The loop

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THE LOOP

The Federation of Fly Fishers Journal for
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Substance and Style - Revisited

Al Kyte 2010

I first saw the terms, *substance* and *style*, being applied to fly casting when helping Mel Krieger write his excellent FFF teaching pamphlet, *Observations on Teaching Flycasting*. Although this pamphlet proved valuable in certification seminars, I never thought the examples given there provided a well-conceived distinction between what is substance and what is style. Yet, the importance of having a clear distinction is evident every time you see an instructor teach his or her style as if it were non-negotiable substance or a caster being evaluated and penalized on style elements when taking a certification test. Although these problems still occur, I believe we are making progress—gaining sensitivity to, and even appreciation for, the use of different styles. I would go so far as to say that this is becoming a strength of our program. Yet, we still need a better way of differentiating *substance* from *style*.

In the bio-mechanics research that Professor Gary Moran and I did during the 1980s and l990s, we included an analysis of which dimensions of an overhead cast changed and which tended to remain the same across groups of skilled fly casters. I had previously done similar analyses of several other sport movements to separate "essential physics" from "acceptable variations." I thought this might be a promising way of looking at substance and style and introduced some of this information in our article, *Fly Casting: Substance and Style* (in the March/April 2000 issue of American Angler).

We found that what changed the least during a successful overhead cast was the relatively straight path of rod tip and unrolling fly line. Everything else—stance, grip, arm and body movements, rod angle, rod bend, speed, stroke length—could be altered to help achieve this straight path. Yet, although this article on *Substance* and *Style* reinforced the importance of an emphasis on straight-path movements and provided a first attempt to describe styles, it may not have provided the most helpful way for instructors to differentiate *substance* from *style*. If not, what might be a better way?

First, we know that there are a number of dimensions in which we make *choices* in how to make a cast. The various choices you and I make come together to identify our own unique *styles* of casting. It would follow that the dimensions of the cast on which we make a choice might best constitute our *substance*. In short, *what* we do during a cast is substance and *how* we do it is style. This type of break down would look like this:

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Substance Dimension	Style Choice (examples)
Stance	Open, Squared, Closed
Grip	Thumb on top, Extended Finger, V-Grip, Other
Casting Arm Movement	Low-elbow, Elbow forward, Elbow-up-to-side, (or other wording)
Body Movement	Body lean, Weight shift, Shoulder and hip rotation, knee straightening, or none.
Rod Bend	Minimal tip-bending, deep full-rod bend, or something in between
Stroke Length	Minimal hand movement of a few inches forward to extreme movement of six feet or more
Rod Rotation Angle (arc)	From 30 to almost 180 degrees
Hand Speed	From slow to very fast movement
Upward/Downward Tilt	Angle of aim from below horizontal to well above horizontal
Side tilt	Rod angle from vertical down to horizontal

I think this type of break down makes it easy for an instructor to get a comprehensive picture of someone's casting style. If, for example, you had a checklist of such *Substance Dimensions*, you could watch a few casts and, as you do, write comments alongside each dimension to indicate the *Style Choices* you see being made. The more you do this, the more you would sharpen your ability to discern even subtle differences between casters.

When there are so many elements or dimensions that make up a caster's style, how can you describe that style in the fewest words? My approach is to initially refer to the type of arm movement I see. This is my basic style category because fly casting is a type of throwing movement and the part of our body that moves the most is our casting arm. I have observed three rather distinctive ways in which successful casters move the casting arm and described them in my recent book, The Orvis Guide to Better Fly Casting.

The beauty of "style" is that an open-minded teacher can continue learning by trying to imitate the combination of style elements that someone new to the scene uses to make a great cast. The more we can understand why different styles or movement combinations are effective, the better position we are in to help that next student who exhibits unusual movement tendencies. Hopefully we have at least learned not to look at style choices as "right or wrong" but as having "advantages and disadvantages."

Al Kyte is a former member of the Board of Governors. His original article is a classic learning tool. Also check out his new book, *The Orvis Guide to Better Fly Casting.*

Comfort zone

by Mike Heritage

We all have a comfort zone, some like to try and go outside it; some, like me, are happy to let it grow organically. This was my way of preparing for my CCI and it will be my way of preparing for my MCI. I do have, what some may see, as a major disadvantage. I am a poet not an engineer. Not for me the studying of graphs showing vectors and angles, nor anything resembling comprehension when looking at any mathmatical formulae. Nope, I have enough trouble with the written word let alone when words are replaced by numbers and symbols.

I also have a problem that whenever I take a lesson from another instructor, I often just don't get it. This used to worry me. I will start to feel uncomfortable that my lack of immediate improvement will start to frustrate who ever was giving me the lesson. I now make a point of telling the instructor that this is going to happen and not to worry about it. During the lesson I watch, look, listen and ask questions. Luckily I retain most of the information so that when I get home, I can spend many a happy hour trying to get my hand and arm to do what my brain is telling it to do.

OK, so now you understand I am a slow learner and your worst nightmare as a student. Tough, that's what you signed up for. It's all part of the joy and the frustration of being a fly casting instructor.

My personal comfort zone grew rapidly as I studied for my CCI. The process of working out the explanations for each cast and then refining them to as few words as possible was one of the hardest things I have done but I eventually found it one of the most rewarding processes I went through. All of the students I have taken since I passed the CCI should be grateful for that process. I am far less wordy and much less full of useless information than I was with the poor people I used as guinea pigs prior to my test. Not to worry, I didn't charge any of them and one or two still talk to me.

I did create one major problem for myself by deciding I didn't want all and sundry knowing I was going to take the test. This meant I couldn't use the one huge resource that was open to me, the Sexyloops Board. A pity, because Paul Arden had been the first to suggest I try for the CCI test. I did confide in a few people, including Paul, and all were very free with advice and suggestions and gave me detailed answers to any questions I asked them. Well no, that's not exactly right. I don't remember any of them directly answering any of my questions. Without exception they just asked me a question or questions that made me think about my original question in a different way and discover the answer for myself.

When I joined the FFF, one item I bought as part of my study material was Mel Krieger's Fly Casting Faults and Fixes. That DVD is worth it's weight in gold. I still watch it occassionally and always find something useful, so, thanks Mel, I, and many others, owe you one.

Now to the casting. I had a problem which many may find a bit odd. I had spent the previous five or six years single-mindedly doing my best to blast a five weight line to the horizon (again, Paul's fault) and getting reasonably successful at it. Now, imagine my astonishment as I set up the CCI casting test for the first time. How can I describe it? Imagine you have been driving on a motorway for several hours at eighty miles an hour and you suddenly have to reduce your speed to twenty five. It feels so slow you think you could just step out of

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the car and walk faster. I set out the hoops at 20', 30' and 45', walked back to the end of the tape, turned around to face the targets and stood there totally stunned. Heck, I'm sure I could throw a size 14 Greenwells that far, without a rod. I double-checked my measurements and re-read the performance test I had printed off, shrugged my shoulders, and got on with it. I found several challenges though. The 20' target wasn't easy, I couldn't throw a tailing loop on command and, laughingly, the 75' distance cast proved a stupidly difficult cast when coupled with the need to make it look easy.

I found the rod and line combination I liked and stopped working on distance while I retrained my brain and muscles for this shorter stuff (the twiddley stuff, as my wife likes to call it) and to my surprise I really started to enjoy the challenges that the test threw up, so much so that I now practice presentation casts far more than I practice distance.

I had decided to take my test at the annual Sexloops gathering, which that year was at Dunkeld in Scotland. FFF testing is usually part of the weekend. We were lucky to have beautiful weather, who would expect to get sunburned, in Scotland, in the spring. The test was given by Lasse Karlsson, BOG, on the banks of the river Tay. There were three of us and I volunteered to go last, the wait as the others took their test was endless but we had set up a practice area away from the testing area and whiled away the time going over the test until we were called for our turn. No1 came back, huge smile, passed. No2 came back, huge smile, passed. Hm, no pressure then. I have to say that after the first few minutes I virtually forgot I was being tested and thoroughly enjoyed myself. Lasse wasn't so lucky though, he had to put up with me leaping up and punching the air while shouting YES every time he indicated I had passed that element. He did ask me to stop doing it and I think I managed it once. Sorry Lasse. The test flew by, I am sure it only took ten minutes, and I had passed.

So what did passing my CCI do for me? The one single most important thing it did for me was to hugely boost my confidence in my ability to instruct. Priceless.

Mike Heritage has been an FFF CI for two years. He is on the committee of the British Fly Casting Club (BFCC) and has held both the five and seven weight distance records. One was taken from him by Paul Arden and the other by 74 year old Mike Marshall (chairman of the BFCC) which says something, but he's not sure what.

ADAPTIVE FLY CASTING INSTRUCTION - TECHNIQUES FOR PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS

A Practical Approach tO Common Ailments That Limit Fly Casting

Part Three - Elbow Problems

By Dr. Gary Eaton, MCI

C. J. rehabilitated houses as a form of sweat equity income. His dominant, right arm began to throb on the outside of the elbow when he pulled away construction elements in a run-down structure. Simple enough, he switched hands and pulled across his body instead of up-and-away. Soon he noticed pain on the *inside* of his left elbow.

Being a rugged guy, too busy for doctor visits, he started eating double doses of over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication. That brought on significant heartburn, so he added double doses of over-the-counter acid controllers. His elbow pains abated for less than a week but rose to high levels with even simple things like twisting a screw-driver, squeezing pliers, or lifting a four-liter paint can. While re-supplying his medications, he noticed the drug-store had a strap for the elbow that fit just down on the forearm. He bought one for each side as well as a pair of neoprene elbow sleeves.

The combination of pills and supports let him work for about two hours before utter misery incapacitated him for even the simplest activities of daily living. He eventually needed help pulling his sweatshirt off over his head. Disrupted sleep arose as a consequence of even light touch irritating the sensitive outer aspect of his dominant elbow. The spiral of ineffective treatments and continuation of aggravating activities brought him to me. We knew each other from casting classes we taught together once a year with a local club.

Simple orthopedic tests confirmed *tennis elbow* on the dominant side and corollary *golfer's elbow* on the other. Both appeared severe. A tell-tale compression line from the elbow strap left evidence of the pressure from tightening the appliance for more effect. Suspicion of potential damage and fifth finger numbness led to electrical testing of nerves in the forearm. Unfortunately, the strap resulted in ulnar nerve compression to complicate C.J.'s injuries.

Looking at the floor he lamented, "I should have come to see you sooner."

"When did this first appear?" I inquired.

"Oh, I've been trying to fix this myself all winter. I am embarrassed because this mirrors what we tell casting students about not letting a problem persist before getting expert help." C.J. mused. "I read some on-line garbage in fishing forums about what to do with *tennis elbow*. See where *that* put me?"

"Yeah, the fact that somebody declares themselves an expert can really end-up hurting people. Some of the bloggers have no concept of the foolishness they perpetuate. Just like untrained casting instructors, the potential for harm escapes them because *they don't know what they don't know*." I said.

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DISCLAIMER *AND CAUTION* – *Casting instructors should not treat any health condition nor give any medical advice. Problems present at rest or worsened by casting that do not respond to adaptations suggested should be referred for medical clearance before continuing any casting program. These articles intend to provide neither medical advice nor treatment.*

A FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPT – AS CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS SERVING OUR STUDENTS, WE MUST CHANGE PAINFUL MOVEMENTS SUBSTITUTING ALTERNATIVE PAINLESS MOVEMENTS TO DELIVER A FLY. FEWER TWISTS, CAREFUL POSITIONING, ADAPTIVE GEAR, LESS FORCE, SLOWER SPEED; ALL *MIGHT* REDUCE POTENTIAL FOR IRRITATION. A PRIMARY RULE IS, *"If it hurts, stop doing it that way!"*

Recommendations reflect concepts of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation applied to movements of straight-line fly casting with a single-handed rod. Consider these simple adaptations and results.

ELBOW PROBLEMS *TENNIS ELBOW AND GOLFER'S ELBOW*

TENNIS ELBOW, also known as *lateral epicondylitis,* presents as pain on the outside, or lateral, aspect of the affected elbow. Early in the course this appears as elbow pain increased with movements that involve gripping and flexing or extending the wrist. This relates to the anchor point of wrist extensor tendons on the lateral *epicondyle* of the arm bone just above the elbow.

GOLFER'S ELBOW, also called *medial epicondylitis,* presents as pain on the inside, or medial, aspect of the elbow where wrist flexor tendons attach. Both extreme stretching of these attachments with extreme wrist extension and powerful wrist flexion torques serve as primary stressors.
As in the case-study that begins this article, tenderness, spreading pain, and interference with routine activity may progress to significant disability. Certain fly rod movements duplicate these and may be reduced with the following adaptations ***only after complete medical treatment AND symptoms completely subside.***

AVOID "V" GRIP – "V" grip places the wrist in slight extension that stresses both sets of tendons attached to the epicondyles. The more neutral thumb-on-top grip, while perhaps less powerful, provides mild protection to sufferers of epicondylitis. Offer a thumb-on-top grip, also called the "key" grip.

AVOID TWIST OR SIDE-SWING OF THE ROD – Often casual casters exaggerate an unnecessary rotational component of the rod tip path, presumably to enhance sense of line load. Educated casters may use rotational *twists* executing various curve casts. These motions definitely generate more stress on the structures causing epicondylitis. One-handed Spey maneuvers result in similar perturbations.

