

Muzzy Bowfishing Reel Review Part 1.

I've had some time to do some testing on the new version of the Muzzy reel for 2007 and want to pass along the testing to results to my fellow bowfishermen. With a few problems with the first production run, I'm sure many of you are anxious to see whether this year's version would hold up, as I was. The main problem with last year's reel seemed to be the durability of the footing material, a manufacturing issue. So my first tests naturally would be everything I could do to try and break it. Now my tests are not the most scientific in the world, but rather real world application, as bowfishing is very taxing on all its equipment. Upon visual inspection and handling, it was immediately apparent that the footing was much stronger and stiffer, and I took an old style Muzzy reel to feel and compare differences. The new reel on the left has a much stiffer material and improved bracing for the foot. So my first reaction was positive and I could see the improvement already.



The next test would involve the mounting of the reel into the reel seat. This mounting would be in a Muzzy reel seat on one of my Osprey bows. I mounted the reel on and cranked it down extremely, tight as you could go to make sure the mounting pressure would not break or damage the foot. It passed nicely and fit nice and tight into the seat.



Next test would be the hood. With the advanced disc type drag system of the reel, with the drag cranked all the way down, the spool would slightly displace causing a little difficulty on removing/replacing the hood of the reel on last year's model. The hood came off very smooth and I adjusted the drag to multiple settings and removed and replaced the hood multiple times so that issue had been corrected. Also a retaining screw was added to insure the cover for the button and gears would not come off.



Next test would be the pickup pin. Last year's model had a few reels where the pickup pin would come out under pressure or stick occasionally, so I wanted to make sure this was addressed as well. After removing the hood, the oversize pin still is the most impressive looking pickup pin, great for handling bowfishing line compared to some of the other spincasts. So would it hold in or not? With a very large pair of channel locks, lots of twisting, turning, beating, and pulling as hard as I can, the pin held strong and there was nothing I could do to get it out. I also reset the reel multiple times to insure the the pin would not stick. I will also address this in my shooting section for the reel to follow. So good news on the pin, issue fixed and test passed.



Now time to spool line. I chose 200# Fast Flight line, as this is the most commonly used line with spincasting reels. You want to insure that your line is not spinning on the spool when trying to fill it, this will give the appearance that the drag is not working, but actually it's just your line spinning around. A good tight knot, or even a piece of tape around the reel for some bite will correct this, new reels tend to have a smooth surface on the spool.. So after a good tight knot on the spool, I fill it to capacity with the fast flight, ~97 feet of line.



Next would be the drag tests. First we want to make sure the drag is functioning properly. With moderate tension, we pull on the line to make sure it breaks as supposed to, and all is well. With the full test, slightly over 30 lbs is what it took to make it slip. One of the most impressive things about the drag system is it's superiority of some of the other model reels. Last year's model drag system (which is the same in this year's) outfished the synergy's I used to fish with hands down. It had stronger holding pressure and never had any kind of issue with stripping. Also you don't have to crank this drag all the way down as with other reels. The drag and gear system is very impressive in this reel and a definite positive over past reels. On to the anti-reverse..... Well everybody knows you don't need anti-reverse in bowfishing, so the anti-reverse was removed. New reel on the right. Glad to see that!



We also wanted to go over the outside of the reel as well. The button, handle, drag knob, and all outside components seemed solid and sturdy. Also the Muzzy logo is infused onto the hood and not a sticker like last year's. New reel is shown on the right.



On to the shooting test. With the water and temperatures cold, I did want to shoot this reel a bunch and see how it actually shot, the line spooled off, etc. After about 40 shots into the block target I was very pleased. With a shot of silicone spray and wetting of the line, the line spooled very well. The reel also reeled very smooth and handled great. Very impressive! When the waters warm we'll let you know how this reel holds up on some monster grass carp and buffalo for part 2 of our series.



And finally we wanted to see if the reel would have to some strain and abuse, so we had two unique tests. First is what we call the "Honda Foreman" test, and yes I know it is muddy. Basically I hook the line to the back of my Honda 4-wheeler and have somebody take off suddenly while holding the bow with reel mounted on it at different angles. This would somewhat very unscientifically test some strength application. The real fishing test will be coming soon, as the water warms and we start fishing. But for now this would do. After several runs and jerks and my arm hurting real good, the reel held true. The seat remained intact, drag held, and gears held strong. This looked like a great start for the new reel



Last is our final and most "strenuous" test. I call it the "My little boy can tear up anything test". Basically I let my 18 month old son Hudson have at it. If anybody besides me could break it, it would definitely be him, he basically destroys most anything he gets a hold of. First he wanted to chew on it, no problem with that. Then he picked, pulled, and twisted it, nothing hurt there again. Then he really began to test it out. Beating it on the hardwood floor repeatedly and smashing it into the wall, it's still holding strong. And finally his most grueling test, the ride down the stairs. As did many of our Christmas ornaments and various other objects, the new Muzzy reel took the ride down 25 stairs....it survived, I was sold, and it made for a good laugh for both of us.

Although this first round of test wasn't the most scientific, we hope that it shows some of the quality of this reel and improvements that were made. Our next test will be shooting fish with it, as soon as it is warm enough. At Backwater Bowfishing, we want to give our customers as much information as we can on the products we carry, and make sure you have all the information you need before making a purchase from us. We appreciate all of your business and do all we are dedicated to keeping our customers happy and bringing you the latest on bowfishing supplies. If you have a product you'd like us to review, don't hesitate to ask. We'll also be glad to answer any questions on any of the new products we'll be featuring soon. Be looking for the 2007 Muzzy Bowfishing Reel next month, the new AMS Retriever Pro Series and much much more coming soon at www.backwaterbowfishing.com!!

Thanks, Bryan