

ON TEST

TRONIXPRO NAGA MX BEACHCASTER

TSF heads to South Wales and meets Welsh international Joe Arch, to discuss the new Tronixpro Naga MX rod.

We met Joe on a sunny, warm day at one of his favourite fishing marks. The target was smoothhound and Joe had high expectations of a good session. While we were excited at the prospect of some good hound fishing, we were equally excited at the prospect of checking out the latest revelation from Tronixpro, the Naga MX Beachcaster.

The Naga MX sits alongside the company's other three top-end surfcasting rods – Medusa, Cobra and Viper – and while the past five years have seen the rise of the Continental-style rod cannot be denied, with more and more anglers shunning traditional rods in favour of their longer cousins, it's a surprise to find out that the Naga MX is not a three-piece Continental-style rod but a conventional 14ft, two-piece beachcaster, complete

with a reducer and capable of casting 5 to 8oz leads plus bait.

What's even more surprising is that the brains behind the rod is Joe Arch, an angler with an unrivalled match pedigree and advocate of the Continental-style surfcasting rod. His philosophy is simple: "When you look at the UK market, while a lot of Continental-style rods are sold, the traditional beachcaster is still the one most anglers use. When Tronixpro approached me with the idea of a signature rod, I wanted it to reflect this and help design something that was a bit different."

The first thing you notice about any Tronixpro rod is the colour. From green to orange to white, they're always different, bucking the trend that a blank must be black. The Naga MX is no exception, finished in a stylish deep red with red and silver whippings, with a light-red shrink



VITAL STATS

LENGTH: 14FT, TWO-PIECE PLUS 22IN REDUCER

CASTING WEIGHT: 5 TO 80Z

GUIDES: FUJI K ALCONITE WITH SILVER STAINLESS-STEEL LEGS AND SURROUND

REEL SEAT: TRONIXPRO COASTERS

ROD BAG: HARD-WEARING CLOTH ROD BAG

BUTT CAP: FUJI BUTT CAP FOR CASTING WITH YOUR REEL UP

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RRP: £329.99

wrap on the lower third of the butt section. A unique phosphorescent paint finish between the tip and third intermediate rings on the tip section aids bite detection at night and gives the rod a complete look.

Fuji K Alconite guides complete the fittings, their lean-forward frame design reducing the amount of tangles in certain conditions while also reducing friction to help you cast further. To secure the reel two Tronixpro coasters are included, along with a hardwearing rod bag with extra pouches for the reducer and coasters.

The colour scheme of the Naga MX was designed not only to look good, but also for practicality. The red blank and silver guides make the rod stand out in low light conditions. The phosphorescent paint aids bite detection at night and allows you to see what's happening without having to continually shine your headlight on the rod tip. A quick charge by your headlight or, better still, an LED light will keep the tip glowing for hours.

The Naga MX is designed as a fishing rod, not to be cast across a grassy knoll in the Cotswolds but to be out battling fish all around the coast of the British Isles. Consequently, the action allows for casting to maximum fishing distances while also retaining good bite detection. The rod has a slim diameter blank with maximum strength and minimal weight. The two equal sections are seven feet long, and while not the easiest to transport, the two-piece construction suits the blank action better for performance. To enable the angler to choose their casting style the rod can be fished either with the reel up

or down, with a 22in reducer for anglers who fish with the latter. For those casting 'up reel' a quality Fuji butt cap is part of the package.

Although the rod has been designed to fish baits at range it's also flexible. Even inexperienced users can cast effective distances, while still retaining bags of power for the experienced big chuckers to get baits flying.

The versatility of the rod means it's ideal for a multitude of different types of fishing — Joe describes it as "a British style rod that can do pretty much everything." The supple tip is ideal for fishing gentle, rolling beaches for smaller species, from whiting to flatfish. The beefy butt gives it the grunt to combat bigger fish such as smoothhounds or congers from snaggy rough-ground rock marks often found around South Wales or the northeast while coping with strong tides.

To get the most from the Naga MX it's best to fish with leads between 5 and 6oz; these will give the rod the balance to get the best distance, and are also by and large the most popular leads you will use in most fishing scenarios. For fishing in serious tides the rod is more than capable of casting leads up to 8oz, plus bait.

In a fishing scenario it becomes more obvious that this is a solid, all-round fishing rod. The mark we were at was a mixture of different grounds with fish resident at different distances and all sizes to give us a good overview of what the rod was capable of.

A gentle lob to around 70 yards was achieved with ease, without the resistance you often find from out and

out court casting rods. A half pendulum to give some momentum and distance had the lead firing out to good distances. A full pendulum demonstrated that the rod is a serious casting tool too. Launching into the cast you can feel the power begin to unfold and release as the rod catapults a 5½oz lead towards the horizon.

The forgiving action means you don't have to be a technical casting wizard to get it to sing, and anglers can concentrate on their fishing rather than their casting.

The bite detection is excellent. Fishing at both medium and longer distances it's clear to see the different movements on the rod tip. It's easy to distinguish between the gentle movement of the sea and tide as opposed to a bite from a smaller fish. Small pouting were plentiful during the opening stages of the session and in all instances the gentle rattle of a bite was easily identified, even at range.

When it comes to the bigger fish, for some, bite identification at range becomes less important but the rod's power in terms of subduing a running fish is more critical. This was demonstrated well by landing several smoothhounds to 15lb during the session. The mark had many obstacles that needed to be avoided, making playing bigger fish tricky. The Naga MX had plenty of power to subdue and eventually stop big fish in their tracks.

In conclusion, we love the rod's fishing ability and the way it casts. It's a quality, great to use fishing rod that has real pedigree. 