ADOPT AN ELBOW FORWARD STYLE – With the elbow forward the opportunity to twist the reel out on the back cast and inward on the front cast will more likely be noticed and also inclination to get sloppy is reduced. Keeping the reel's line feed opening aimed at the target throughout both forward and back casts serves to impede tendency to twist with the elbow forward. Sidearm tilted casting angles inherently put the epicondylitis sufferer at considerable risk as do elbow to-the-side styles.

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SMALLER REEL PROFILE – As we minimize torsional forces and grip force, the torque offered by larger reel *diameters* contributes momentum to be overcome when tracking becomes imperfect. Interestingly, large arbor reels compensate with spool width and often provide a decreased diameter when we opt for reels that are compact for the line-weight outfit being cast.

LARGER HANDLE CIRCUMFERENCE – Increasing handle *circumference* by 50%, or more, decreases required force to grip. Larger hands often benefit from larger circumference increases. Applying tennis racket handle products, Wilson™ Cushion Pro over-wrapped with Unique brand Tourna-Grip™, increases circumference while preserving the non-slip feel of cork.

MODERATELY FAST ROD ACTION OF LIGHTER SWING WEIGHT – Lighter outfits inherently reduce forces on injured tissues. Very stiff rods may lead undisciplined casters to abrupt rotational movement that irritates epicondylitis. Extremely slow action rods require much longer duration of per-cast

This demands longer rod arc to accomplish the same cast compared to rods with less flex. Medium to moderately-fast action rods provide benefits including:

- Efficient stroke length
- Shorter duration of high force grip
- Overall easier casting
- Easier tracking with less *twist* of the reel
- Improved tip control
- Easier line pick-up off the water

Proper application of a force with smooth, constant tip acceleration, along a precise straight-line path, reduces effort and improves casting efficiency. These advantages are not enjoyed with ultra flexible rods. The improved capacity to cast in wind enhances confidence of the student.

USE NON-DOMINANT SIDE – Few situations make one appreciate capacity to cast with either arm like a physical limitation. In addition to providing rest to the affected limb, one enhances the versatility for presenting a fly across many settings. More detailed recommendations for developing non-dominant side casting skills may be found in the previous article on adapting to arthritis.

Summary of recommendations for TENNIS ELBOW AND GOLFER'S ELBOW in fly casting students –

SMALLER REEL PROFILE
NO TWIST OR SIDE-SWING
LARGER HANDLE CIRCUMFERENCE
MODERATELY FAST ROD ACTION
USE ELBOW FORWARD STYLE
AVOID "V" GRIP
LIGHTER OUTFIT
NON-DOMINANT SIDE CASTING

Clinical experience suggests that once these conditions cause pain, the **effective treatment usually involves more invasive intervention** such as injections of a cortisone-like compound. Therapeutic ultrasound may provide intermediate benefit for those completely intolerant of injection therapy. Oral medications may ameliorate extremely mild cases, provided adequate immobilization coincides. The structures irritated (entheses) suffer notoriously sketchy blood supply while symptomatic, so **oral medication usually fails** as a treatment. Note that the correct term for symptoms is NOT *tendonitis* - the tendon carries relatively few pain receptors. Resting until symptoms *completely* abate remains critical to recovery.

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Stretching often aggravates epicondylitis, especially when not fully rehabilitated. The anatomical problem is not due to inadequate flexibility, so stretching may be unwise for epicondylitis. Likewise, weakness plays no role in the biomechanics of tennis elbow or golfer's elbow. **Weight training may aggravate the original site** when biomechanical errors remain unaddressed. Indeed, these two entities arise just as frequently in heavily-muscled individuals as in those with average arm mass.

Properly treated, **repeat episodes indicate failure to adapt activities** so as to limit the circumstances that caused the original injury. **The false precept that epicondylitis invariably recurs may represent inadequate rehabilitation care** more than real physiologic propensity.
Avoid continuing activity without medical clearance when symptoms appear at rest or early in the casting lesson.

Casting the "Mendoza Line"

by Joe Mahler and Dusty Sprague

In baseball, a batting average of .200 is what is known as the "Mendoza Line" and is generally regarded to be the demarcation of acceptable and unacceptable hitting. There is some controversy as to whether it was named after Minnie Mendoza, or Mario Mendoza-both major league infielders, both unremarkable hitters. For our purposes the term will describe the threshold of casting skills needed to reasonably expect success in a saltwater fly fishing situation. In our experience, most angling visitors feel more prepared than they actually are. Success on the trout stream or lake is great, but for salt water fly fishing, additional skills are needed. Here is what we consider to be the Salt water caster's Mendoza Line and some practice tips to boost your average.

Distance. Being able to cast a longer line improves your opportunities. While unloading a fly line to 100 feet is not necessary, a solid and CONTROLLED cast of 60 feet will suffice in most situations, if it can be delivered with speed, accuracy and in a breeze. While it may be true that most fish are caught at less than 60 feet, a stiff headwind can quickly reduce the distance you can cast. And, the farther you can cast with control, accuracy and speed, the more quickly and easily you can execute a shorter cast. Practice by throwing your tightest loops at a distance of 40 ft, and then make the loops go faster. As you increase hand speed and rod bend you'll need to increase stroke length and rod arc to match the bend in the rod to keep the rod tip moving in a straight path to keep the loops tight. Add 5 feet, get the loops tight again and make them go faster. Keep adding 5 feet until you reach a plateau - you lose control - the loops fall apart. Reduce the length of line a few feet and work to gain control again. Fine tuning the mechanics of the cast will allow you to reach out gaining more distance with good loops, under control. It does no good to cast long distances if the line does not go where it is intended - practice using a target. And, use a measuring tape to know how far you are actually casting – it's easy to misjudge casting distances.

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False Casting and Shooting line. Many fresh water fly fishermen tend to false cast a lot, measuring the cast and fine tuning the loop to achieve tea-cup accuracy for relatively stationary fish. Often there is no time limit to the presentation. Excessive false casting in the salt can result in lost opportunities. Many species in the salt are on the move and opportunities to present the fly are brief. One of the most useful skills is to very quickly turn a short line into a long line. Practice by picking up 30 feet of line and with one back cast, present the fly at 50 feet. You'll need to shoot line in both directions. Remember to first STOP the rod, and then SHOOT.

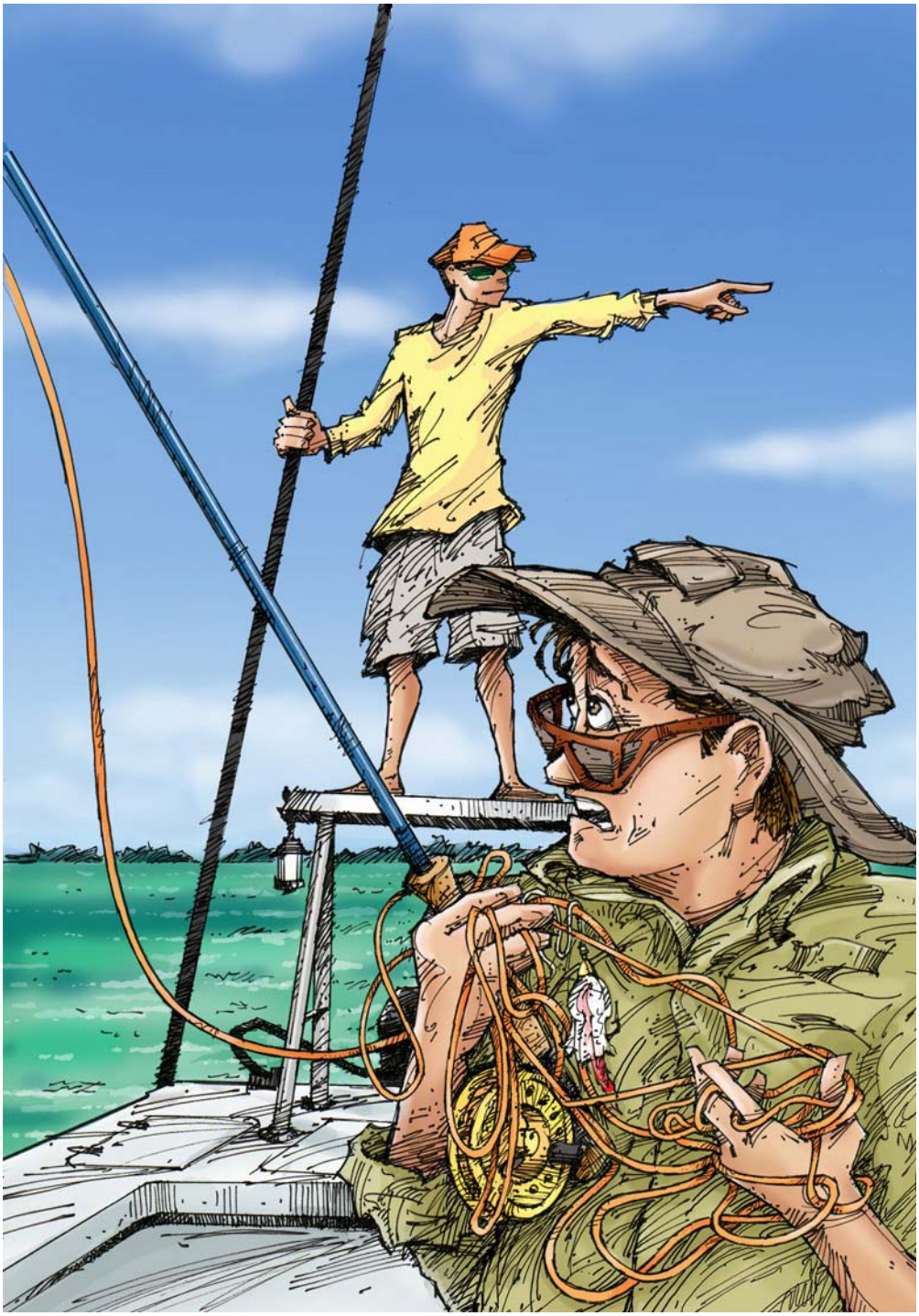

Illustration copyright Joe Mahler 2009

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Double haul. If you don't know how to haul – learn. Effective hauling adds line speed and can dramatically increase casting distance. For many anglers, when casting 50 feet or longer even with little wind the rod hand struggles to make the cast - just not enough strength and control. Hauling can help by reducing the work of the rod hand by shifting some effort to the line hand. We consider it essential for distance casting, penetrating wind and simply making casting more balanced and comfortable even at moderate ranges. However, there is an important point to remember - one must be able to control the size of the casting loop before a haul will significantly help. Making a big loop go faster with a haul is not very productive. Get your loops under control then add the haul. Speed cast. Good opportunities at fish - shot windows - can last mere seconds. You need to get the fly in the water before the fish detects your presence or the fish is out of range, or the retrieve angle changes to the point the retrieve 'attacks' the fish with the fly. If you can make a controlled cast to 60 feet, with three or fewer false casts, in less than five seconds, you'll be in good shape. Practice by stripping 65 feet of line off the reel and restacking the line to get the front of the line on the top of the pile. Extend 30 ft of fly line out the rod tip. With that 30 feet of line out the rod tip, let approximately 15 feet hang in a large loop from the rod tip. Coil the remaining line and hold with the index finger and thumb of the rod hand, trapped against the cork. Hold the fly in the line hand with hook point forward. Begin by dropping all the coiled line from the rod hand, continuing to hold the main line with the rod hand. Roll cast to position the line on the water in front of you, letting the roll cast pull the fly from your line hand. Make a long back cast stroke, hauling, then shooting line opposite your target area. False cast, haul and shoot line. Use no more than three false casts - two is even better. Practice using a target.

Dealing with Wind. Almost always an issue, the wind can turn a great day of fishing into complete frustration, unless you are prepared to effectively deal with it. For wind coming into your casting arm, practice casting side-arm with the rod traveling horizontally, parallel to the water - increase your tempo and line speed to avoid the fly and leader hitting the water. If the wind is strong into your casting side practice casting with the rod tip angled over your opposite, down-wind shoulder. Or, turn to face away from your target and present the fly on your back cast. Learning to present the fly on your back cast, casting off your line-hand shoulder or casting with your non-dominate hand will allow you to fish to both sides of a skiff while avoiding having to cast 'through the boat' which can be dangerous to boat mates and the guide. Practice these techniques well before you get on the water and encounter the wind. For a wind at your back, keep the back cast short and use the wind to shoot more on the forward cast. Keep your back cast low and your forward cast higher. For a head wind, aim the cast lower in front and slightly higher in back and extra line speed. Ideally, the line will unroll just above the surface and not be blown back. Practice in all wind directions.

Controlling Slack. If you are not casting, the rod tip should be in the water or very near the surface to help keep a straight path between the fly and the anchor point of the line pinched against the cork. Strike detection is greatly aided by keeping slack out of the system.

