

FALL  
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# The Loop

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Cover photo: Martin Aylwin - IFFF MCI, Santiago, Chile  
Location: Rio Claro, Central Chile



# 2015 CBOG MEETING SYNOPSIS

by Rick Williams, Chair of Casting Board of Governors



*Doing the Power Snap with Joan Wulff! - Joan Wulff and 12 Governors after her Old Mill district presentation acknowledging the Power Snap!*

The 2015 annual meeting for the Casting Instructor Certification Program (CICP) occurred Tuesday, Aug. 11 in Bend, OR, at the 50th Anniversary IFFF Fly Fishing Fair. Nineteen governors attended the meeting, as well as a dozen or more

CICP members, including former Emeritus Governors Steve and Tim Rajeff, Randi Swisher, Bob Middo, and Jeff Wagner, and new MCIs Bill Wheeler, Paul and Gail Gallo, and Jim Sommercorn.

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## 2015 CBOG Meeting Synopsis *continued...*

Four new governors were seated: Dok Arvanites (MCI, Montana), Willy George (MCI, California), Keith Richard (MCI, Louisiana), and Brian McGlashan (MCI/THCI, Scotland). Brian is the CICP's first Governor from the UK!

Two governors retired: John Breslin (Wisconsin) and Bruce Richards (Montana). Bruce was one of the founding governors and had served 23 years on the CBOG. Bruce was designated Governor-Emeritus for his long and valued service to the CICP.

A special event occurred at the 2015 Fair, with Joan Wulff attending on Wednesday, and she conducted an hour-long presentation for governors and MCIs at the Old Mill District. Joan demonstrated her teaching methods using many different eye-catching visual aids and explanations of her casting terminology and definitions that all of us learned when preparing for our own certification exams. It was great to see Joan at the presentation and that evening at the IFFF President's Banquet.

The CICP business meeting included updates from all CICP Committees. One highlight was an in-depth look at the testing results and feedback from the new CI Exam. **CI Test Committee** – The CI Test Committee presented testing results and feedback from the new CI Exam. A new CI test was approved at the 2014 CBOG meeting and rolled out for use starting Apr. 1, 2015, along with supporting notes for examiners and performance tips for candidates. By the time of the Fair, 59 CI tests had been given with



***Power Snap Again!*** - L to R: **Leslie Holmes, Joan Wulff, Steve Hollensed, and Peter Hayes.** Leslie and Steve were 2015 recipients of the **Mel Krieger Fly Casting Instruction Award** for their longstanding efforts in mentoring instructor candidates.

feedback on the test experience solicited from both examiners and candidates.

### ***Results for the CI Post-Test Survey indicated:***

- 51 examiners were solicited for feedback with 44 responses



## 2015 CBOG Meeting Synopsis *continued...*

- 42 candidates were solicited for feedback with 14 responses (8 passed; 6 did not)

### **Overall, examiners were satisfied with the new tests:**

- 91% were satisfied with the time requirements on the new CI test
- 93% of examiners had taken the CI Examiner's Training Workshop
- 50% of examiners provided suggestions for additional improvement

### **Survey results from candidates included:**

- 79% of candidates were satisfied with their testing experience
- 93% noted the test was administered consistent with the testing protocol
- 100% noted the physical exam site as satisfactory

### **Candidates were asked what they would do differently if they could do the test over.**

- gain teaching experience first
- likely do another pre-test; the test is more than the sum of the tasks
- use only an MCI as a mentor, one that actually administers the test

**MCI - Test Committee** – The MCI Test Committee is underway with a revision of the MCI test that will hopefully be presented to the CBOG at the 2016 meeting in Livingston. Goals for the MCI test revision include being consistent and complimentary to the new CI Test, placing greater emphasis on understanding of topics, mechanics, and instructional skill assessment.

**International Committee** – The International Committee oversees the area of fastest growth for the CICP. Of the total number of tests given last year (2014) was 173, with 77 (45%) given at international events. Need further work and funding assistance to deliver the EDP program

to our international MCI and THCI Examiners.

