

# The Golden Stonefly Newsletter Early Fall Part 1



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from Alan Reyes

**A Special Thank You to Chris Prelaz for the Awesome Page Design**

**San Juan Rodworks Enters the European Nymphing Market with The New Conejos Series:**



On our recent fishing trip to the San Juan River tailwater below Navajo Dam located in the Navajo State Park, New Mexico, I had the pleasure of fishing half a day with the Owner of San Juan Rodworks, Gary Davis. Gary met My Compadres and I the second day that we were there and with him, he brought his new Conejos series of European Nymphing rods to try on this legendary fishery. The series consists of 2 rods, a 10' 2 weight and a 10' 3 weight. Well needless to say, I couldn't wait to give them a try but for expediency's sake we chose one rod to use and picked the 10' 2 weight. It would be the perfect rod for fishing the Braids which is a system of small and large islands upstream of the Texas Hole. The Braids divide the main channel with the rest of the river creating a number of small streams and creeks. The Braids will be home for the big guys all the way down to the little guys and some runs hold a large number of trout. We picked such a run to give the rod a try. After 20 fish of different sizes, we stopped counting.



## Gary Davis:

As I said previously, a few weeks ago, I had the honor and pleasure of meeting and fishing the entire morning with Gary Davis, (pictured) the owner of San Juan Rodworks on the company's name's sake, the San Juan River in Navajo State Park. I have had conversations with Gary Via email but never in person, and when you fish with someone, you find out a lot more about that person than you do in a formal business environment. He is a customer first businessman. Also, he is a man of many passions and talents. When you go onto the company's website, you will see a reflection of him and how he does business and how his company takes care of its customers.

## The Conejos Series:

As with all San Juan Rodworks rods the fit and finish of the Conejos rods was outstanding. Starting at the up-locking reel seat which has gunmetal anodized machined aluminum hardware and a beautiful burl wood spacer along with a AAA nicely finished stacked cork grip, that gives the rod a classic look. The blank is a non-glare mat black finish with black wraps and gold highlights. The gunmetal anodized stripping guides and light wire single foot guides and tiptop also added to the stealth appearance of the rods. The white alignment dots that ensure quick assembly were perfectly matched on either rod. Oh, and every rod comes with two tips.

## The Test Rods:

As I said before in another article, the only way that you can really critique a euro nymphing rod is to go out and fish the darn thing.

The San Juan Rodworks Conejos 10' 2 weight European Nymphing Rod matched with a SAGE ESN Euro Nymphing reel with a one ounce weight, The new RIO Tactical Euro Nymph fly line with integrated leader and RIO 2x Sighter Material (fluorescent Pink and Yellow) and approximately four and a half feet of RIO Fluoroflex Strong 6x tippet and an 8" tag placed approximately 18" above the point fly. The flies were a #14 red jig style San Juan Worm with a size 3.2 mm gold tungsten bead on point and a #24 Top Secret Midge off the tag. This was the winning combination for the whole day. The 2 weight is a light, sensitive rod with a supple tip allowing great castability. Casts are very accurate and recovery is really good. The upper part of the rod protects light tippet and the lower part of the rod easily handles a larger fish as I found out in the late afternoon. The 2 weight was a party with the little guys and a roller coaster ride with a big fish. Now, I didn't want to base the field test on one rod, and fishing them both, I found that these two rods have two distinct rolls that do cross over each other as far as utility. The 2 weight will be your rod for small to medium creeks, streams and rivers, fishing small to medium size nymphs are its forte but it can handle a rather heavy stonefly nymph. A blast with small fish but will fight and land an 18" bruiser as well. The 3 weight is basically your medium to large river rod. Still fun with the little guys but this rod will land any fish in the river. When you look at the two rods side by side, you can't mistake one from the other. The 3 weight has a beefier butt section than the 2 weight and that changes the taper up the rod all the way to the tip. However, you don't lose anything in feel or casting performance. The 3 weight is just as sensitive as the 2 weight and can throw a surprising list of assorted weights and sizes of flies from light weight rigs to heavy stonefly nymphs and jig streamers. When I fished this rod, I used the same tackle as I previously fished with the 2 weight, except I went with a foot and a half longer on the tippet section of the leader and fished a #14 Blowtorch with a 3.2 mm slotted copper tungsten bead for the point fly and a #22 Ju Ju Bee off the 8" tag. All fish that day were caught on the Blowtorch.

If you are thinking about getting into European Nymphing these rods are a great way to go. Their affordability and performance are a standout in the market. If you are a seasoned High Sticker and need a backup Euro Rod, these rods are a great way to go as well. It's just one of those "You can't go wrong" things.

Suitable reels for these rods would be the Redington TILT Euro Nymphing Reel, the New Orvis Hydros II Euro, and the New Waterworks/Lamson GURU S HD -5+.

The San Juan Rodworks Conejos 10' 2 and 3 weight European Nymphing Rods receive my 5 Star gold seal of approval. Once again while I was fishing these rods, I had to remind myself that I was fishing a \$225.00 fly rod because they fish better than or equal too rods costing \$100 to \$300 dollars more. They were a pleasure to fish, balance was right on, I didn't feel any fatigue after fishing a full day with either rod, and this Company's got your back as far as all around customer service. Well done, Gary!!!

P.S. I usually don't mention this when I do write ups on Euro Nymphing Rods, but both of these rods cast a weight forward or double taper 3 weight dry fly line with ease and accuracy. Lines I liked were a RIO Gold WF3 F, a Scientific Angler Trout taper WF3 F, Scientific Angler Trout DT3 F Double Taper.



**Until next time, Tight Lines**

**Alan Reyes**