Setting the hook. A standard trout hook-set, by lifting the rod, provides enough force to set a small, thin-wired hook in the soft mouth of a cold-water trout. In saltwater hooks are larger and made with thicker wire and some fish have tough mouths. It's best to use a strip-strike on saltwater species. The strip-strike provides two important advantages – first, by adequately setting the thicker- wired hooks in tough mouths and secondly, if the fish is missed on the initial hook set, the fly is still in the water in front of the fish and you may get a second opportunity. Also, in trout fishing, especially dry fly fishing, we try to set the hook the instant we see the fish take the fly, otherwise he could spit the fly quickly. In saltwater fishing sometimes the fish misses the fly on his first attempt. It's best to wait to feel the fish rather than setting the hook based on visual clues. With the rod pointed directly down the line to the fly, when you feel the fish take the fly, very quickly strip strike - pulling line

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back with the line hand, keeping the rod pointed directly at the fish. If there is any significant angle between the line and the rod shaft, the rod tip will bend, absorbing the strike. Keep the rod and line in-line. Practice by having someone stand on your line or hold the leader with a gloved hand as you strip line in simulating a retrieve. When you feel the line come tight, strip strike and only when you are certain the set is solid, use the rod to fight the fish.

Be Quiet, Observant, and Ready. Shallow water fish are nervous and alert to anything that is out of the ordinary. You'll do best if you are stealthy - keeping quiet, low and avoiding unnecessary movements. Casting low to the water with side-arm casts helps keep the line from reflecting the sun's glare and spooking fish and using stealthy clear lines can help as well. Also, opportunities are fleeting. It seems to happen frequently; you pull up to an area to fish, begin to get your rod out of the holder and suddenly the fish are there. You are not ready and an opportunity is lost. Get ready quickly and quietly when you get to your next spot.

Know the Clock system. While many anglers know that the bow of the boat is 12 o'clock, and the stern is 6 o'clock, if not practiced beforehand, confusion is almost guaranteed. Practice by calling out the number, pointing your rod where you are looking so the person on the poling platform can direct you to the correct location. Don't cast until you see the fish. If you do, you'll most likely cast to the wrong spot and spoil the opportunity. Communicate with your boat mate or guide - they don't know unless you tell 'em - when you spot the fish, announce it - if you can't see the fish, announce it.

Some serious yard practice before your trip can make all the difference in what kind of day you will have on the water. So grab a tape measure, a few targets, and start working to cast above the "Mendoza Line".

Joe Mahler
FFF Certified Casting Instructor
President, Sanibel FlyFishers

Dusty Sprague
FFF BOG

CONCLAVE 2010

West Yellowstone, Montana

August 24-28, 2010

CBOG Meeting is on Tuesday, August 24

Come meet our Board and see what we do in the meeting. We can't promise it will be exciting, but it is usually a good time to meet everyone and learn more about what we do.

CONSERVING YOUR WORK FORCE :

RETAINING VOLUNTEER CASTING EXAMINERS

By Gary Eaton, MCI

Burnout decimates every work group over time. Resisting this out migration of essential labor demands attention to their needs. This includes physical, mental, emotional, and other fulfillments. Consistent, organized leadership eases the stress of high-intensity, detailed tasks.
Studies of workplace satisfaction indicate that worker involvement in decision-making, selecting tasks, public recognition, and transparent process assuring fair treatment, all contribute to enjoyment of work and hedge against burnout. Administrators with ongoing feedback systems and communication pathways that reinforce these values demonstrate higher productivity, fewer injuries, lower absenteeism, and stronger institutional loyalty over the long run. Nothing seems to engender quality effort like genuine appreciation for the work performed.

Labor inherently reacts to adverse work conditions either by outward activism or, more insidiously, through apathy regarding management goals. Most leadership teams that avoid upheaval and worker shortages maintain open communications to individual volunteers with high levels of respect and confidentiality. Genuine concern pays big dividends just as insincerity destroys entire organizations.

The following check list presents a rational starting point toward creating a consistent team of dedicated examiners:

1. Do you survey workers for the tasks they prefer?
2. Do you explain why preferred assignments are unavailable and offer detailed criteria for when preferred opportunities will arise?
3. Do you monitor duration of shift length and enforce breaks and limits?
4. Do you provide for hydration and nutrition support throughout the test period including rest rooms, comfortable waiting facilities, and ample ready areas?
5. Are you careful to assign teams that collaborate well while still providing diverse strengths?
6. Are complete tools provided for each task?
7. Do you provide both a post-event group debriefing as well as confidential follow-up surveys geared to anticipate problems and refine efficiency?
8. Do you provide hard copy maps to the site, layout of test area, candidate lists, examiner guidelines, and contact information?
9. Do you publicly recognize each team member and provide enough material support to recruit repeat volunteers?
10. Do you have a plan to place staff in their preferred role at the next event? Have you communicated that role to them and sought their agreement?

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11. What contingency exists for low volunteer turn-out, replacing key personnel, site change, inclement weather, etc?

12. Have you trained and developed key co-leaders to assume essential coordinator roles when needed?

If you do not specifically know how each of your workers feels about every aspect of your testing day, try to send an individual e-mail inquiry. Also, survey your test-takers and site support people for ideas and to identify rough spots. The difference between harmony and agony often reveals itself in communication.

SAMPLE FORMAT -

CCI EXAM DATE _ Month/Day/ Year

COORDINATORS **Governor Smith** **cell # 555-123-4567**
Master Jones **cell # 555-098-7654**

Rally Point **XYZ Hotel Lobby, 123 HWY & Main St.**
Rally Time for examiners **8:00 AM** **candidates** **8:45 AM**

SCHEDULE OF THE DAY

8:15 AM - INTRODUCTIONS & ASSIGN TEST TEAMS & CANDIDATES

8:35 AM - DISTRIBUTE DAY SCHEDULE & SUPPLIES FOR MORNING

Each kit includes:

* Test forms on clip board,
* Test kits, Map to Site,
* Sun Screen,
* Bill-of-Rights,
* Water Bottles (2 frozen, 1 chilled),
* Protective Gear,
* Yarn Flies, etc.

8:45 AM - INTRODUCE EXAMINERS TO CANDIDATES

* Distribute maps to test site to candidates
* Provide timetable of examinations to candidates with appointment time & examiner team
* Names & cell numbers.

(Example: Team A (MCI Beta and MCI Lambda) cell #555-246-1357

9:30 AM - Begin Examination of Candidate Rho, cell #555 086-4208

11:15 AM - Candidate Sigma on-site to complete test before lunch, Cell# 555-975-3197

12:45 PM - Break for lunch & re-supply with water for afternoon. Consult with Governor Smith re: ideas for refining process over lunch.

1:30 PM - Begin Examination of Candidate Epsilon, cell# 555- 102-9384

3:30 PM - Assemble at rally point to submit results, return test kits.

3:40 PM - Written test & educational Program. Examiners meet with MCI Jones to complete evaluations de-briefing.

(Continued on page 15)

5:00 PM - Candidates fill-out evaluations & return to MCI Jones while Governor Smith de-briefs examiners seeking & giving feedback.
5:30 PM Examiners invite candidates to cook-out at Campers Park

TEAM B (MCI Zeta & MCI Nu) have similar schedule with 3 other candidates, etc.
Governor Smith & Master Jones oversee and step-in to relieve examiners, prompt candidates to be ready on-time, assure facilities work properly, coordinate delivery of box lunches to examiners, etc. If an examination team is running long, Governor A can divert next candidate for examination by Governor A.

FFF Examiner Pre-Test Letter

Dear Master Instructor Beta,

Thank you for agreeing to help examine FFF candidates at Fishing City on (date). The coordinating team is Master Jones, cell #555 123-4567 and Governor Smith cell #555-098-7654. Please keep our phone numbers for future reference. Let us know if you have questions or concerns.

We plan to meet for breakfast on the test day at 0700 before our pre-exam meeting at 0800 in the XYZ Hotel lobby. Please, join us in the hotel restaurant for breakfast if you can. We expect to provide you with bottled water, a box lunch, and testing equipment for test day. After the testing Governor Smith hopes to de-brief the examiners while Master Jones administers the written test. When all the paperwork is done, we would like to show our appreciation by having you as our guest at a barbecue at Campers Park, 123 HWY at Main Street about 5:30 p.m. Let us know if you have any special dietary requests other than hamburgers, Cole slaw, and baked beans. We will provide an array of soft drinks. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in Campers Park.

Please respond to this e-mail by telling us your experience as an examiner and from what area you are coming from. If you have a conflict and are unable to examine any of the following candidates, please indicate. If there is any special examination role you would like to avoid or to participate in, tell us. If you know of another examiner that you would like to test with or not test with, let us know that, too. We make no guarantees, but will consider your interests whenever we can.

We are delighted to have your help on (date). Thank you for your dedicated service.

Governor Smith and Master Jones

The following candidates are scheduled to test:

Rho
Sigma
Epsilon
etc.

(Continued on page 16)

FFF Examiner Post-Test Survey

You may remain anonymous or leave your e-mail to receive a personal response. Thank you for volunteering to evaluate candidates today. Your feedback will help improve the process of FFF examinations. Please contact the coordinators with any additional concerns or ideas that you feel could help. Feel free to elaborate on any answers on this form.

1. Did you have adequate tools to perform the tasks asked of you today?
2. Did the schedule and appointment times work pretty well?
3. Did you have enough drinking water?
4. Did you have enough to eat?
5. Did you have adequate breaks?
6. Did you have adequate access to rest rooms?
7. Were the testing grounds adequate to conduct an efficient examination?
8. Did you find the pre-test meeting & assignments useful?
9. Were the site map and directions clear and useful?
10. Would you like to test with the same partner again?
11. Would you like to have the same role or a different role next time you examine?
12. What suggestions do you have for improving the examiner experience here?
13. If you would like to be contacted by us for follow-up, write your preferred contact information.

Gary Eaton is a regular contributor to the Loop. Check out his other article in this edition - Part 3 of a series on adaptive fly Casting techniques.

FFF Flyfisher Magazine

A Correction.....

In the Flyfisher Spring-Summer 2010 magazine, the article by our Chairman of the FFF Board of Directors, Phil Greenlee, contained an item that must be corrected.

Phil Greenlee wrote an article entitled 'Seeing a Positive Membership Trend for the New Year'.

In this article he states that the FFF was working with Norway to create a new European FFF Council. This information is incorrect.

After deliberation and consultation, the FFF decided that they would not be creating any new councils either in North America or internationally. There is some reorganization of current councils being done but that is all.

The letter from Phil Greenlee that was sent out previously stating the 'moratorium' stands as policy. - Ed.

"STOP, LOOP, GO"

by SOON S. LEE

Times are a-changing. An official glossary is being developed by the FFF. Certified instructors are urged to teach with one voice, perhaps not with uniform methodology, but certainly with officially sanctioned terminology.

This is actually a good thing: we have to speak the same language. Almost all instructor candidates are familiar with SLP (straight line path) of the rod tip, perhaps less so with RSP (rod straight position), in particular those candidates from foreign lands.

While it is true we take these foreign candidates' unfamiliarity with US angling lexicon with empathy, we expect in time all candidates to subscribe to the same education and vernacular if the objective is FFF certification. After all a foreigner wishing to put M.D.(USA) behind his or her name cannot be permitted to embrace 'circulation' as 'humors flowing through meridians'.

Then there is this nebulous concept of 'stop', lacking of an official definition. To throw a loop the caster terminates his casting stroke by physically stopping the rod in its tracks. The rod can be stopped briskly or lazily. It can be stopped high and almost vertically or it can be stopped low and almost horizontally. Stiffer rods stop differently from those more supple. These and other considerations have input on the resulting loop that is launched from the rod tip. We need to correlate this termination of the casting stroke to the way a loop forms as a result.

In my mind a loop is made up conveniently of three segments, each of which is the consequence of distinctive rod action.

1) Upper leg of the loop: In the casting stroke, rod tip path determines the course of the upper leg of the loop. Simply stated, a straight line path of the rod tip determines a straight upper leg in a true loop, a convex tip path results in an open or non-loop, a concave tip path causes a closed or tailing loop.

2) Lower leg of the loop: The rod tip at the final rod holding position determines the profile of the lower leg of the loop. This profile reflects rod tip activity as the result of damping characteristics of the rod itself and purposeful manipulations of the rod by the caster.

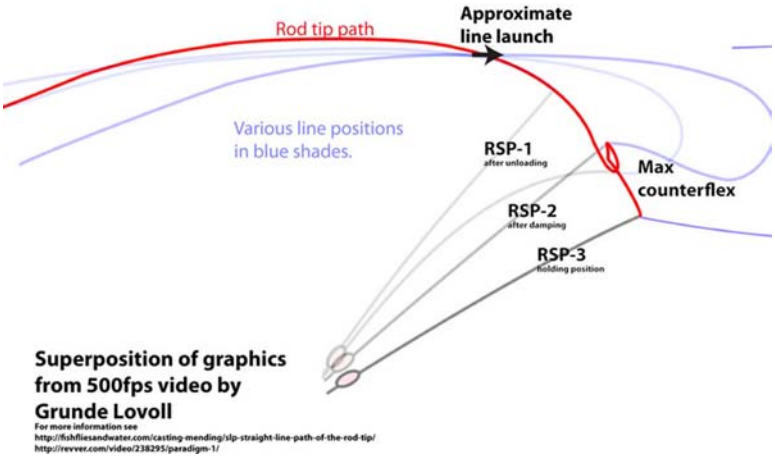
3) Body of the loop, size and shape:

Please see Ally Gowan's illustration of Lovoll's graphics (posted in April, 2010 on Gordy's master study website) on the next page.

I propose defining 'stop' as the interval of time beginning with line launch ('Approximate line launch' in illustration) and ending with rod holding position ("RSP-3" in illustration).