**Examiner Development (EDP Committee)** – The EDP Committee reported that significant progress had occurred in 2015, the second year of the three-year implementation period. Most importantly, the EDP program requirements were streamlined and simplified (January 2015), making it easier for MCIs to participate in the Examiner Training Program. Program accomplishments include:

- Eight EDP training events were held in 2015 in North America and abroad.
- More than 90 MCIs are enrolled in the EDP program
  - 88% of governors are EDP members
  - 33% of all MCIs are EDP members
  - 80% of new MCIs (2014 onward) are enrolled in EDP
- Goals for the EDP Committee in the coming year are to
  - Address barriers (perceived and real) that prevent greater MCI involvement in EDP
  - Further revise, simplify, and update the test-specific Examiner Training Workshops.
  - Provide more opportunities for EDP training and involvement at regional and international CICP events.

**Awards Committee** – Seven CICP Awards in fly casting instruction were given out in 2015.

• **Steve and Tim Rajeff** both received the Lifetime Achievement in Fly Casting Award for their many and varied contributions to fly casting and instruction. The crowd at the 50th Anniversary banquet gave them a standing ovation for these richly deserved awards and recognition.

## 2015 CBOG Meeting Synopsis *continued...*



***Rick Williams, CBOG Chair, presenting William Holmes with a Governor's Pin in Bellingham, England (Sept 2015) in recognition of his selfless work in helping grow the CICP and EDP programs in the UK and throughout Europe.***

- ***Leslie Holmes*** and ***Steve Hollensed*** were the 2015 recipients of the Mel Krieger Fly Casting Instruction Award for their outstanding efforts in mentoring instructor candidates over many years.

- Al Buhr became the first recipient for the new Floyd Franke Award for Contributions to the CICP. Al's contributions are legion and include development and oversight of the Two-Hand Certified Instructor Program.
- Governor's Pins were awarded to Chuck Easterling, Carl Zarelli, and William Holmes for their significant and valuable contributions over the last year to the CICP in supporting the rapid growth we are seeing internationally and within the EDP (Examiner's Development Pathway).

At the conclusion of the CBOG meeting in Bend, participants commented on how the CBOG and CICP has become re-energized, focused, and exciting. Some of the former CBOG members commented very positively on how collegial the meetings and peer interactions have become - a noticeable and pleasant change from their experience with the CBOG in earlier years.

The meeting adjourned to the Old Mill District for a CICP social event sponsored by Rick Williams and Tye Krueger (CI) of the Confluence Fly Shop, where stories were told, Deschutes River Ale enjoyed, and informal casting games occurred.

The 2016 CICP Annual Board of Governors Meeting will occur on Tuesday, Aug. 2, at the Annual IFFF Fly Fishing Fair, in Livingston, MT. See you there!

***Rick Williams - MCI,THCI, CBOG is currently serving as the Chair of the Casting Board of Governors***



# IFFF Examiner Development Pathway Update

**Mark Huber - EDP Committee Chair, Anchorage, Alaska, USA**

The IFFF met in Bend, OR in August for the 2015 Fly Fishing Fair and celebrated 50 years of the organization. Our Certified Casting Instructor's Program [CICP] program also marked an important milestone - the Examiner Development Pathway [EDP] marked its one year anniversary. I am pleased to report that implementation of the EDP is well underway, with 90 MCIs currently enrolled in the program. We have several individuals who have achieved their validated examiner status at the L1 and L3 level and more who are well on their way to achieving validated examiner status in the coming months.

As CICP members, your continuing feedback is important as we continue with EDP implementation. Several considerable changes have been made to date based on feedback received. Please forward your comments or suggestion to me at [mhuber@gci.net](mailto:mhuber@gci.net) or to a CBOG in your area.

You will recall that under EDP, only validated examiners will be able to conduct CCIP exams after December 31, 2016. Until December 31, 2016, those who achieved their MCIs prior to December 31, 2013 were grandfathered in their examiner status. These examiners are the bridge over the three year EDP implementation period which ends on December 31, 2016. With the current level of EDP participation, we believe we will have a sufficient number of EDP validated examiners to successfully meet the demand for CCIP exams in 2017 and beyond.

