think I first actually fly fished with that, probably about the age of eight. And my brother and I started experimenting with fly fishing at that point. And parents bought us a fly tying kit. So we were tying flies at about the age of eight. And I think we tied tied to all the flies in the package of hooks that came in this fly tying kit. And then we kind of all apart because we ran out of hooks and then we tied them all back again. So it was growing up at an early age. We were fishing a lot with with just my brother and I and my father.

Dave Dozer [00:02:26] My company is Bamboo Pursuits out of Sisters, Oregon.

James Thull [00:02:31] I have Property in Brothers.

Dave Dozer [00:02:33] Good. OK, there's that. There's not much there. There's not much there. abandoned brothers. Yeah, there's not much there, other than fields. Yeah. Yeah, I got started early and I was building some graphite and a couple of fiberglass rods.

Dave Dozer [00:02:51] When I got out of college, so in the early 80s into probably 1990, I built some some graphite rods. All my friends found out I was building rods. Of course I had to build them for them and I kind of got bored with with graphite rods. It kind of felt like I was just putting a kit together. You would buy the components and just put it together. So I got out of it for maybe 10 years, ten, twelve years or so. And then my wife and I were fishing with friends of ours down in Northern California and friend of mine, Peter, who's a big bamboo fanatic, stuck a bamboo rod in my hand and said, Here, fish this rod for a day. And I didn't realize it was about a twenty five hundred dollar rod. But I love the feel of the bamboo rod and just love the action of it. And spent about a year thinking about, well, do I want to buy a bamboo rod? Do I want to make a bamboo rod? Because I had built other rods and thought, well, I had to be able to make a bamboo rod. And I found a class in making bamboo rods locally in central Oregon and was able to take that class and built rod number two out of that. That was about 16 years ago. And from there, I just went on and built Rod number two and then Rod number three. And here I am years later, designing and building rods for anybody who wants them. Oh, let's see. Certainly fly-fishing is. Your success rate on fly fishing is a lot less than what it used to be a lot of places. After college, I went down to California and we had some great fishing down there in the early 80s. Some of the rivers in Northern California, we did fly fish a lot and you could catch a lot

of fish and a lot of big fish. And it seemed like in maybe the 90s, fishing really declined. And a lot of rivers, the upper Sacramento and Pit River and Hat Creek. We faced a lot in fishing, just declined a lot. And it seems like maybe in the last 10 years there's been conservation efforts that have gone on, recovery efforts that have gone on and seeing better fishing and rivers that used to be great, that have had trouble in the past, which is great to see. You know, the conservation efforts, I think are paying off some of the rivers that we've fished. The fishing pressure went down because because the quality of fishing was declining and I haven't seen fishing pressure go back to what it used to be. So now it seems like at least in the rivers that I fish in the west, there's not as many people that are out anymore. And maybe there's a generation that hasn't learned to fish. You know, those of us that are in our 50s or 60s, we grew up with family members teaching us. I think there's a younger generation where people just have not learned to fish like we used to as kids. And so I know there's a lot of efforts like communication going on in some fish events like this FFI event we're at today about how do you get kids back into fishing, which is great to see. So there's some people who do some great things in that direction. Kids events and fishing events for kids. Women in fly fishing has grown so much in the last five or six or seven years. My wife in particular has been involved in helping promote a lot of that. She's a guide and she's a casting instructor and has held a lot of women's events. And you really see the energy and women in the fly fishing industry growing dramatically. It still is a good ole boys industry. And it's I think it's tough for a lot of women to go into a fly shop and feel confident that they can do it and ask questions, not just intimidated with it. So these women's events, I think, are really paying off to get a lot of more women into the fields. We're seeing a lot of women in casting instruction now that are coming out that are great casters. In a lot of cases. I think women are probably they probably learn casting better than men because they're willing to listen, whereas a lot of men are just well figured out on my own. So there's a you know, the growth in women in the industry has been huge. I'm not sure if the industry is necessarily keeping up with it yet. There's still a lot of sexism that goes on in advertising in the industry, but probably a lot of industries. You still see that. I know other women have a lot of frustrations with buying waders because the industry doesn't size women's sizes the right way, that most women are the size in the way that Hollywood sees it. And so that's one of the growing frustrations I hear from a lot of the women out there that are really getting into it is we can't buy by waders. We can't do this. We can't do that because the industry is not keeping up with the growth in women in fly-fishing. And let's face it, some of the fly shops are a bunch of good old boys are there. And it's tough. You know, as a male, I certainly don't feel it when I go into a shop. But I hear from from women who have gone into it quite a bit. You know, I think accessibility is a big problem. It's getting harder and harder to access the rivers. I think you see a lot more private property that you're used to getting. Access is tough and and it's only going to get tougher unfortunately you're seeing private pay to fish ranches showing up a lot more than used to be. So you can get to quality water if you're willing to pay for it. You go over to Japan or you go to England and everything is paid to fish over there. And so I kind of worry that we're just gonna lose public access because it's it's too big of an industry right now. And lands public lands are disappearing depending on whatever administration we have. The current administration doesn't seem to be too concerned with public lands. And no public lands are not as big of an issue on the East Coast like they are out here in the West. But they are a big thing. That's public lands are what give us access to to the waters that we fish. So I'm I'm hoping that that things turn around. I'm not sure if they will, but I've got some hope. Well, I loved it so much growing up, so by training, I mean, I have an engineering background. I worked in college, worked in aerospace for 15 and 16 years down in California, then moved up to Oregon and worked in high tech for 15 years and was fortunate enough to retire six years ago. So I can do my Bambu thing full time now. But there's an engineering side of me that really is fascinated with fishing and trying to