'Stop' is not one instant of time, nor does it just mean physical cessation of motion. In loop dynamics, 'stop' runs the gamut of rod tip motion from the point of line launch through RSP-1, maximum counterflex, rebound and RSP-2, to final holding position RSP-3.

(Continued on page 18)



This definition is simple yet all-encompassing and is readily understood by the student. It also dispels the currently bantered about notion of a 'stopless' cast. (I might add here that I feel RSP-3 is a misnomer because the weight of fly line carried by the rod tip at holding position will hardly allow a rod straight position).

'Stop' determines loop size. 'Stop' begins when the rod tip deviates from its straight line path. The extent of rod bend at this instant largely determines the size of the loop. Nevertheless loop size can be modified by the degree of abruptness of the 'stop', by rod position at the 'stop' (e.g. stopping the rod at 12 o'clock versus stopping at 2 o'clock) and by purposeful manipulation of the rod tip to limit or exaggerate the extent of rod bend.

I suspect that many demonstrated examples of open loops are really the result of circuitous rod tip travel from continued rod rotation after line launch. In these cases there have not been adequate lengths of fly line in the air to document straight line path of the rod tip prior to line launch and loop formation. These are actually examples of extra-wide true loops.

'Stop' also determines loop shape. The rod tip after line launch may describe a lazy cursive resulting in a boxy front end. The gathering together of launch point and RSP-1 in close proximity just below the rod tip's forward trajectory forms a pointy front end. The hyperbolized forward and downward travel of the rod tip executed by some distance casters leaves a loop profile resembling that of a curved-blade meat cleaver, at least initially, until it attenuates because of the pulling action of the front end of the loop.

The reader may wonder about the pertinence of this submission's title *'Stop, Loop, Go'*. I have over the years used the term point G (for 'Go') for the instant of line launch. I also speculated that had we taught casting as making a casting stroke followed by 'let the line go' instead of 'stop the rod', students might have been more inclined to visualize the exercise with equanimity.

Indeed we do not exhort the archer to 'stop the load' in order to launch his arrow. Be that as it may, the author prefers this catchy title to *'Loop Dynamics: Casting Stroke Governs Upper Leg; Rod Tip at Holding Position Governs Lower Leg; Stop Governs Loop Size and Shape; Definition of Stop'*.

Soon Lee is a BOG from California. He is a regular contributor to the Loop.

Germany 2010 - EWF Show

Juergen Friesenhahn with our chair, Bruce Richards

Recently our BOG Chair, Bruce Richards, attended the EWF Fly Fishing Show in Munich, Germany on our behalf for an international testing event. The event was combined with a great show - fly fishing only - hosted by Michaela & Robert Stroh and attended by many of our local masters and governors.

Bruce managed to get there just as the volcano in Iceland was causing problems with air travel in Europe. He made it to the show - but getting home was another story. Many of the show demonstrators, fly tiers, etc. couldn't travel to the show and so, as our members are known to do, they improvised.
Juergen tells the tale of a casting demo he did with Bruce:

This photo was taken after the casting demo by Bruce and myself - at the EWF in Fuerstenfeldbruck (near Munich). We did a demo together with the teacher/student theme, partly translated by the student into German. It was fun, doing this.

Here is a recap of Bruce's "choreography", after a short briefing: hmmm... at first open loops, then closing the arc too much, overpowering/tailing, then trajectory too high/too low, stopping on the delivery without following the line - fly drops back... beginning to rotate, while having too much fun, then ripping the line from the water on the pickup, casting "over the fish", solving this problem by reaches/mends, then distance problem/tailing on delivery caused by not adjusting the arc...and so on... ending in a tangled mess ; -D

(continued on page 20)

More photos from the show.....

Photos on this page courtesy of EWF Show.
Check out more at www.erlebniswelt-fliegenfischen.de

Bruce keeps trying to convince us that he really was there to work! Sounds as if they had fun even with the volcano! It took him an extra five days to get a flight home. An unexpected holiday in Germany where he was well taken care of - even went fishing.

PEARLS....

From a Master Study Group

Hosted by Gordy Hill

Pearl #1 - The Variables.....

In the past, we have discussed the mechanics of and the physics behind straight line overhead casts. Discussions have included the ESSENTIALS as well as numerous elements of STYLE. You all know these well. Now I'd like to enter the world of VARIABLES. Joan Wulff once referred to these as 'variations on a theme'. Mac Brown wrote about 'enlightenment casts'. Al Kyte, in his papers, discussed several 'variables'.

QUESTION: What is your concept of variables?

In responding, I'd like each of you to ask yourselves these questions (No right or wrong answers here). Keep the specific answers to yourselves and then prepare your answer to the question on the table. *As you do this, allow your minds to leap beyond the standard fly casts!*

Best to try to do this as you would answer a question on a Master's oral exam with # A SHORT ANSWER followed by # AN EXPLANATORY DETAILED ANSWER. :-

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1) What do YOU consider variables to be?
2) Can you define variables?
3) How do they impact the essentials of fly casting?
4) How do they fit the concept of style?
5) Can you come up with some examples of variables?
6) How do these variables enter our world of fly *fishing*?
7) How do they impact our *teaching?*
8) Should the family of elliptical casts be considered as a set of variables?
9) Would you include casts such as the 'bow & arrow cast' or the 'underpowered curve cast', the 'Maloney cast' or the so-called, 'helicopter cast' be considered as variables?
10) Do you think the 'River Dump & Pump' is a bone fide variation?
11) How about 'dappling', 'blow-line casts' or Tankara fishing?
12) What about SNAP CASTS?
13) .... and Hugh Falkus' 'Two way fishing'?
14) .... Joe Shedlock's 'Sky Writing'?
15) The 'Salt Water Speed Casts'?
16) On and on……..

From Dusty Sprague:

Interesting you bring up 'variables'. Several years ago I searched for a term to describe the variable elements of casting. I was not totally comfortable with the 5 essentials; they are good but did not fit with the way I wanted to describe casting to my students. I settled on 'principles' and 'variables' and teach the following:

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3 Principles of casting - must be executed for every cast - they don't change - remove slack; load and unload the rod; and the cast goes in the direction the tip finishes. Those are the three 'principles' I teach and I'm still searching for a term better than 'principles'.

5 Variables: Power (hand speed/rod bend), arc, stroke length, timing, and trajectory - all varying with the amount of line/weight to be cast.

There is a lot more description and explanation behind each one of the above....but you get the idea.

Dusty - Good way to look at it! Your thought process parallel's Lefty's as he discusses PRINCIPLES in *CASTING WITH LEFTY KREH...*

Principle 1. *You must get the end of the fly line moving before you can make a back or forward cast..*
Principle 2*. Once the line is moving, the only way to load the rod is to move the casting hand at an ever-increasing speed and then bring it to a quick stop.*
Principle 3. *The line will go in the direction the rod tip speeds up and stops - more specifically, it goes in the direction that the rod straightens when the rod hand stops.*
Principle 4*. The longer the distance the rod travels on the back and forward casting strokes, the less effort is required to make the cast.*

Some might add: 'There must be a match between casting arc and rod bend' (From prior messages between us, I know you agree) …Gordy

---

MAC BROWN on VARIABLES.....

The ingredients for all casts are listed below - they make up hundreds of specialty casts for on-the-stream examples. Think of these tools like a recipe for coming up with something new. A cast is not a mistake if it can be repeated at will. Look at casts that provide a layout that solves a problem. There are only alternatives (abandon right/wrong absolutes).

Simple answer 'changing momentums in varying rhythms' with no rules or boundaries is key for progression.

a. Force (3 combinations) all lines either fail to straighten, just straighten, or have excess energy to dissipate by kicking around the corner. Ex. These are called negative, normal, and positive casts. They are directly related to loop plane.
b. Loop planes dictate positioning of where the layout occurs. They occupy 360* of airspace around the tip of the rod. Ex. Rod leg on the top with fly leg directly below is a 180* loop plane.
c. Line planes important for altering/enhancing a desired result. Ex. Line skewed 30* off on the back cast from target as opposed to the typical 180*.
d. Timing is one of the most important ingredients. Listen to the line sing as velocity changes. This is not just wait for the line to straighten. Includes all aspects of timing of a force followed by the pause. Delayed line/rod hand during and after the casting stroke (before and after RSP/mends too!). Example of this is form one big circle of line around your body working it to keep it in action (tensioned). Change the timing to form 2, 3, 4, 5 circles. Occupies less airspace by reducing it in half for each one you add. Valuable for tight spaces /change of direction casts.
e. Direction dictated from the body. After all, we cannot talk about force with a disregard for direction. Coupled plane pendula describes this nicely for the hinges of the body. Hand path is focused on typically since it is the last body hinge to dictate path of the rod. This influences the Tip path, which is straight, ellipses, circles, and all other geometric shapes. Hint: Often this deviates from the hypothetical SLP. This also includes the line hand, which takes on many roles such as hauling and shooting line. Figuring out the strengths /weaknesses of various positions depending on what you desire to accomplish (style). The uses of rotary hand paths become powerful tools during this discovery of various motions.

Here are three random exercises to apply the ingredients listed above. I threw these together in a hurry just to provide some things to apply those ingredients from above.

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1. Putting these all together is actually a simple exercise. Take a slight concave hand path on the horizontal rod plane. Tweak it by changing timing and momentum. How many specialty casts do you come up with? Every motion has several outcomes. Is there a few or more than a dozen? It depends on your creative play to the number.

2. Usually snaps are done with the same setup motion of the rod. Reverse the motion (rod scribes the U shape from coming low (slow) and turning the corner high (fast) to throw a big hook for the back cast.

3. Apply the same ingredients above for controlling tails that are normal, negative, and positive force. Hint: Learning to control a tailing loop that is a straight layout is among the most difficult. Hint: Tail early happens early in stroke, tail late (out by the leader) occurs late in the stroke (the opposite of mends).

From Mark Milkovich.... Gordy's comments in red

QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR CONCEPT OF 'VARIABLES'?

Wulff's description of oval casts as a variation on the theme of 'straight line overhead casts' produced by manipulating the rod tip path 'variable' appeals to me as a particularly useful teaching concept. It emphasizes the primacy of the straight line overhead casts as a foundation, a point echoed by Brown, and provides a framework for teaching useful casting deviations, by manipulating a handful of basic variables to accomplish an extremely wide variety of alternative casting objectives. *Well stated.*

1) What do YOU consider variables to be?
Those elements of a cast which when changed alter the casting result. *Agree.*
2) Can you define variables? Modifiable elements of the cast. *Yes.*
3) How do they impact the essentials of fly casting? They don't. *Agree*
4) How do they fit the concept of style? Used in combination they define a casting style.
One way to look at it. The can also be used within a particular casting style as well as change of style to suit a particular casting goal.
5.) Can you come up with some examples of variables?

1. Power (acceleration/deceleration)
2. Arc
3. Tip Path
4. Rod Plane *Yes.*

6.) How do these variables enter our world of fly *fishing*?
They drive the process of loading/unloading the rod. We modify them quantitatively (e.g. amount of power) and qualitatively (e.g. shape of tip path) in order to achieve specific casting objectives. *Yes.*
7.) How do they impact our *teaching?*
They provide a skeletal framework which can be used to present casting variations in a systematic fashion.
Systematic or for single accomplishments.
8.) Should the family of elliptical casts be considered as a set of variables?
For teaching purposes a 'Variation on a Theme' produced by consistently varying the tip path variable from SLP. *Well.... the dyed in the wool Spey caster might consider straight line overhead casting as a variation on his theme !*
9.) Would you include casts such as the 'bow & arrow cast' or the 'underpowered curve cast', the 'Maloney cast' or the so-called, 'helicopter cast' be considered as variables? Again, Variations on the Foundation (straight line overhead) Cast Theme produced by varying one or more elements of the cast. *Yes.*
10.) Do you think the 'River Dump & Pump' is a bone fide variation? Any variation which consistently produces a desired casting objective would for me qualify as bone fide. This for me would also apply to all the items listed below.

I agree to all except for 10.) The 'River Dump & Pump' doesn't really involve any cast at all. This is a denigrating term used by some guides in Alaska for a way of getting salmon hook ups for clients who couldn't really cast a fly rod.

(Continued on page 24)

The guide would anchor his craft up current of a good run or pool, then have the client simply feed line out into the river. He'd then have the angler strip in. This was repeated over and over until a salmon was hooked.

11) How about 'dappling', 'blow-line casts' or Tenkara fishing?
12) What about SNAP CASTS?
13) .... and Hugh Falkus' 'Two way fishing'?
14) .... Joe Shedlock's 'Sky Writing'?
15) The 'Salt Water Speed Casts'?

From Mark Surtees..... Short answers here Gordy, sorry, and some I need to do more research on.