In this update let me address several questions which were posed to me and other EDP Faculty during the 2015 IFFF Fair in Bend.

**Question:** *What is the purpose of EDP in the CCIP?*

**Answer:** The purpose of EDP is to increase the quality and consistency of CCIP exams conducted by the IFFF.

**Question:** *Are MCIs required to participate in EDP?*

**Answer:** No. MCIs are encouraged to participate. If MCIs wish to conduct CCIP exams in 2017 and the future, they will need to have completed the EDP requirements and become a validated examiner.

**Question:** *What is required for an MCI to achieve L1 (CCI) Examiner status?*

**Answer:**

1. Enroll in the EDP program by sending an email to Chuck Easterling at [charles.easterling@sbcglobal.net](mailto:charles.easterling@sbcglobal.net) and [casting@fedflyfishiners.org](mailto:casting@fedflyfishiners.org)
2. Attend an EDP Examiner Effectiveness Workshop.
3. Attend an EDP CCI Exam Workshop.
4. Participate in CI exams at the following participation levels under the EDP Program
  - One CI exam in an Observer role.
  - Two CI exams in a Second Examiner role.
  - One CI exam in a Supervised Lead Examiner role.

Note: For MCIs certified before January 1, 2014 – credit will be given towards the CI exam participation roles for documented CI exam experience since January 1, 2011.

5. Complete the CI exam Peer Performance Review (PPR).

## IFFF EDP Update *continued...*

6. Annual reporting of teaching and mentoring activity to the ERC Committee. An Annual Activity Log is available to report activities. This can be downloaded by contacting [casting@fedflyfishers.org](mailto:casting@fedflyfishers.org).

**Question:** *How much do the EDP workshops cost?*

**Answer:** EDP workshops are provided at no charge. In 2014 there was a \$75 charge for the workshops and *that charge has been dropped based on feedback received.*

**Question:** *How long does it take to complete the L1 EDP requirements?*

**Answer:** This will depend on scheduling and your availability to attend scheduled workshops and exams. You should reasonably expect twelve to twenty four months to complete the EDP requirements depending on the availability of EDP workshops and gaining the required CCI exam experience in your area.

**Question:** *Is the Peer Performance Review (PPR) a separate IFFF test and what is the purpose of the PPR in EDP?*

**Answer:** Peer Performance Review (PPR) is not a test. It is a Peer (EDP Faculty) review of the EDP enrollee's performance of certain CCIP exam tasks specific to the examiner level sought. For example, a L1 EDP enrollee would be asked to perform certain exam tasks from the CI exam to an exam pass standard.

The purpose of the PPR within the EDP process is to assure credibility of the examining team in that examiners have the ability to successfully perform the exam tasks.

Credibility of IFFF CCIP examiners, exam consistency and fairness in how exams are conducted is a critical factor in the reputation and credibility of the entire CCIP.

You can expect to see EDP workshops coming to IFFF regional and international events over the coming year. If you need CCIP exam participation requirements and are interested in completing those at a scheduled event, please send an email to [casting@fedflyfishers.org](mailto:casting@fedflyfishers.org)



*About the author:*

**Mark Huber** is an International Federation of Fly Fishers (IFFF) Master Certified Casting Instructor (MCI) and a Certified Two Handed Casting Instructor (THCI). Mark also serves on the IFFF Casting Certification Program Board of Governors and is Co-Chair of the IFFF Two Handed Casting Committee. Mark is an avid fly fisher and provides fly casting instruction and presentations to individuals

and groups. Mark serves on Pro Staff with R.L. Winston Rod Company and Ballistic Spey Lines.

A long time resident of Alaska, Mark is an active fly fisher and casting instructor throughout Alaska, the western US and internationally. Mark specializes in fly casting and spey casting techniques and fly fishing for the trophy rainbow trout of the Bristol Bay and Katmai regions of Alaska.



