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Datus C. Proper  
1914 N. Johnson St.  
Arlington, VA 22207

Office: 202-426-2278  
Home: 703-841-9336  
Aug. 11-30: 406-587-5241

Silvio Calabi - (207) 594-9544

#### DAI-RIKI TIPPET\* MATERIAL

Synthetic monofilament has gone through three or four generations that I can<sup>2</sup> recall. They were not always easy to recognize: new materials would be a little better than their predecessors in some qualities, but worse <sup>in</sup> ~~than~~ others. Stren, for example, was stronger than most of the Europeans for a while, but diabolically shiny. Aeon and Nylorfi, a few years later, were also strong, but the process of tying a knot in them created little "pigtail" kinks right in front of the hook's eye. Several other monofilaments that claimed super strength shared this problem.

Whoever made Dai-Riki must have had some advice from good fly-fishermen, because the product is right. Dan Bailey in Livingston, Montana, gets credit for importing the monofilament and distributing it to a lot of shops around the country.

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\* Editor: please note that the title should refer to tippet material, not leader material.



"Dai-Riki" means "Great Strength," and while that is accurate enough, it does not tell us much about the maker. A lot of Japanese tackle is arriving here anonymously these days, sometimes under different brands. It gets hard to track. In the words of a familiar advertising campaign, we need more work that's good enough to sign.

Let's call Dai-Riki the Toyota of tippet materials. If that does not sound like a high compliment, consider that Toyota's reputation for quality has allowed dealers to sell cars for a premium above list price. Dai-Riki is also premium-priced: about two dollars for a little bit of monofilament on a spool too big to fit in my fishing vest. ~~But~~ the material is good enough to justify some fussing, so I rewound it onto practical spools and used it to replace all the other tippet material in my vest.

But that is just one angler's opinion, and opinions on monofilament (like most other tackle) tend to be passionately subjective. Let's be as precise as possible about Dai-Riki's characteristics. That way, if you disagree with my judgment, you'll know why. Please note, though, that these comments apply only to fine monofilament: tippets and the sections just above them. Heavier butt-sections work best with different materials. On that subject, see the article on "Braided Leaders" in the May/June issue.



- ° Dry knot-strength is remarkable. I tested it by knotting together different monofilaments whose diameters had been checked by micrometer. For fishing purposes, this is about the most relevant test available. <sup>(.005")</sup> Dai-Riki would always break .006", and sometimes .007", Racine Tortue -- my favorite of the last generation.
- ° Wet knot-strength has, by now, been tested by a couple of hundred wet trout. I have had none of the puzzling breakages that <sup>troubled</sup> ~~afflicted~~ some new materials. I have used .005" (6X) tippetts in circumstances that used to call for .006", and if anything, the finer Dai-Riki has lost fewer fish. Now, a thousandth of an inch may not sound like much, but .006" is twenty percent thicker than .005", and that is enough to make a real difference in the behavior of small flies.
- ° Shock strength <sup>t</sup> is less clear. I have popped off a few fish on the strike, which is not one of my customary afflictions. It may be -- I'm not sure -- that fine material cannot cushion <sup>N</sup> against a sudden shock quite as well as thicker material of the same nominal strength.
- ° Kink resistance is good but not outstanding. Dai-Riki easily loses its memory of the spool (even on a small spool), and it does not form those pigtail curls when knotted. When stretched by a big Montana trout, however, the material does pick up a few kinks and is best changed.
- ° Color is dull and non-shiny, which I would rate as good.
- ° Body is about right too. By this, I mean that the material is sufficiently stiff and heavy to resist wind knots and to deliver a fly fairly accurately even when the tippet is long.

5' = 625

6' = 1296

(turn on  
skiff)



If Dai-Riki was the first of a generation, it will not be the last. A new material marketed under the Orvis and Sussex brands is also very strong, and it is available in a finer (.004") diameter, which is welcome. The price is higher. I won't venture an appraisal before a season of fishing.

It looks like a tough season for the trout.