1) What do YOU consider variables to be?
All casts and the motions that generate them, in the abstract sense, are potentially variable, and in the practical sense all casts are almost always different although we strive for homogeneity in the basics. Variables in the way that I think you have asked these questions are modifications of what might be considered a standard set of casts or casting components, though I would be interested to know what different people consider that standard set to be.
Good way to express it.
2) Can you define variables?
Variables are alterations to elements of a cast which generate outcomes different to that intended by the original standard cast. ***Yes.***
3) How do they impact the essentials of fly casting?
Not in any way, they employ the essentials of fly fishing as I understand them to create new solutions to circumstantial challenges on the water. ***Agree***
4) How do they fit the concept of style?
Style is a variable. *We could look at it that way. Then there could be variables within a particular casting style.....*
5.) Can you come up with some examples of variables?
Mends in a PULD, curves. *Curves and mends.... yes. Please help educate me. What is a PULD ?*
6) How do these variables enter our world of fly *fishing*?
Good casters are creative in trying to resolve specific casting challenges so if the standard cast doesn't put the fly on the fish then varying elements of the cast may do. Good anglers look and learn and many share their skills with others so the techniques spread. *Yes, indeed.*
7) **How do they impact our *teaching?***
They make my teaching way more interesting but I would normally only consider adding variations to a casters bag of tricks when they had good basic control over the rod and line. Good point. Getting into variables might will confuse the early caster.
8) Should the family of elliptical casts be considered as a set of variables?
Not unless we have established from what they are saying i.e. is there an abstract idea of the ideal elliptical cast in an agreed set of "standard casts".
We can look at this in two ways. Those who are dead set on straight line overhead casts as the "norm" might see other ways of casting as belonging in the realm of variables. The reverse might also apply.
Then we can take a typical or "classic" set of elliptical casts (whatever this may be) and consider any deviation for a purpose to be a variable.
9) Would you include casts such as the 'bow & arrow cast' or the 'underpowered curve cast', the 'Maloney cast' or the so-called, 'helicopter cast' to be considered as variables? Yes. ***Agree.***

10)Do you think the 'River Dump & Pump' is a bone fide variation?
I'm an ignorant Brit…I've never heard of it…..
Not really a fly cast at all. See my comment in Mark Milkovitch's anwer sheet.

(continued on page 25)

11) How about 'dappling', 'blow-line casts' or Tankara fishing?
I don't really count these as 'casts' but that is an entirely subjective position, they are certainly fly fishing.
Perhaps we could look at these as lying in a "gray area"

12) What about SNAP CASTS?

These are not really a variation of a standard loop generating stroke because they use a slightly different method for accelerating the line. In fact I'll have to go away and find out exactly how they do work…..rapid shift of mass from the line under tension to the rod leg apparently….is this correct Gordy?? I may have misunderstood the physics here.

Some look at the snap casts or snap moves as a 'cast within a cast'. In most instances, the line / leader is on the water. A lift is made, then the rod tip is accelerated beneath the line causing a wave of energized line to result in propelling a loop in the opposite or nearly opposite direction. (The angle can be determined by the direction the tip was traveling as the loop began to form at RSP).

To my eye, it becomes even more of a 'cast within a cast' or even a violent disruption of a cast when I practice by making a forward cast..... then before the loop has fully unrolled, I make the 'snap' by drawing the rod tip back and then suddenly accelerating it just beneath the travelling loop. The wave thus produced results in the line forming a second loop which is propelled in the opposite direction. Is this a variation ? I think so.

13) .... and Hugh Falkus' 'Two way fishing'? *I interpreted this as a series of mends designed to swing a salmon fly in each of two directions one following another.*
14) .... Joe Shedlock's 'Sky Writing' ? *Joe gave some workshops at conclaves a few years ago with this as the title of his presentation. The concept was to imaging drawing or "writing" an image in the sky with the rod tip as the prelude to a particular desired layout.*
15) The 'Salt Water Speed Casts'? *I'd classify these as variations*
16) On and on..... *Endless !*

Gordy's comments…..As I participate in giving Master's exams, I note that sometimes the candidate will give a correct answer.... *but to a different question !* In teaching, I'm not immune as I find myself falling into the same trap.

Many of you didn't "listen to the question" and made the assumption that I was looking for answers to the specific questions. That approach would not have favored a candidate taking an actual master's oral exam.

Actually, that worked out fine for teaching because it allowed us to see the different thought processes which went into these specific answers. I know I learned some things from this. For that reason I embraced it and sent a few of the results.

It's refreshing to see the various ways of looking at a question like this. Here, for example, are a couple of answers taken from one of our newest members, Capt. Jim Barr who is a salt water fly caster and guide who plies Rhode Island waters :-

5.) Can you come up with some examples of Variables?
Physical ability/disability- Wind-Rocking boat-varying underfooting conditions- balance- Line type and weight- Overhead limitations (obstructed/unobstructed space)- Backcast limitations-(obstructed/unobstructed space)- Differing equipment (rod length, weight, flex), Fly pattern- (size, weight, air resistance)- Leader length-diameter, Water conditions (still, moving, braided current-, speed), River obstructions, Height of caster from the water level, Visibility, Proximity of the fish, Feeding pattern of the fish, Water column depth.

(Continued on page 26)

6.) How do these variables enter our world of fly *fishing*?
Variables are external conditions for which we have little or no control- in addition to manageable conditions/ kinesthetics that we can control (or at least in part control) and that with physical application we can negate, influence or be assisted by the unmanageable variables.

As a salty flyfisher, I can *tell* he's a salty caster by his tone and additions relating to his experiences fly fishing the sea as well as the fact that he does have experience with fresh water fly fishing.
Serves to show how we are influenced by our most common fishing experiences…Gordy

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Pearl #2 - Fly Rod quiz....

1) Your student asks you, "What is the best length for a fly rod? Your answer?
2) In trying for a bit more distance when casting your 5 wt. graphite fly rod, you feel that if you had just a bit more rod length you would be able to achieve a little bit more distance. Tim Rajeff recently showed us a trick that he uses. Do you remember what that was?
3) Try to come up with a good description or definition of the term ROD ACTION.
   a. Short answer.
   b. More detailed answer.
4) We have all heard of casters describing a fly rod as having lots of POWER. What do you think they mean?
5) What do you think is meant by the term, 'ROD STRENGTH'?
6) Salt water fly fishermen sometimes request a fly rod with 20 lbs. or greater LIFTING POWER. What application do you think they have in mind?
7) You have two fly rods. Each is rated at # 6 wt. One of them is 10' in length. The other is 8 1/2' long. The factory rep tells you that both have exactly the same EFFECTIVE ROD LENGTH. How can that be?
8) Give a brief definition for EFFECTIVE ROD LENGTH.
9) Can you give us a reference for that?
10) Who was the first author to use that term?
11) What (if any) changes would you make in your casting if you switch from a 10' long # 7 rod to an 8' long #7 fly rod assuming that they are both "medium fast" rods and you are using the same fly line ?
12) What (if any) changes would you make in your casting if you switch from a 9' long # 7 fast action rod to a 9' long #7 slow action 'full flex' rod?
13) Your student is about to enter a distance casting competition. He asks you if the size and weight of his reel will make any difference. What do you tell him?
14) This same student now asks you whether he should choose an up locking reel seat or a downlocking seat for this event. Your advice?
15) Another of your students is going on a trip. He will be fishing for very large, powerful fish. The fish camp operator has informed him that he won't need long casts, but that these fish are so powerful that not many can be landed. Ten to twelve wt. systems have been recommended. He is about to purchase a fly rod for that situation and he wants to know whether a long rod or a short rod would be best. What do you tell him?
16) The angler in question #15 has been advised to use a rod of a particular length. He now wants to know if this should be a stiff rod or one which is more flexible to land these big powerful fish. Your advice?17) Why?
18) You have hooked a very large fish. As you apply pressure, your guide says, "*Be careful not to break the ninety degree rule.*" What does he mean?
19) I actually had a student who had a severe allergy to cork. He'd already purchased two expensive fly rods and didn't want to spend a lot more money to solve his problem. Can you come up with a practical solution?
20) You know the design requirements for the rod you wish to purchase. Now what do you actually do as you compare one rod with another at your fly shop?
21) What considerations lead you to choose a particular fly rod rating?

(Continued on page 27)

22) What is HOOP STRENGTH?
23) Of what value is the property of increased hoop strength of many modern fly rods?
24) Rod manufacturers use materials of greater modulus to make their rods stiffer and more responsive relative to rod weight. What else do they do to help accomplish the same thing?
25) What is meant by the term PARABOLIC TAPER ?
26) What is "DAMPING"?

Answers from Tony Loader.....

1) Your student asks you, "What is the best length for a fly rod ? Your answer"? An appropriate length for the fishing you intend to do. Might be anywhere from a 6ft for a 1 weight line to an 18ft double-hander. *Agree.*

2) In trying for a bit more distance when casting your 5 wt. graphite fly rod, you feel that if you had just a bit more rod length you would be able to achieve a little bit more distance. Tim Rajeff recently showed us a trick that he uses. Do you remember what that was? No, but I'd guess he shifts his rod hand as far down the butt as he can while still maintaining an adequately strong grip. *That's it !*

3) Try to come up with a good description or definition of the term ROD ACTION.

a. Short answer. The way in which the particular rod flexes.

b. More detailed answer. For any given applied force at the butt or given mass suspended from the tip, a "tip actioned" (or "fast")rod would bend more into the shape of a "J", whereas a "through actioned" (or "slow","progressive", "parabolic") rod would bend more into the shape of a "C". *Good way to put it.*

4) We have all heard of casters describing a fly rod as having lots of POWER. What do you think they mean? Resistance to bending i.e. "stiffness".
Some do use the term that way. Others use it to mean the wt. of line the rod can carry effectively..

5) What do you think is meant by the term, "ROD STRENGTH"? Resistance to breaking. *Yes.*

6) Salt water fly fishermen sometimes request a fly rod with 20 lbs. or greater LIFTING POWER. What application do you think they have in mind? Hauling a big hooked fish from the depths. *Yes.*

7) You have two fly rods. Each is rated at # 6 wt. One of them is 10' in length. The other is 8 1/2' long. The factory rep tells you that both have exactly the same EFFECTIVE ROD LENGTH. How can that be? The longer one bends more than the shorter for a given applied force. *Yes.*

8) Give a brief definition for EFFECTIVE ROD LENGTH. The chord length between the rod hand and the rod tip at maximum bend. *Yes.*

9) Can you give us a reference for that? Tim Rajeff uses the term in advertising for his 5wt distance rod here: http://www.hatchfinders.com/ECHO.htm
He does. Also, THE TECHNOLOGY OF FLY RODS, by Don Phillips

10) Who was the first author to use that term? Don't know.
Vincent Marinara in his book, IN THE RING OF THE RISE (1976).

Question 11) is missing.

12) What (if any) changes would you make in your casting if you switch from a 9' long # 7 fast action rod to a 9' long #7 slow action "full flex" rod? Widen the arc and slow the tempo for any particular line length.
Yes.

13) Your student is about to enter a distance casting competition. He asks you if the size and weight of his reel will make any difference. What do you tell him? Yes. The smaller the mass to be accelerated over the length of the stroke the better. *Yes.*

(continued on page 28)

14) This same student now asks you whether he should choose an up locking reel seat or a down locking seat for this event. Your advice? A down locking seat places the reel at the extremity of the butt allowing the caster to grip the cork lower thus maximizing effective rod length. *Yes.*

15) Another of your students is going on a trip. He will be fishing for very large, powerful fish. The fish camp operator has informed him that he won't need long casts, but that these fish are so powerful that not many can be landed. Ten to twelve wt. systems have been recommended. He is about to purchase a fly rod for that situation and he wants to know whether a long rod or a short rod would be best. What do you tell him ? A short rod will provide less mechanical disadvantage thus more leverage for the angler to fight the fish. *Yes.*

16) The angler in question #15 has been advised to use a rod of a particular length. He now wants to know if this should be a stiff rod or one which is more flexible to land these big powerful fish. Your advice ? A more flexible rod. *Agree.*

17) Why ? Shorter effective length thus better leverage. Better inherent shock absorbance for jumping fish. *Yes. Key word there is'effective'.*

18) You have hooked a very large fish. As you apply pressure, your guide says, *" Be careful not to break the ninety degree rule."* What does he mean? Keep the rod butt at 90 degrees to the fish to maximize shock absorbance.
Well…. It will absorb shock to the leader, but will place less pressure needed to land a large, powerful fish. Also, by having the rod at near 90 degrees or more, you are placing tremendous stress on the rod and thus making rod breakage more likely.

19) I actually had a student who had a severe allergy to cork. He'd already purchased two expensive fly rods and didn't want to spend a lot more money to solve his problem. Can you come up with a practical solution? Seal the cork with a spray on matt finish lacquer. Alternatively, or additionally, wrap the cork with special purpose grip tape as used on tennis and squash racquets. *Good solutions.*

20) You know the design requirements for the rod you wish to purchase. Now what do you actually do as you compare one rod with another at your fly shop? Test cast each rod in the car park using the same line. Preferably a line with which I am very familiar.
Yes. Hard to beat actually casting with it.

21) What considerations lead you to chose a particular fly rod rating? Target species size and behaviour, expected fishing conditions, flies to be cast. *Agree.*

22) What is HOOP STRENGTH ? The resistance of a hollow cylinder to crimping when a bending force is applied. *Yes.*

23) Of what value is the property of increased hoop strength of many modern fly rods? Allows the designer to build a rod of adequate strength with a lower moment of inertia. *True.*

24) Rod manufacturers use materials of greater modulus to make their rods stiffer and more responsive relative to rod weight. What else do they do to help accomplish the same thing? Increase the diameter and decrease the wall thickness of the blank. Use lighter hardware on the rod. *Yes.*

25) What is meant by the term PARABOLIC TAPER? A rod which bends into a roughly parabolic shape. A 'slow' or 'through actioned' rod. *Yes.*

26) What is 'DAMPING'? The ability of the rod or caster to reduce the amplitude and frequency of counterflex and rebound. *Yes. (Reduces vibration.)*

Tony … GREAT ANSWERS ! Question 11 is omitted from this copy.