# NEWLY APPROVED CASTING DEFINITIONS

## For Casting Instructors

Tim Lawson, CBOG, Los Angeles, California

Defining the terms we all use when teaching and conducting certification exams is critical to the continued success of the IFFF Casting Instructor Certification Program (CICP). To that end, the Continuing Education Committee developed a list of terms which are used by all certified casting instructors when teaching and testing, and assigned clear and concise definitions to those terms. On Aug. 11, 2015, during the annual meeting of the Casting Board of Governors (CBOG) in Bend, OR, the CBOG officially approved the definitions document.

As you will read in the Preamble, the CE Committee's goal was to create definitions intended for certified casting instructors when communicating with one another. In particular, it was felt that the six motions possible during a cast (casting arc, stroke length, creep, drag, rotational and translational drift) must be clearly understood and consistently defined by instructors and examiners. Dubbed "The Simple Six," this list is the cornerstone of all casting instruction, regardless of the skill level of the student.

How many of you understand "The Five Essentials?" How many of you teach them to casting students in the format written in the Gammel's booklet? The same principle applies to these definitions. It is expected that instructors be capable of molding the core definition to fit the level of understanding of the student. "Rod rotation in the direction of the next cast during the pause" is probably

going to need a little embellishment by the instructor to help a student with a "Creep" issue. Another certified instructor, however, will know exactly what the mechanical issue is when told a student has a problem with "Creep."

It was recognized by the CE Committee that many casting authorities have provided us with casting definitions over the years. Most of us learned the basics from the published works of Joan Wulff, Mel Krieger, the Gammels, and Lefty. These publications and their definitions were aimed at the casting student. While certainly useful in teaching the basics, individual variation was sometimes confusing. The document that follows is specifically designed to eliminate that individual variation and confusion.

Questions and constructive comments are welcomed and encouraged. Please direct your responses to: Tim Lawson, MCI, CBOG; 44osprey@gmail.com; (323) 303-7438

These casting definitions and their complementary illustrations have been developed and approved by the Continuing Education Committee of the IFFF Casting Board of Governors. They have been adopted by the Professional Development Committee for inclusion in the Casting Instructor Study Guide, and by the Examiner Development Pathway Committee for inclusion in the CI and MCI Examiner Training Workshops.

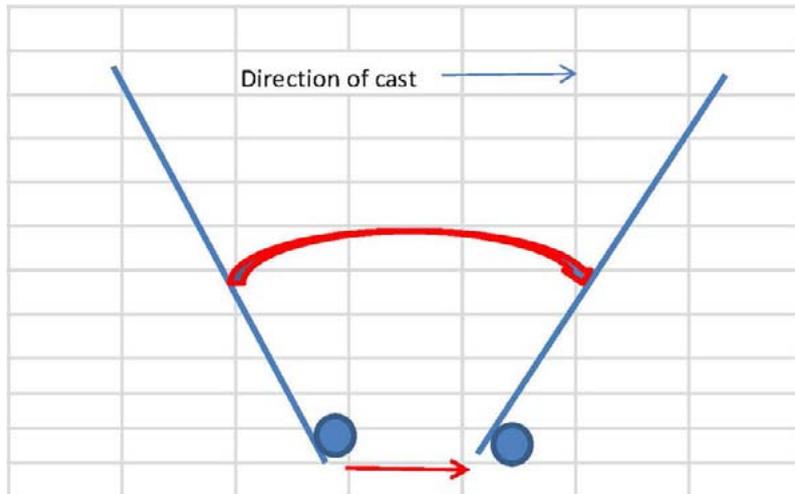
Newly Approved Casting Definitions *continued...*

The first six definitions specify the elements of fly casting mechanics, that is, the hand and rod movements that produce a fly cast. The remaining definitions were written to provide a common language for casting instructors and examiners. All were written to provide a set of terms that IFFF certified casting instructors should use when discussing casting among themselves. When instructors use the core definitions to explain fly casting terms to students, it may be necessary to match the communication content to the skill level of the student by adjusting the wording of the definitions.

