

# Some Thoughts On New Fly Lines

by  
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Recently two fly lines were introduced that promised some special performance. Rio introduced the “Gold” series and Scientific Anglers introduced the Sharkskin. While the Rio line is sold at the normal price of about \$65 the SA line is listed at about \$100. They are both a WF-F style fly line. I made a very subjective evaluation of these two lines, in 5 wt. I was really looking for a WOW but expecting only marginal changes. I consider myself a good fly caster but by no means an “expert”. Depending on your casting abilities you may have a different set of conclusions. Remember, these are both very good fly lines.

My results can be summarized as follows:

1. Both lines were excellent and performed about the same in all the normal casts.
2. There was a WOW in both lines in their reduced friction through the guides. This made hauling easier and I got perhaps 15% more casting distance with each. If you are looking to get more distance in your casting you might first look at your general casting abilities and do some practice with a good coach.
3. The Sharkskin produces a sound when moving through the guides like my old silk lines. Some may like this and some may find it a pain. This line has a rough feel that might take a little getting used to. This is part of the new SA technology. I felt I was casting a heavier line. A delicate presentation, therefore, might be a problem for some. It also seemed to be more easily stretched. This might be an advantage with lighter weight lines but a disadvantage for heavier lines where a strip-set is often used to set the hook on larger fish. It's available in 3 – 8 weight and the 5 wt was the only line available to me. I would expect the heavier line, 7 & 8 wt's, to have reduced stretching. The Gold is available in 3 – 9 wts.
4. The Sharkskin seemed to “tangle” more easily when I was distance casting and had a pile of line laying at my feet. In my advancing years I am not as good at “untangling” line and this Sharkskin with its unique rough surface took some time to get these tangles out. This bothered me some as I often get a lot of line out and have more tangles than I like to admit. I sure don't need more trouble getting out tangles while the fishing is good.
5. Both the Rio Gold and Sharkskin are reported to be easier to keep clean. If this proves true under our fishing conditions that will be a major advantage.

These were my observations and yours could be quite different. It's always fun to evaluate new equipment and see if it fits into your style of fishing. For me, I decided to get a Rio Gold in a WF-7-F. Watch out salmon and steelhead!