(continued on page 29)

From Doug Swift.....

1) Your student asks you, 'What is the best length for a fly rod'? Your answer?
'The length that is compatible with your intended purpose'. An explanation of how rod length relates to casting, line management, fish playing, type of water being fished etc. would be in order. *Agree. The length is situation dependant.*

2) In trying for a bit more distance when casting your 5 wt. graphite fly rod, you feel that if you had just a bit more rod length you would be able to achieve a little bit more distance. Tim Rajeff recently showed us a trick that he uses. Do you remember what that was?

I'm not sure what Tim's trick was, but positioning the casting hand as far back toward the butt as possible does give some effective extra rod length for me. *Sure. That IS one of Tim's tricks.*

3) Try to come up with a good description or definition of the term ROD ACTION.
a. Short answer. Where the rod bends *Good short answer, even though it isn't the whole story*
b. More detailed answer. A fast action rod bends in the tip section. A medium action rod bends more through the tip and into the center of the rod and a slow action rod would bend throughout the rod length.
Correct. I might also add that it depends upon the stiffness and recovery rate profile.

4) We have all heard of casters describing a fly rod as having lots of POWER. What do you think they mean? How much the rod bends under a given load
That is one way to look at it. The term can also refer to the weight of the line it can carry well. (Really the same thing.)

5) What do you think is meant by the term, 'ROD STRENGTH'?
How much the rod will lift before breaking *Yes. Another way to put it is the amount of stress it can accept at 90 degrees to the butt section before failure..*

6) Salt water fly fishermen sometimes request a fly rod with 20 lbs. or greater LIFTING POWER. What application do you think they have in mind?
Moving very heavy deep water fish when necessary. *Yes. You need a rod with lots of lifting power to pump a very large fish up from beneath the boat. Rods made for that purpose usually have a beefed up butt section.*

7) You have two fly rods. Each is rated at # 6 wt. One of them is 10' in length. The other is 8 1/2' long. The factory rep tells you that both have exactly the same EFFECTIVE ROD LENGTH. How can that be?

The 10' rod could be a very soft action rod that will load and bend to the same effective rod length as the 8 1/2' rod which may be a fast action rod and bend much less. *Yes.*

8) Give a brief definition for EFFECTIVE ROD LENGTH.
"The cord subtending the arc of a fully bent rod" Gordy - I would be wondering if a student would understand what that statement meant if I had to explain effective rod length to them. If I demonstrated by anchoring the rod butt to the ground, bending it and hanging a weighted string from the highest point along the bent rod shaft to the ground would that effectively demonstrate effective rod length?
Agree. Unless you draw the diagram for your student, he isn't likely to understand that even though it is true. Your demonstration would go a lot further toward getting the point across.

9) Can you give us a reference for that? "The technology of fly rods" by Don Phillips.
Yes. (pp. 45-49)

10) Who was the first author to use that term? I've read that it may have been Vince Marino *Correct ! * * IN THE RING OF THE RISE* by Vincent Marinaro, 1976, pp. 52-55.

(continued on page 30)

11) What (if any) changes would you make in your casting if you switch from a 10' long # 7 rod to an 8' long #7 fly rod assuming that they are both "medium fast" rods and you are using the same fly line? A longer casting stroke and wider casting arc to provide more tip travel for the shorter rod.
True.... though only part of the story. You would also need to change your timing. When going to the shorter rod, it is necessary to have a more rapid cadence which requires more rapid movement of the rod and shorter pause time.

12) What (if any) changes would you make in your casting if you switch from a 9' long # 7 fast action rod to a 9' long #7 slow action "full flex" rod? Probably as in question 11 so the changes could accommodate the effective rod length of the slower action rod.
Another way to put it: When going from the fast action rod to the full flexion (soft action) one while carrying the same amount (wt.) of line, you would need to:

1. *Slow down your stroke. (slower cadence)*
2. *Increase your casting arc.*
3. *Increase pause time. These changes are needed if your objective is to make an efficient cast with a relatively small loop. That is because it is the way to match your casting arc to your rod bend.*

13) Your student is about to enter a distance casting competition. He asks you if the size and weight of his reel will make any difference. What do you tell him?
I would tell him to go with a lighter reel. It would be more aerodynamic and less weight. There are probably some other reasons I'm not thinking of.
Correct. A reel acts as a counterweight when casting. It has mass and therefore when moving has its own momentum. A large, heavy reel makes it harder to make a crisp stop. (This is why the rules of most if not all competition casting events require the caster to use a rod with reel attached). It is easy to prove this to yourself or your doubting student. Simply make the casts with a heavy reel in place; then remove the reel and make the same cast.

14) This same student now asks you whether he should choose an up locking reel seat or a down locking seat for this event. Your advice?
I'd tell him to choose a reel with a up locking reel seat. If he is distance casting he may choose to grip the rod more toward the reel seat and jeopardize loosening the ring if it were a down locking reel seat.

Good point, though rarely an issue. I agree with Tim Rajeff who uses a 5 wt. Echo rod which he has made with a down locking reel seat. He uses it because it allows him to grip the rod way down toward the butt with his hand crowding the reel. This has the effect of slightly lengthening his rod. (If you go back a couple of days to one of our messages, you will see a link to a video by Tim in which he covers this).

15) Another of your students is going on a trip. He will be fishing for very large, powerful fish. The fish camp operator has informed him that he won't need long casts, but that these fish are so powerful that not many can be landed. Ten to twelve wt. systems have been recommended. He is about to purchase a fly rod for that situation and he wants to know whether a long rod or a short rod would be best. What do you tell him? A short rod. *Agree. Many get this one wrong, so I'll expand upon it.*

The longer rod provides a lever system which favors lots of tip travel for the amount of hand travel. Great for gaining tip speed for casting. That same long lever works against you when you are trying to achieve enough pressure to land a large fish. This is one reason it is extremely difficult to land a 100 lb. + tarpon when using a 15' long spey rod. (I'll never try that again..... since the fish has to be played to exhaustion in order to get the creature in thus making it unlikely that a successful release can be accomplished).

This is true even with big game trolling rods. It is the reason that ocean tournament rules often restrict the length of the rod by having a minimum length requirement.
Bottom line: The shorter the rod, the quicker you can land a big fish. Extrapolating to zero: You can land a fish a lot faster when using a handline ..... ie. "no rod."

(continued on page 31)

16) The angler in question #15 has been advised to use a rod of a particular length. He now wants to know if this should be a stiff rod or one which is more flexible to land these big powerful fish. Your advice?
The stiff one. *I'd go with the more flexible one every time.*

17) Why? A stiff short rod would provide better control for playing and landing these large powerful fish.
*Assuming the rods are the same MEASURED length, the more flexible one will have the tip and most of the mid section flatten out along the line so that you end up fighting the fish with a much shorter effective rod length. With this flexible rod, then, you can apply a much greater amount of pressure to subdue the creature.**
** Described in detail in Floyd Franke's, FISH ON ! A Guide to Playing and Landing Big Fish on a Fly, Chapter 3. (Study Figure 3.4 on p. 47.)*

18) You have hooked a very large fish. As you apply pressure, your guide says, *"Be careful not to break the ninety degree rule."* What does he mean?
I'm thinking that it would relate to the best rod angle to distribute the pulling ability of the fish and not putting the rod at an angle that would probably break it.

Yes. The best way to break a fly rod is to fight the fish with the rod at 90 degrees or greater with repect to the taught line. You are actually applying much more pressure to your rod than to the fish. What the guide means is: "Don't raise your rod way up and apply pressure. If you do you may break it."

19) I actually had a student who had a severe allergy to cork. He'd already purchased two expensive fly rods and didn't want to spend a lot more money to solve his problem. Can you come up with a practical solution?

Not really. The only thing I can think of is having the handles rebuilt with a synthetic type handle. (hypalon?)
An expensive fix. Much easier to coat the cork with plastic, tape, or to sand it down and then apply the wind-on sticky backed material they use on golf club handles.

20) You know the design requirements for the rod you wish to purchase. Now what do you actually do as you compare one rod with another at your fly shop?
Ideally, have the line you are going to use with you on a reel and cast the rods to compare. If that's not an option, hold the rod parallel with the floor and bend it slowly back and forth to try and get a feel of it's action, power and recovery abilities.
Yes. Someone who is expert on fly rods can tell a great deal by vibrating it in air. Your student isn't likely to gain any information at all by doing that or simply waving it about.
I like your first answer. If the shop keeper won't let me cast it, I won't buy it.

21) What considerations lead you to chose a particular fly rod rating?
What the rod will be used for.
You bet. This would include lots of things such as the weather and other casting conditions, the size and weight of the flies used and the size and fighting ability of your quarry.

22) What is HOOP STRENGTH?
The strength factor around the rod shaft as opposed to along it's length
Yes. Another way to put it is that hoop strength is resistance to the tendency of a tubular rod to flatten out as it is bent.

23) Of what value is the property of increased hoop strength of many modern fly rods?
Prevents the rod from collapsing along it's length.
Agree. This also contributes to stiffness since this increases as the resistance to deformation (flattening) increases.

(continued on page 32)

24) Rod manufacturers use materials of greater modulus to make their rods stiffer and more responsive relative to rod weight. What else do they do to help accomplish the same thing?
Adjust the taper profile *Yes. This includes increasing tubular diameter and adjustments to wall thickness.*

25) What is meant by the term PARABOLIC TAPER?
A taper that is stiffer in the tip and softer in the butt section.
Another way to put it : A flexion profile which is not linear (straight line relationship) but progressive along a parabolic curve.
Or : A rod made with a progressive taper (as opposed to a taper which doesn't vary). .
26) What is 'DAMPING'? Reducing rod vibration. *Yes.* WELL DONE! Gordy

---

Some more answers.....

1) Your student asks you, "What is the best length for a fly rod? Your answer ?
What are you going to fish for and where? Small streams 7 1/2 to 8'; large fish in salt water or lakes 8 to 9'; medium rivers, lakes, salt water flats 8 1/2 to 9 1/2' (with 9' being my preferance); larger rivers 9 to 10 1/2' to allow more control when mending.

2) In trying for a bit more distance when casting your 5 wt. graphite fly rod, you feel that if you had just a bit more rod length you would be able to achieve a little bit more distance. Tim Rajeff recently showed us a trick that he uses. Do you remember what that was? Use a down locking reel seat, then grip the rod as close to the reel as possible.

3) Try to come up with a good description or definition of the term ROD ACTION.
a. Short answer. How a rod bends under load.
b. More detailed answer. A slow rod will bend close to the cork if not into the cork under very little to moderate load. A medium fast rod will bend to the middle of the rod under a moderate load. A fast rod will bend very little under a light load then requiring a heavy load to bend into the butt section. Load would be determined by how much line was being carried and the amount of energy applied to move the rod though the casting stroke.

4) We have all heard of casters describing a fly rod as having lots of POWER. What do you think they mean? The ability of the rod to develop lots of line speed.

5) What do you think is meant by the term, 'ROD STRENGTH'? How well a rod stands up to heavy use.

6) Salt water fly fishermen sometimes request a fly rod with 20 lbs. or greater LIFTING POWER. What application do you think they have in mind? Being able to lift (move) a heavy fish in deep water, it may or may not be directly under the boat.

7) You have two fly rods. Each is rated at # 6 wt. One of them is 10' in length. The other is 8 1/2' long. The factory rep tells you that both have exactly the same EFFECTIVE ROD LENGTH. How can that be?

8) Give a brief definition for EFFECTIVE ROD LENGTH.
9) Can you give us a reference for that?
10) Who was the first author to use that term ?

11.) What (if any) changes would you make in your casting if you switch from a 10' long # 7 rod to an 8' long #7 fly rod assuming that they are both 'medium fast' rods and you are using the same fly line? Increase line speed and stroke length to make the same length cast.

(continued on page 33)

12) What (if any) changes would you make in your casting if you switch from a 9' long # 7 fast action rod to a 9' long #7 slow action "full flex" rod? Slow down and lengthen the casting stroke.

13) Your student is about to enter a distance casting competition. He asks you if the size and weight of his reel will make any difference. What do you tell him? If he feels comfortable with his current reel, it should not cause any problems for him.

14) This same student now asks you whether he should choose an up locking reel seat or a down locking seat for this event. Your advice? Downlocking inorder to increase rod length.

15) Another of your students is going on a trip. He will be fishing for very large, powerful fish. The fish camp operator has informed him that he won't need long casts, but that these fish are so powerful that not many can be landed. Ten to twelve wt. systems have been recommended. He is about to purchase a fly rod for that situation and he wants to know whether a long rod or a short rod would be best. What do you tell him? Short rod advatage to the fishermen, long rod advantage to the fish. Get the shorter rod.

16) The angler in question #15 has been advised to use a rod of a particular length. He now wants to know if this should be a stiff rod or one which is more flexible to land these big powerful fish. Your advice? The one he is most comfortable casting that has good butt strength for fighting and lifting large heavy fish.

17) Why? Although you may not cast very far or very often you should op for a rod that you feel good about and cast well. Just because a rod is stiff (fast) doesn't mean it has good lifting power and durability and just because a rod is more flexible doesn't mean it doesn't have good lifting power and durability.