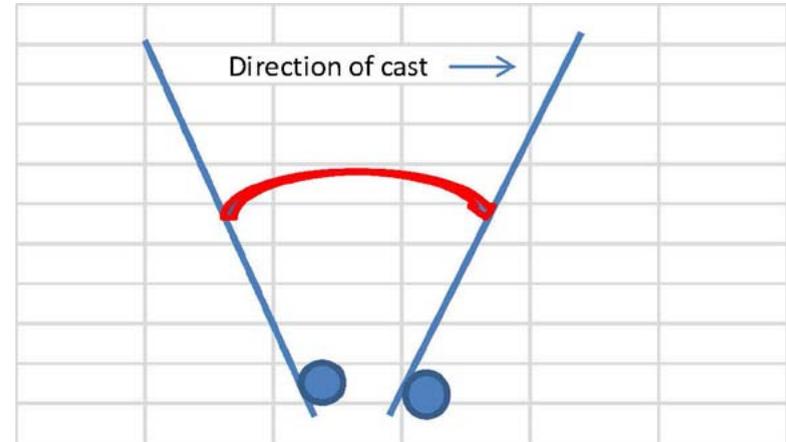
**Fly casting – the act of casting a fly line with a fly rod**

**1. Casting stroke –**

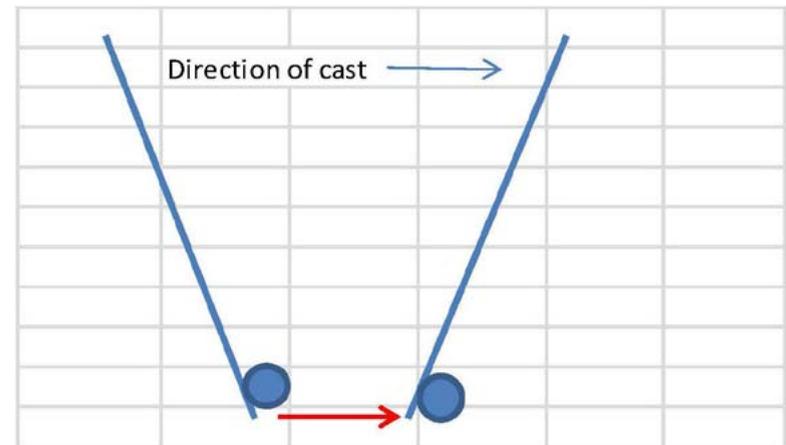
1. Fly rod motion sufficient to cause loop formation.
2. Rod translation and/or rotation during a fly cast sufficient to cause loop formation.



