

The Serious Tackle Box

With Chris Gonzales

Serious Breakaway Deep Shot

The Serious Breakaway Deep Shot — it's my variation of the drop shot rig used in bass fishing. Differences in my version are: Upping the size of the mono and hook, plus how the hook is attached to the mono and how the drop shot effect is implemented.

"Breakaway" refers to the 40# mono loop connecting the bottom of the mono leader to the weight. The primary benefit is breaking when hung in structure, like the drop shot rig.

The standard knot used in drop shot rigs, the Palomar, is difficult to tie in heavy mono. My solution is to crimp it. Materials needed for one of these deep water big fish rigs are 10 ft. of 300# mono, double barrel crimps, Spro™ Power Swivels, 2/0 — 550#, a circle hook such as an Eagle Claw L20045R size 18/0 and a bottle of liquid Super Glue™.

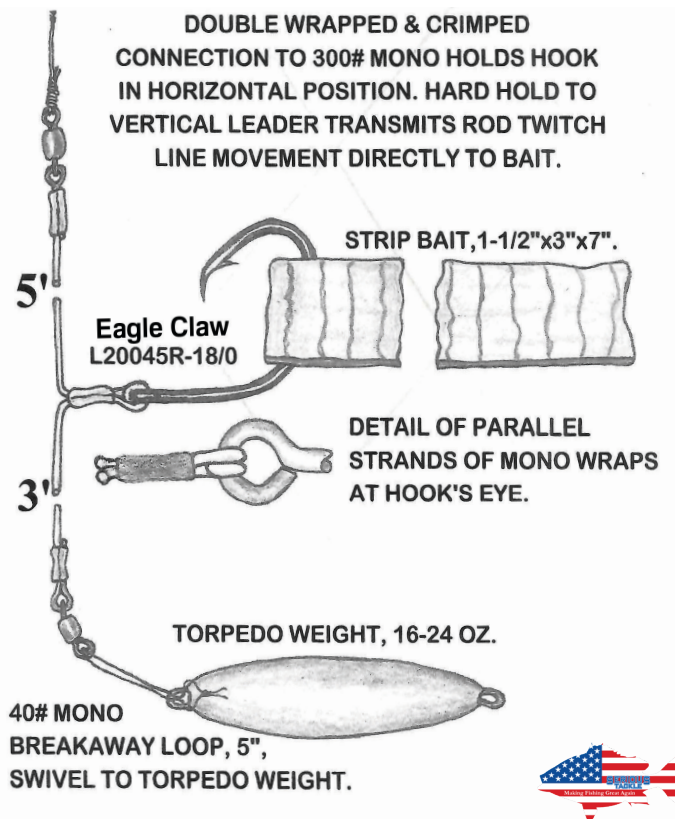
To build my crimped-at-the-hook version, start by tightly bending 180 degrees, the 10 ft. length of 300# mono at 6 ft. from what will be the top end. Thread your circle hook on the mono, going through the eye twice, stopping at the "bent" mono marker. The bend side of the hook must be toward the 6' end up. Now slide a double crimp onto both ends of the mono. Push the double barrel sleeve as close to the mono as you can, making sure that the wraps of the twice through the hook's eye aren't crossed.

For crimping...make about an 18" tied loop with a piece of heavy cord; loop the cord over the hook bend and then around your left shoe bottom. Loop both strands of mono around your left hand several times, place the crimp tool on the crimp; pull hard on the double mono to tighten the mono turns on the hook's eye. With a firm, but not hard enough pressure to start the crimp to close, push the sleeve a bit farther toward the hook eye. With the crimp as close to the hook's eye as you can get and with max pull tension on both strands of mono, crimp tight; starting at the end of the crimp away from the

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hook's eye. Finish the crimping, working your way toward the hook's eye. This tightening procedure "walks" the pressure toward the hook's eye, giving a tighter double loop.

The next steps are to form and crimp an eye on the top and bottom of the mono with one of the swivels in each one. The purpose of the swivel above the breakaway loop is to prevent breakage of the mono when multiple weights are used to get to the desired depth. They will spin without the swivel and the 40# mono will twist and break, stopping your drop.

At times the 300# mono isn't tight enough at the hook eye. The solution that holds the circle hook 90 degrees from the vertical section of mono is to carefully secure it in that position with liquid Super Glue™. To get this done, rotate your hook about 45 degrees out of position; carefully apply a small amount of the glue to the area of the wraps at the eye. Quickly rotate back, stopping at the desired 90 degrees from vertical. Wipe away excess glue.

That 5 ft. length of mono above the hook is for abrasion resistance. A hooked big grouper's first move is to try to reach a hole of some sort to get into. That 5 ft. of heavy mono will possibly save a cutoff.

Torpedo sinkers, whichever size you need to use, from 12 oz. to 24 oz., will less frequently become hung in bottom structure than other types. This vertical fishing brings up the importance of Spectra for your main line. Its high strength for its small diameter allows you to load more line on your reel and gets to deep bottom with less sinker weight. It's much less affected by the current that's trying to push it off vertical.

Spectra's main performance factor is its lack of stretch, which gives a greater feel for what's going on at your bait, plus increased hook-

ing power. This combination places immediate pressure on a big bottom fish such as a grouper—all important factors.

Rod tip twitches will almost make your bait come alive. With a strip bait particularly, those twitches plus possibly small fish eating on it, will send a scent cone down current that will call the big one in. Hang on for that deep rod bowing strike when your Serious Break-away Deep Shot rig has done its job.

If you have any questions, stop by Serious Tackle or email me at chris@serioustackle.com

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