18) You have hooked a very large fish. As you apply pressure, your guide says, *"Be careful not to break the ninety degree rule."* What does he mean? Don't let the angle between the rod and fish go to less than 90 degrees you could over stress the rod and break it.

19) I actually had a student who had a severe allergy to cork. He'd already purchased two expensive fly rods and didn't want to spend a lot more money to solve his problem. Can you come up with a practical solution? Tape over the cork, if that didn't work change the grip to one of the better foam grips.

20) You know the design requirements for the rod you wish to purchase. Now what do you actually do as you compare one rod with another at your fly shop? With the shop owners permission cast the rods

21) What considerations lead you to chose a particular fly rod rating? What am I going to fish for and under what circumstances, i.e. weather/wind, distance of cast, from a boat, float tube, wading etc.

22) What is HOOP STRENGTH? The strength of the diameter or cross section of the fly rod.

23) Of what value is the property of increased hoop strength of many modern fly rods? Line speed and fish fighting abililty, the rod tends to remain round instead of floating out to an oval shape when bent.

24) Rod manufacturers use materials of greater modulus to make their rods stiffer and more responsive relative to rod weight. What else do they do to help accomplish the same thing? Change rod tapers, wall thickness, blank diameter, and to some degree the resin used to adhere the graphite fibers.

25) What is meant by the term PARABOLIC TAPER? An even taper allowing for a more even bend (load) of the rod (guess on my part)

26) What is "DAMPING"? How fast a rod recovers from the vibrations of a cast, the quicker a rod stops vibrating the faster the damping.

Hungary 2010

International Certification Event

May 14-16th, 2010

Two new MCIs in Hungary - Zigi and Erno. Good Job!

The workshop/written test in Hungary

(continued on page 34)

The ultimate stay dry testing garments...waders

Recently I was fortunate to travel to the second certification event in Hungary. Hosted by Paul Arden - the candidates were very well prepared and ready. Paul had hosted a pre-certification workshop two weeks before the event to check everybody out. Almost all of the candidates did their performance test in English!

Zigi and Erno with a successful candidate.

New testing clothing- trying to stay dry

(continued on page 35)

Examiners Raf Mascaro & Denise Maxwell with Erno Paskay - the second MCI in Hungary!

Our two MCI candidates did very well and as soon as they had passed, we set out to put them to work helping us. Of the CI candidates - ten out of twelve passed.

It was truly an international event. Candidates came from Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Italy and Serbia. You can imagine the written tests - we had tests in four languages.

All of the candidates were enthusiastic and wonderful to meet.

Everyone gathered for a celebration supper on the last evening

(continued on page 36)

Successful CI candidate, Akos Szmutni. Akos has written the first book on fly fishing in the Hungarian language.

Paul Arden, Denise Maxwell and Milan Kupresanin in Croatia (fishing of course)

(continued on page 37)

This picture of Zigi, our first MCI in Hungary, sums up the event - a great success!

My thanks to all who contributed photos to this article. I have taken photos from all possible sources to present a good story.
Thanks to Paul Arden, Lucian Vasies and any others to whom I have not given credit. A great event that holds good memories. Denise

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Submissions may be sent to the editors or the National Office:

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From the Mike Heritage blog.....

Popping Loops

I like loops, in fact I love loops. I watch my loops like a hawk and I have learned to read them, and so should you. You can tell if your backcast is in line with forward cast. You can tell if there is a curve in your stroke. You can tell if you are stopping in the right place, are you creating the correct tip path?

If you cast a rod that you are unfamiliar with, you can learn its little quirks and foibles in just a few casts by watching the loops.

You can create open loops, tight loops, top pointed loops, bottom pointed loops (apparently - I have never been able to make them but I have seen pictures of them!), round loops; the list is seemingly endless.

The loop is a dynamic connection between one part of a fly line and another, normally the top, or fly leg and the bottom, or rod leg. Usually there is only one loop, the one that's taking your fly out to the fish but there is nothing to prevent you from adding a snap or two and having two or three loops while making a fancy presentation cast.

Loops don't magically appear. You and the rod have to combine to create them. Correct acceleration and straight line path (SLP), and stopping in the right place in the right way.

Learning to read your loops helps prevent you from just going through the mechanical motions, they help you adjust your stroke and become a better all round caster. *(April 2009)*

Reverse Psychology

I have recently been introduced to two teaching methods that seem to break the rules of fly casting instruction. One I saw as a demonstration and the other is on Youtube and both, in my opinion, are brilliant.

Generally when teaching fly casting you start with either the roll cast or a pickup and lay down, then move on to false casting, shooting line and finally double hauling. If we start in the middle, we would start with falsecasting, if we start at the end, we would start with the double haul.

There are a few things that are always difficult to get over to a student like, the backcast has to be as good as the front, how important loop formation is and, the worst of all, not cast just using the wrist. From that point of view it really doesn't matter where you start, it's always going to be a struggle to get those concepts over to the student. So, why not chuck them into the deep end and go straight to the most difficult thing for a caster to learn, the double haul.

It's a bit like how my wife reads a book, read the last page first then the rest of it makes sense!

They have to work out timing, stopping the rod, loop formation and using two hands, if they can grasp that then the rest is relatively easy. When you go back to the beginning (roll cast or pick up and lay down) my guess would be that they would only have to be shown a couple of times and they would get it straight away.

(continued on page 40)

Starting at the conventional beginning, every new cast we try to teach has to be explained and concepts described. If we start at the end, the student will have had to learn most of this and they will have experienced, and have a greater understanding of, the mechanics of flycasting.

I am going to try and marry this to Lee Cumming's method that he demo'd in Scotland, which means I won't be starting at the end but in the middle, then I will go to the end, then back to the beginning.

Right, who's first? *(May 2009)*

Check out the demo on Youtube at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHofBrTUORE

Cack Handed

I need a challenge to get myself interested in casting practice again. I have just been out for my first serious practice for ages, probably since my trip to Scotland and if it hadn't have been so funny it would have been tragic, I was crap with a capital K. I eventually threw a couple of near 120's with the help of a following wind but I was struggling to get a decent backcast in, the line is knackered and the handle of my 2TE is so pitted and split I was being distracted by it. Anyway I had soon had enough so I decided to cast left handed (I'm right handed) and things got interesting. I am quite competent with my left hand provided I don't try and double haul. I can single haul the backcast but I don't get any feeling in the forward haul. I can't find the timing, or the feel. I have decided that I am going to teach myself to cast left handed properly. My target is 100ft, which to be honest may be a tad optimistic because my best, at the moment, is around 55ft, although I haven't put a tape out yet so I may be in for a surprise and find I am at 60ft.

I would like to just cast with my left hand but I have some competitions coming up and I don't want to look totally useless, however, these will be out of the way by the end of July and then I will cast left hand only.The interesting part is that I can see all the faults I see in other beginners, too much wrist in the wrong place, backcast not dynamic and aimed at the ground etc, etc.

Perhaps I will film my progress and we can have a laugh together, God knows I need one right now after a disastrous couple of weeks with my boiler and car. *(June 2009)*

More Cack Handedness

I think I am going to enjoy learning to cast left handed. You have to switch off automatic pilot and re-engage the brain. It also makes you realize that things are not quite as straight forward as you thought they were. For instance, I can cast nice loops when I don't haul, I can feel the rod load, I can adjust casting arc and power application but the moment I try and add a double haul it all goes out the window. All feeling, especially on the forward cast, just disappears. I know the reason. It's because my backcast just isn't very good. I have the classic beginner's problem, whoofy loops. Now, a woofy loop is one that displays several faults, it's too open, it is not dynamic enough to straighten and the line appears to want to travel is several directions at the same time, i.e. crap tracking coupled with a bad stop and rubbish power application. When I switch the rod to my right hand to see what I am doing wrong it is very apparent that I use only half the amount of effort, switch back to left and back off the power and try and relax the arm, ahh, much better. I have discovered a couple of other problems. I don't drop the rod tip with the line so when I pick up it's with a load of slack and I have chronic creep. I am beginning to think one reason why people creep is because their backcast is poor and they just start the stroke too early to try and catch it before it hits the ground.

I started the session at about 60' but I now have a measured cast as a benchmark, 83'. I have been here before, several years ago, but this time I hope it won't take me a year to add ten feet, like it did the first time round. With a bit of luck I may hit the ton by the end of the year. *(June 2009)*

(continued on page 41)

I'm talking to the hand, it just ain't listening..

I suppose I always knew it was happening but I have discovered my left hand doesn't know what my right hand is doing, in fact my left hand has a mind of its own. It completely ignores the instructions my brain are giving it. My forward loops are quite nice but my backcast loops are rubbish, I swap to the right hand to show the left what to do, 'look, see how easy it is?', put the rod in my left hand and it's as if it isn't listening, it carries on doing the same thing.

Actually it's not the hand - that only holds the rod, it's the wrist that is the problem, it feels weak, which it's not, it's just uneducated. Tracking is a nightmare, I even have a problem doing simple pick up and laydowns against a straight line and until I get it right, or at least consistent I won't get those nice dynamic loops I need to make the haul work.

I will have to take my own advice and just concentrate on basic technique before I attempt any serious distance stuff. I might even upline by one weight until I can consistently falsecast 50' in line.

Anyway, this is just confirming my suspicion than that the backcast is key to flycasting. My advantage is that I know this, most beginners just don't appreciate it. They just concentrate on what happens in front of them and are oblivious, or just don't care, about what happens behind them.

Best today of 78', I'm going backwards (again) *(June 2009)*

It's behind you....

Now then, what to do? This left hand casting business is useful, but not from a practical fishing point of view (of course it would be if I decide to carry on learning it) but, it is turning into something quite useful as a teaching aid. Twice in the last couple of weeks I have switched hands while teaching and asked the student to tell me what I am doing wrong and guess what, they can tell me exactly what I am doing wrong. It's a bit galling that it's exactly what I have been telling them for the last hour! The difference is they can now see what I see.

The problem is that by educating my left hand I may (probably will) lose the ability to demonstrate what an awful backcast looks like. Because I really do want to cast properly with my left hand, double haul and all, I may have to then go and take a lesson in how to cast badly so that I can demo it to students.

I have a lesson, from someone I respect, most years and this year I have decided that Charles Jardine has drawn the short straw. Can you imagine the scene, I pull up at chez Jardine, we shake hands and he asks me what do I want to work on and I ask him to teach me half a dozen ways to throw a crap backcast. I have seen Charles cast several times so I know he can do it, but, I bet he had to learn how because once you have learned how to throw a proper backcast it becomes bloody difficult to deliberately throw a bad one on demand. The one I really want to perfect is the one that looks ok'ish to start with but then runs out of steam, opens up and blows back to the caster. That's a classic.

Can anyone tell me why hardly anyone watches their backcast asdasdasedwedrfsdfsdfgsdfrgtswdefrswdeaqswdefrzx? (sorry just finished eating a melon and the keys needed a wipe). I really don't understand it. They are so fixated on the forward cast they totally ignore what is going on behind them. It's one of life's mysteries. *(July 2009)*

(continued on page 42)

Getting the message over....

When instructing there is always the possibility of instructions being misinterpreted by a student. But, you would imagine that when you are, essentially, talking to yourself you would think there is no room for ambiguity. I am living proof that this is not the case. My left hand still refuses to either watch what my right hand is doing or listen to what I tell it to do. This is putting me in a very awkward position, I mean, if I can't get an instruction across one arm and down the other what hope do I have with with someone standing a few feet away.

This is so bloody frustrating, I can either get the back cast right and then throw tails on the forward cast or I get the back cast from Hell and throw a beautiful forward cast. I just cannot get it consistently right in both directions at the same time.

Why are you throwing tails? I hear the more astute among you ask. Because my left hand has chronic creep, that's why. Why it won't stay back and wait for the line to straighten is a mystery to me, well, not exactly a mystery, just a bit puzzling. I think it has gotten so used to crap back casts that don't straighten properly that it comes forward too early to try and hit the cast before the line hits the ground, which means I am left with hardly any stroke length to apply proper power with. I filmed a session this morning and the difference between the timing of my right hand compared to my left is quite startling. My right just waits and waits for the line to straighten and then smoothly loads the rod from the get go. My left is half way into the stroke before it acquires the line and is almost shock loaded, the result is a huge tail.

I have gone through all the exercises I would put a student through, pick up and lay downs, side casting, cast lay down cast lay down on the back and forward strokes but it is still not coming together.

On the other hand, I no longer feel awkward doing the wrong thing with the wrong hand, I am actually starting to feel the haul working properly so not everything is bad news.

If I can't get a better quality video clip done tomorrow I will put the one up on Vimeo that I did today. Lets see if we can't work out what's going on. *(August 2009)*

The Eyes have it....

Since I have started to try and teach myself left handed fly casting I have been pondering what is the single most important aspect of fly casting that is key to producing the perfect fly cast. For the life of me I cannot say that this or that is the most important because 'this' always depends on 'that' being right as well.

I have said for years that a good, dynamic, back cast is the key to a good cast, and so it is, but, what do you have to do to create the perfect back cast? Ooh, let's see, perfect pickup or set up from the forward cast (and how do I set that up unless I have made the perfect back cast in the first place?), timing, power application, tracking, correct casting angle for amount of line/power, keeping everything in tension. Cor, look at that, I have just written the Five Essentials, and that's the crux of the matter. Take one of them away and you have f***ed up, to put it bluntly. There is just no way around it, all the elements of the Five Essentials have to be melded together to produce the perfect overhead cast, and most other casts for that matter.

