



Splitcane Rodmakers Gathering in Sarnen - Switzerland by Christian Strixner

From the 15th to the 17th of September 2006 the first Swiss splitcane rodmaker's gathering was held on the banks of lake Sarnen in the town of the same name.



People from 5 different countries attended the event so you really could call it an international gathering. The participants made the journey there from the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, Germany and Switzerland. 60 enthusiasts in total displayed their great skills on working with bamboo. Among them were 5 professionals (Bjarne Fries, Robert Stroh, Hans-Jürgen Schlecht, Rolf Baginski and myself).

The main purpose of this event was to get to know other rodmakers personally and to exchange working techniques and valuable information on the subject of splitcane rodmaking. Several lectures have been held starting Saturday morning with Rolf Baginski on the subject of taper design. He suggested that an uneven distribution of masses properly and in a certain way carried out would result in surprisingly well performing fly rods.

Ludwig Reim (a retired professional) divulged his knowledge on working with nodeless splices made entirely from powerfibers. He hates node straightening - so do I.

After lunch my good friend Robert Stroh enlightened us with a very uncommon technique for building hex rods. It's not an entirely new technique but he rediscovered and fine tuned it. Hereby he twists a blank whilst gluing it together. In doing so he achieves a greater tension in the blank resulting in higher line speed in comparison to a standard blank.

After we all had twisted heads Bjarne Fries displayed his great knowledge on making bamboo ferrules.



Quite frankly speaking he must be called the inventor of the integrated bamboo ferrule. The reason for utilising bamboo ferrules for rodmaking is obvious. You save a tremendous amount of unnecessary weight in comparison to nickel silver ferrules. Bjarne's rods are exceptionally light weight and certainly not fast action rods but with the most delicate presentation qualities, provided one can cast these rods. It's a challenge by the way.



The last lecture of the day was held by Robert Stroh again on behalf of Gerd-Peter Wieditz who unfortunately could not attend the gathering because of private reasons. Straightening a freshly glued blank can be a nuisance from time to time but Gerd-Peter found a way to back the car out of the garage.



In between the lectures there was plenty of time to test cast so many rods on the freshly cut lawn of a soccer field that it would have taken a whole week to compare all masterpieces provided by the exhibitors. And one could admire some excellent work of the hobbyists as well.



The Italian friends (Italian bamboo rodmakers association IBRA) were accompanied by Terenzio Zandri who is producing very nice silk lines. They are a bit pricy compared to conventional lines but with a little care they perform well for many years. Not the right thing for Paul of course!!!

Philipp Sicher provided all information on his Morgan Hand Mill and all the options you have with this device. You can make quadrates, pentas, octas and of course hex rods with it. A very versatile tool!



In the evening we enjoyed an excellent dinner with Italian wine and other fine spirits. The glasses were never empty. The next day I've been nuts about Tina's aspirin stocks. Sunday morning started with a hearty breakfast as a foundation for a lecture to come about a hot potato.

Kurt Zumbrunn is a Swiss hobbyist rodmaker. He recently invented a canerod with a triangular cross section consisting of 13 splices. He gave us an introduction on how to pile up so many splices in the right order for glueing. We all had the opportunity to cast such a rod. And as we all know the feeling, transmitted to the caster is a very personal thing. There is quite a heated debate going on between a few rodmakers whether this kind of rod profile makes sense or not. To my mind, irrespective the results, it's always a good thing when somebody thinks outside the box.



The last topic on this day catching our attention was an easy and very cheap way of binding rods. No

garrison binder, no four string binder, no costly device anymore! Rolf Baginski showed us a simple way of binding rods which nothing more than a drilling machine a small plastic pipe and a string. Applause!!!

After lunch the inescapable farewell approached. Many hands have been shaken. New friendships were formed. Can it get any better?

So who takes all the credit for this wonderful weekend?

There is a Swiss group of enthusiasts who were willing to take all the effort to provide us with such a great hospitality. They organized not only the accommodation. We sat on nicely decorated tables for breakfast lunch and dinner and enjoyed superb food. They've been looking after us all the time. We felt like at home - or even better!

My great thanks go namely to Philipp Sicher, Jaroslav Vecko, Herbi Kiser, Beno Gisler, Christian Schmid und Ottavio Bisaz and all the others, who have been so helpful.



Christian Strixner
Oct '06

[Return](#) to whence you came
[Return](#) to home page



www.sexyloops.com
Copyright © 1998-2008