**2. Casting arc –** The angle change of the fly rod during the casting stroke.

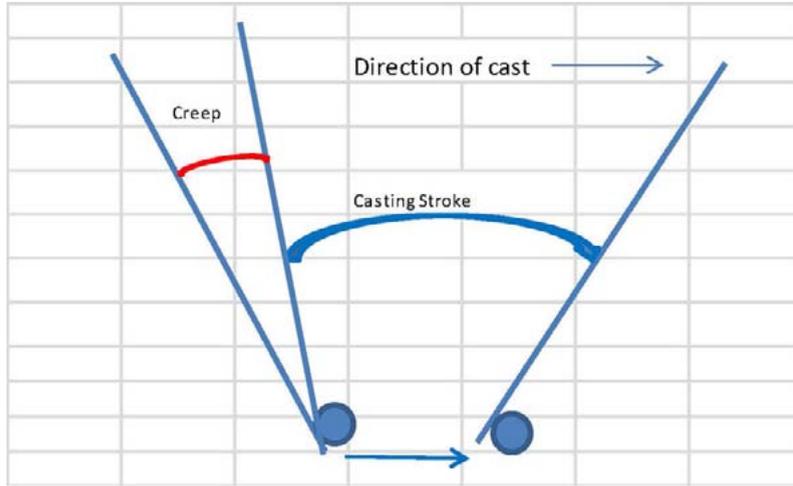


**3. Casting stroke length (stroke length) –** The distance moved by the rod hand during the casting stroke.

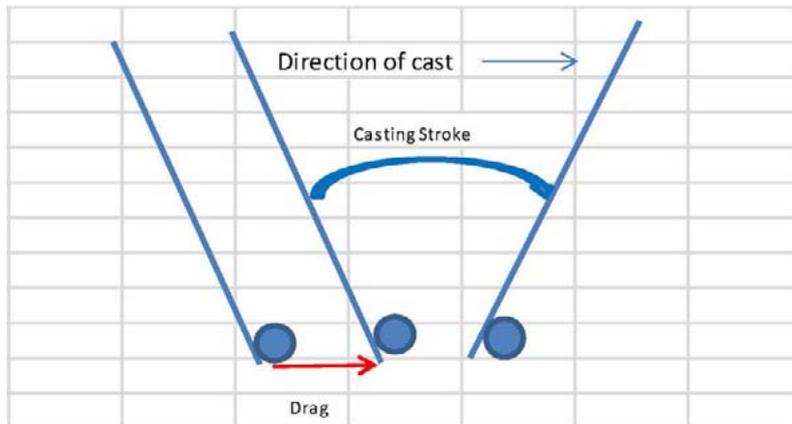


Newly Approved Casting Definitions *continued ...*

4. **Creep** – Rod rotation during the pause in the direction of the next cast.

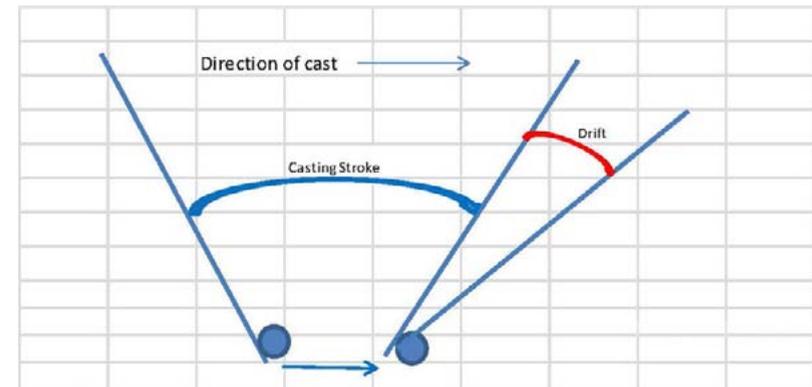


5. **Drag** – Hand translation during the pause in the direction of the next cast.



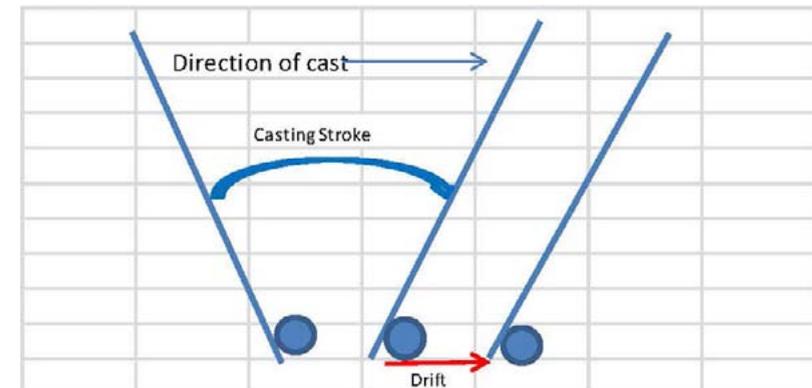
6. **Drift** – Rod rotation and/or hand translation during the pause in the direction of the current cast.

**Rotational Drift** – Rod rotation during the pause in the direction of the current cast.



*Pause* – time period between casting stroke.

**Translational Drift** – Hand translation during the pause in the direction of the current cast.



## Newly Approved Casting Definitions *continued...*

**7. Mend** – repositioning the fly line after loop formation on a delivery cast

Aerial mend – mending before the line lands on the water

Water mend – mending after the line lands on the water

**8. Single haul/hauling** – pulling on the fly line with the line hand while fly casting

**Double haul** – hauling on consecutive casts  
(back cast and forward cast)

**9. Curve cast** – Delivery cast in which the fly line and/or leader lands in a curve, caused by rod motion before loop formation

**10. Pause** – The time period between casting strokes

**11. Tailing loop** - Loop caused by a concave rod tip path in which the top (fly) leg dips toward and crosses the bottom (rod) leg



**12. Trailing (Underslung) loop** – straight or upward curving top leg that falls below the bottom leg due to gravity



Approved by the Casting Board of Governors 8/11/2015  
Illustrations courtesy of Bruce Richards, MCI, CBOG



*About the Author:*

**Tim Lawson** is an MCI who spends the summer months fishing the waters around Yellowstone National Park and the winter months tying flies and teaching casting in Pasadena, CA, US. He enjoys mentoring CI and MCI candidates, and is an active examiner in the Casting Instructor Certification Program (CICP). Tim is a Life Member of the IFFF.