Before I heard of the Five Essentials my only option was trial and error as a way of trying to sort out (m)any casting problems I had. I fished for twenty five years before I got around to having my first proper lesson. That's an awful lot of trial and error. If I had bothered to take a few fly casting lessons in year one I would have had the tools to work out my problems properly. This is exactly what the Essentials are, they are your tools of the trade.

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Once you have the tools you can set about building your cast. The only other thing you need is eyes. You use those to watch your loops, or your hand, or the rod tip. For God's sake look at something, don't just stare vacantly into space as I see a lot of casters do. If you have a problem seeing your back cast, open up your stance a bit so that you can glance back without having to contort your neck or twist your body (that can ruin your tracking as you turn forward again). Learn to read your fly line. Is the loop too open, is it tailing, is the fly leg waving around, are the rod leg and fly leg in plane, are there waves running down the rod leg as the loop moves away from you? Even when the line has hit the ground, or water, you can still read it. Is it straight, has it curved, did it turn over fully or did it land in a heap? All of these things will lead back to one, or more, of the Five Essentials not being performed properly.

I think I have just answered my own question and created the Sixth Essential.

#6 - Use Your Bloody Eyes. *(September 2009)*

Who am I? What am I?...Where am I?

I'm in a bit of a quandary. I need a bit more involvement with my fly casting certification organisation. I am an FFF certified casting instructor, all well and good. I like their ethos, I have a lot of friends who are FFF, there are online discussion groups and there are lots of resources on their web site. My problem is that, at the moment, they do not have a very big presence in the UK, and, to be honest, in the rest of Europe. They hold regular workshops and an annual conclave, but, they are all in America. I believe this will change as the FFF membership grows in Europe. The trouble is I am not getting any younger and by the time all this comes to pass I may well be in my dotage and ready to be put out to grass.

As I see it I have three options; wait for the FFF to find it's feet in Europe; join AAPGIA; work my way through the GAIA system.

I am not political in any sense of the word but there are some background politics involved with both AAPGIA and GAIA. I don't really know what they are, I don't want to. All I want is to do is to be able to teach fly casting without being concerned that one or the other looks on me as being somehow less than they are because I am not a member of their organisation. It's just ridiculous, it's not rocket science, the world isn't going to end tomorrow because I am one or the other, we teach fly casting for God's sake, not brain surgery.

I am slightly more inclined towards GAIA at the moment. From what I have seen they have made huge improvements in their certification process. I have seen a qauntum leap in their casting program, which, to be honest was a bit of a joke not so long ago and they appear, from where I stand, to be the ones on the move.

I have a huge respect for most of the AAPGIA instructors I know and it wouldn't do me any harm to work my way through their system either.

Or, I could take my FFF Master's and use that to help increase the FFF's profile in Europe. I don't mean that Mike Heritage becoming a Master would raise the FFF's profile, I mean that being a Master would allow me to help with certification of CCI's.

I hate decisions, but I am going to have to make one soon.

Mike Heritage has been an FFF CI for two years. My thanks for allowing me access to his blog to entertain you folks.

From The Editor

It is that time again...and I am late with this issue of the Loop. I hate being late or getting behind and this spring has seen me do just that. Playing catch up is tiring and frustrating. I blame it on too much to do.....

I hope your winter wasn't as long as mine seemed. That in itself sounds weird because we had the warmest winter on record here and an amazing early part of the year. Spring in February!
It is just that the weather has turned cold, wet and more like winter than winter was - and this is June!

Recently I was fortunate to have the opportunity to travel to two international testing events - Scotland followed by Hungary.

If any of you have tested in Livingston(?) - it isn't until you get out on the field that you remember how windy it always is in Livingston. We end up hiding behind buildings or corners - anything to cut the wind.

Well - I have found a place that beats Livingston for wind - and I didn't think that was possible. It is Aberdeen, Scotland. Talk about windy!

Now don't get me wrong - the event was great. The people were a pleasure to meet - this was an annual Sexy Loops gathering and these folks are even more nuts about casting than some of us. However I didn't warm up until I got to the airport to leave....

I had the opportunity to fish a day in Scotland before I left - at the Haddo Trout Fishery. A small stocked lake but amazing fishing. I caught a blue trout (yes!), brown and rainbow trout.
The owner/manager - Mike Barrio - closed the facility for a day to allow us - the bunch from the event - to fish. A very enjoyable day of fishing.

From cold and windy Scotland, I traveled to Budapest, Hungary where I met up with Paul Arden, Raf Mascaro and some of our candidates. Paul lives part of the year in Hungary - actually southwest Hungary in a lovely spot full of grape vines and beautiful rivers. Everybody makes wine there - and palinka! His house looks out over the Drava River and Croatia is on the other side.

The weather in Hungary was supposed to be in the 80-90s - shorts weather - and I was thinking that this might be my only shot at summer but no.....a huge storm swept thru Europe and found us. Check out the pictures of our testing gear - full waders, rain jackets and if I would have had gloves, I would have put them on. Wow!
You could say all of us bonded over the weather. the wind was horizontal and raining.....

This unfortunate weather didn't help with the fishing that was planned after the event. Paul had offered some fishing - and Milan - a fishing guide from Croatia and one of our successful candidates - had offered to take us. Since almost all of the rivers were in flood, we went down into Croatia to the Gacka River, which is a beautiful chalkstream. Wow!

The fishing wasn't the greatest because the Gacka was also full of water from the storm, but what a beautiful river. I am going to go back and fish. Before I go, I have to practice my nymph fishing because in reality, I really suck at this type of fishing. It was sight fishing for large brown trout and rainbow trout but no hatches happened.

I enjoyed meeting everybody in Hungary. It is a beautiful country and all of the candidates were great. Many thanks to Paul Arden for his careful and thorough preparation for the certifications. Congratulations to all who passed.

I won't tell you about the extra weight in my baggage that I accumulated on the trip. Unbelievable!

Now about this edition of the Loop. One of the attendees I met in Scotland, Mike Heritage has contributed an article to this issue. He has also allowed me complete access to his blog - to use for the Loop.

Many thanks to the others who contributed. I thought the 'well was dry' but this is a good size edition. However don't hesitate to send in your articles please.

The conclave is around the corner - I promise to have the next editon of the Loop out before it. If you are attending, see you there. If not, we'll toast you and hope you are fishing. Life is good - be sure to go fishing!

Talk to you soon.
Denise

Upcoming Events for 2010

Roscommon, MI FFF Great Lakes Council Conclave John VanDalen	June 18 - 20, 2010 CI (2) Test is on Saturday 6/19/2010	For more information on the show http://www.fffglc.org/
2-Day CI PREP WORKSHOP Douglas City, CA (near Redding) Guy Manning	June 26 -27, 2010 Limit in this prep class is 10.	For more information and to sign up contact Guy Manning
West Yellowstone, MT FFF Conclave & Fly Fishing Fair 2010 Jessica Atherton	August 25-26, 2010 Instructor Master Two-Handed	To Sign up for this test location you will need to go through the pre-registration process for Conclave - Pre-Registration opens May 2010
Brisbane, Australia Peter Morse, MCI	Sept. 25, 2010 Instructor 4 (Full)	
Germany Neumunster Thorsten Strueben	August 27-29, 2010 CI MCI	International testing event. For more info and to register, go to the web page for Germany 2010.
Melbourne, Australia Peter Hayes	Sept. 29-Oct.1, 2010 Instructor Master THCI	International testing event. For more info and to register, go to the web page for Australia 2010.
Mtn Home, AR FFF Southern Council Conclave Chuck Easterling	October 2, 2010 Instructor (5) Master (2)	For more information on the show http://www.southerncouncilfff.org/conclave/conclave.php
Kissimmee, FL FFF Florida Council Conclave Dusty Sprague	October 23 - 24, 2010 Instructor (6) Master (2)	For more information, Dusty Sprague or Gordy Hill
Italy 2010 Bereguardo, Italy (Milan) Raf Mascaro	Nov. 5-6, 2010 Instructor Master Two-Handed	International testing event. For more info and to register, go to the web page for Italy 2010 or contact Raf Mascaro
Japan 2010 Nagoya, Japan	Nov. 4-7, 2010 Instructor Master Two-handed	International testing event. For more info and to register, go to the web page for Italy 2010 or contact Bill Higashi

Please see the FFF web site for registration deadlines, testing class limits and contact information.

CONGRATULATIONS

New Casting Instructors

Gary Woodward - Jonesboro, AR
Dan Brown - Taylors Falls, MN
Ryan Allred - Medford, OR
Michael May - Gardiner, ME
David McCoy - Seattle, WA
Dylan Rose - Seattle, WA
Robin C Brown - Livermore, CO
John Hyde Ordl - Chiloquin, OR
Jay Grant - San Francisco, CA
Matthew (MJ) Jones - San Francisco, CA
Thomas Urbig - Germany
Don Urquhart - Australia
Eddie Schoenbein - Sonoma, CA
Robert Garber - Haltom City, TX
Misty Dhillon - Elliott City, MD/India
Gabriele DiFlorio - Romania
Milan Kupresanin - Croatia
Janko Bartolec - Croatia
Joel Oerter - Seattle, WA
Gabriele Di Florio - Romania
Magnus Toth - Sweden
Akos Szmutni - Hungary
Oliver Kuzmanovic - Serbia
Tamas Bacsai - Hungary
Lucian Vasies - Romania
Larry Levine - Heber Springs, AR
Stephen A Walker - Fairfield, OH
Don Horton - Burlingame, CA
Scott Gerlt - Columbia, MO
Rick Radoff - Rocklin, CA
Egor Babich - Ukraine
Wayne Pattison - Australia
Keith Westra - Fremont, CA
Dean Schubert - Santa Rosa, CA
Christopher Bassano - Australia
Jess Clark Spokane, WA
Raymond (Lee) Watts - Wales, UK
Shaun Ash - Australia
Ivica Bratic - Croatia
Yevgeniy Fedorenko - Ukraine
Igor Stankovic - Serbia
Mike Kolaski - Pearland, TX
Djordje Andjelkovic - Serbia
Oleg Jeltovski (Ole Nord) - Russia
Yuriy Matukhin - Russia
Esa Raudasvirta - Sweden
Dmitriy Drozdov - Russia
Fredrik Hedman - Sweden
Magnus Hedman - Sweden
Ulrik Roijezon - Sweden
Mark A Hutchinson - Appalachia, VA

New Master Casting Instructors

Zsigmond Kovacs - Hungary
Erno Paskay - Hungary
Jim Solomon - Culver City, CA
Mary Ann Dozer - Corvallis, OR
Fredrik Hedman - Sweden

New Two-Handed Casting Instructors

Gary Bencivenga - Quincy, WA

Sweden 2010

May 29 and 30, 2010

We have 5 new CI's; Fredrik Hedman, Magnus Toth, Ulrik Röijezon, Magnus Hedman, Esa Raudasvirta.

The workshop and written test at the event.

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Fredrik Hedman did both his CI and MCI during the same event.

Sweden Certification Event – Some of Sweden's best turned out for the FFF International Committee's certification event at Älvkarleby on the river Dalälven.

Two of our hard working Masters, Thomas Berggren, and Stefan Siikavaara put on a great CI workshop. New Master Fredrik Hedman gave one of the best talks on "keeping it simple" that I have seen. It was well received by all who attended.

Setting up the field

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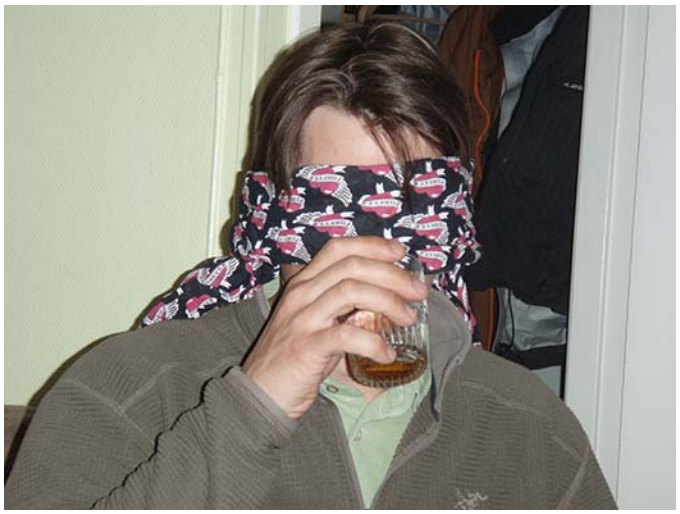
Practice, practice.....

The location was well suited for testing with a large lawn area, nearby lodging and a café.

The lead organizer was Stefan Siikavaara, with backup from Thomas Berggren. A great job for two relatively new Masters. Their hospitality and organizational skills were very much appreciated.

Stefan is also coaching Sweden's distance casting team.

Dan McCrimmon BOG



A blind taste test

OOPS - I'v done it again....

In the last issue of the Loop, I mistakenly gave credit to the wrong author. The article called 'The End of August' belongs to Louis Bruno. Ihave corrected the copy that sits on the Loop pages of the FFF web site.

My sincere apologies - If I keep this up, this may have to become a regular column.....