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■ »bambou refendu« suisse ■ »canne bambù« svizzera ■ »channa sfessa« svizra ■  
■ »splitcane« switzerland ■

## 1<sup>st</sup> Swiss Bamboo Rodmakers Gathering 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> September 2006

Rodmaker gatherings have a long tradition in the United States. Discussions are always the best occasions for progresses. Europe has been rather undeveloped in this matter so far. Most often only small groups have met for experiences exchange.

But the American Rod maker scene has always been followed carefully by the Europeans. It's of great need to exchange experiences in bamboo rod building.

Due to that fact the idea came up to organize the first international meeting for bamboo rod makers in Switzerland. It was a great event and more than 60 rodmakers from all over Europe took part. They came from Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, Austria and Switzerland. The aim was to exchange with each other about their own experiences. The official speakers were all professional rod builders. But beside those interesting topics there was a lot of time for testing rods and practical work.

The meeting took part in Sarnen in central Switzerland. It was a perfect place to reach from all directions and surrounded by beautiful mountains.

Every meeting has to have his highlight. So it was of very great interest for all participants that one special taper has been produced by two Swiss rod builders (Philipp Sicher and Herbert Kiser) in different shapes as Quad, Pentagonal, Hexagonal, Hexagonal as spiral rod, Hexagonal with bamboo ferrule, Octagonal, 13-strip rod and modified 13-strip rod.

*Philipp Sicher and Herbert Kiser*



It was the first time to have this occasion to compare directly all the different building methods for the same taper. The differences were very significant and by the end everybody had its one preference.

*Robert Stroh (to the right) in discussion of the different rods with some friends*



*Bjarne Fries (left) is trying to analyse the differences in action between the different built rods*

The program was filled with specific topics. Rolf Baginski, professional rodmaker from Germany, was speaking about his new ideas of taper design. He showed different rods to explain that it's not necessary to built lighter tips for using lighter lines. Instead of that he changes the shape of blanks to reach the same action.



*Rolf Baginski explains his new ideas on taper design*



Ludwig Reim, an old German rodmaker, gave a lot of information about his patented "Solitip"-System. He was trying to overcome the weakness of bamboo rods by his specific developed combination of strip composing and laminating technique.

*Ludwig Reim (to the right) is explaining his ideas on rodbuilding*



The very specific topic of spiral rods was hold by the German Robert Stroh. He was demonstrating this old technique from the Americans Fred Divine and Letcher Lambuth very impressively. His main equipment therefore was a special constructed tool to twist and fix the glued blank.

*Robert Stroh showed how to twist a fresh glued blank*

Bjarne Fries, professional rodmaker from Denmark with his presentation of constructing bamboo ferrules (see previous article in Powerfibers) was of very great interest. He was demonstrating the advantage of this construction method by the smaller weight and stiffness. His elegant rods could be tested intensively afterwards.

*Bjarne Fries*



Beside all those specialities there were other common subjects. Robert Stroh from Germany showed a very easy method to straighten the blank after gluing.

Discussions were a very important part of the meeting. Everybody brought his self constructed rods for showing and testing.



Michael Mauri, a professional German caster and line tester was impressed by the performance of the various bamboo rods and gave a lot of important and helpful advices for improvements.



*Michael Mauri in discussion with Hans-Juergen Schlecht, Bjarne Fries and Rolf Baginski*

Side topics like the art painting by the German Thomas Kubitz were as well of great interest.



*Thomas Kubitz in action of drawing .....*

During the two days of the rodmakers gathering he was drawing a picture about bamboo rod building, which found a happy new owner by the end of the meeting.



*....watched by interested spectators*

Very important during the two days meeting was the accommodation. Beno Gisler, a professional Swiss cook and his friend Christian Schmid, both amateur rodmakers, created delicious dishes from breakfast buffets till gala dinner. They were well supported by all the organizers wives.



*Beno Gisler....after a hard working day*



*Preparation of one of the accommodation highlights...*

On Sunday morning another special topic was held by the Swiss Kurt Zumbrunn. His speciality, the 13-strip rod, had already brought up many critical discussions in advance. He showed in details this complicated building process. It was interesting afterwards to compare the casting action of his rods to conventional constructed rods.



*Discussion about the interesting concept of the 13-strip rod*



*Kurt Zumbrunn explains his 13-strip rod*

The final presentation was held again by Rolf Baginski. He showed a very simple technique to glue the strips together which makes it almost unnecessary to straighten the blank afterwards.



*A seldom picture: two professional rodmakers are working together...  
Bjarne Fries from Denmark is assisting the German Rodmaker Rolf Baginski.*

Between the official presentations there were private subjects of interest like the Morgan Handmill. Philipp Sicher explained his personal working method with it. He showed this rather unknown equipment in Europe and explained directly the large range of possibilities with this planning method.



*The Swiss amateur rodmaker Philipp Sicher showed his Morgan Hand Mill. People were impressed by the various possibilities in experimentations. Building Quads, Pentas or octagonal rods can be done without special and expensive planning forms.*

*Bjarne Fries and some Italian friends from the IBRA (Italian Bamboo Rodmakers Assotiation) are studying the details of the Morgan Mill. Bjarne was surprised how precise a bamboo ferrule can be made with this tool.*



The Italian Terenzio Zandri brought his full program of silk flylines to Sarnen. He explained in details how he's producing them.



*The Italian Terenzio Zandri (to the right) is explaining the manufacturing process of silk lines to his friend Walter Rumi. Because Terenzio is making his silk lines totally by hand, he is able to produce his lines in any size a flyfisherman wishes for his rod.*



Very generous were all the offers from different speakers and other participants for the final raffle. The bamboorod from Rolf Baginski, two flexi strippers from Bjarne Fries, the reel seat from Robert Stroh, two silk lines from Terenzio Zandri, a bamboo priest from Kurt Zumbrunn and a flyline from Michael Mauri found happy winners.

*Kurt Zumbrunn drawing one of the winners...*



The meeting was an experiment but came out as such a great event that even with rain on Sunday some participants could hardly give up testing rods. And by the end previous competitors were discussing intensively together.

*Rolf Baginski's endless power*