analyze and figure it out. It's a problem solving exercise. You come up to a piece of water trying to figure out, OK, where are the fish at? OK. If I think they're at a certain place, how do I get my flies to them? What flies are they gonna gonna be willing to take? And so I think it's a it's a huge problem solving exercise that my engineering background kind of points me towards wanting to do that and figure it out. And then my family, I have actually an artistic background in my family, everybody, my family that my mother has a strong artistic background. And my grandfather was a professional photographer. My father was a water colorist for 40 years. My brother is a fine art photographer. My sister is a fashion designer. And so there's an artistic side that is in me, too. And being out in nature, I think appeals to that artistic side. And, you know, just being away from the big city. Being away from the people really appeals to that. And then I kind of take the engineering and the artistry together towards my bamboo rod building. And it's a may seem like kind of an unusual mix, but it works very well for me.

Dave Dozer [00:11:14] I learned from a class and a gentleman by the name of Chet Caraco, owns a company called Bellinger's, that teach that back then and they still teach bamboo rod building and they sell and sell bamboo rod building tools and equipment. And I took a class, three day class and building bamboo rods through them years ago. And I was a gentleman that helped out with the class, Darryl Whitehead, who's very well known around the world for his bamboo rod building. And actually, I think most of us in the northwest who build rods have had been someplace along the way. We've connected with Darryl and is getting on in age. I think he's just kind of getting out of the rod building. But I remember the first day of Darryl taught the first day of class, and I remember him saying craftsmanship like a dozen times in that first day of the class and it sunk into me around. If you're gonna build a bamboo rod. Yeah, you're building a rod is gonna cast well, but strive to build the best rod that you can and don't cut corners. Don't try to turn it out real quick. Take your time and put a high level of craftsmanship into the building. And so and I still remember that first day with Darryl there. There's a good friend of mine who who builds back east out of Virginia. Rick Robbins does have some influence on me. Rick and I build very different kinds of rods. He's been building for forty nine years, I believe, back east. And he's very well known on the East Coast, not so much on the west, but build some amazing rods. But he and I've connected a lot sharing ideas and building. And he learned through a lot of the big names back east, back 15, 20, 30 years ago. And so he's come up through the Catskills style of bamboo rod building and which is different than what you see out in the West. So being able to talk to the people I know on the West Coast here, but yet connecting in with Rick about what are the what are your approaches towards Rod building from the East Coast side of things? And it's really helped me kind of develop my expertise and my knowledge in in designing rod building. I get the question, why Bamboo a lot? I'll do a show and I've had it a couple of times today in the show, and what I tell people is my belief is there's kind of a few things that really appeal to the to the aspect of bamboo rods and bamboo rod building. First off, there's this tradition around bamboo rods. So you're you're fishing with something that has that has been hand-built the same way it was built a hundred years ago, using the same methods. A lot of the same tools. There's a real appeal, I think, to a lot of people with that. There's certainly a coolness factor to having a bamboo rod, you know, that appeals to some people. But really the big difference is the feel you get in casting a bamboo rod is so different from graphite and it's different from fiberglass and being able to feel in your hand, feel in the grip. Everything that Rod is doing when you're casting is something that I think is real infectious for people. And it really pulls people into the whole bamboo community. But once you get that first rod, then I need another one and then I need another one. And you really don't want to go back to graphite. So there's a lot of great things about bamboo. They're not for every fishing condition and they're not for everybody. But there. There are a lot of things that that can really appeal to

the aspect of fly fishing, a classic hand-crafted instrument that gives you an experience that's different, completely different than what you get out of casting graphite.