Contact him at,  
44osprey@gmail.com; (323) 303-7438

## Casting Masters Then and Now

# MEL KRIEGER

1928-2008

By Bruce Morrison

*"If you're fortunate, you will understand that the complex and profound path toward teaching mastery gets two miles farther away for every mile you travel"*  
*Mel Krieger (1993, IFFF publication)*



Mel Krieger is known to fly fishers around the world. During his 35 years as a casting instructor Mel taught in Austria, Germany, England, Scandinavia, Switzerland, England, Australia, New Zealand, South America, the United States, Canada, and Asia. Mel was the head of the western division of the Fenwick Fly Casting Schools. When Fenwick decided to close the schools Mel started his own school, The Mel Krieger International School of Fly Fishing. Many fly fishers knew him through his Club Pacific, a travel agency for

fly fishers. His wife Fanny handled the all important administrative details for both the casting schools and the travel agency. His seminal book, *The Essence of Flycasting* has been translated into many languages. At the time of his death he was working on a new book: *The Quintessence of Fly Casting: A Manual for Experienced Fly Casters and Instructors*. Mel put together four DVD's dealing with various aspects of casting and fly fishing. Many of them have been dubbed in other languages.

## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*



*Mel at the Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club, San Francisco*

Mel loved Argentina and Argentines. He donated the money from the sale of his book, DVD (Argentine- Spanish edition) and his workshops in Argentina to a foundation to promote fly fishing and fly casting among Argentines. As a consequence, the numbers of men, women and children enjoying fly fishing greatly increased. Similarly, many of today's guides got their start in Mel's seminars.

Mel made important contributions to the IFFF. He is credited with persuading the Federation to initiate the instructors' certification program. Later he pushed to have the IFFF recognize the importance of two handed casting by creating an instructor's certification program. The IFFF recognized Mel's many contributions by awarding

him The IFFF Ambassador Award, The Lifetime Achievement Award and The Order of Lapis Lazuli. They also established The Mel Krieger Fly Casting Instruction Award in his honor. The Northern California Council of the IFFF inducted Mel and Fanny individually into the Fly Fishers' Hall of Fame.

In previous articles in this series I have asked interviewees to answer a series of questions. In this instalment, I ask some Mel's colleagues to write about what they learned from Mel and what they thought were his greatest contributions to fly casting instruction.

The Loop is grateful for the contributions from Al Kyte, Steve Rajeff, Macauley Lord, Christopher Rownes, Tim Rajeff and Willy George.

## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*



**Willy George:** The current president of the historic Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club (GGACC) writes about the formative role the club played in Mel's career.

In 1964 Mel and Fanny Krieger rented an apartment near Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. The location was not an accident.

A long time fisherman, Mel wanted to learn fly fishing. Before leaving Houston, they studied a map of San Francisco and discovered that there were casting ponds in the park. Mel joined the Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club, and visited the ponds most days to practice. With the help of casting experts like Jack Horner and Phil Miravelle, Mel was soon competing in casting tournaments and within a year's time had won several local championships.

About that same time, fellow Golden Gate club member Jimmy Green, chief rod designer for the Fenwick Rod Company, asked Mel to be the Western Headmaster of the Fenwick Regional Fly Fishing Schools, joining Lou Tabory in the East and Gary Borger in the Midwest. The Fenwick Schools were an instant success.

In 1971 the Krieger's bought a house on 27th Avenue, just across Fulton Street from the Golden Gate Park. When fishing shows were in town or fly fishing celebrities came to San Francisco the house became an epicenter for discussions about fly casting and fly fishing.

Notables like Ernie Schwiebert, Lee and Joan Wulff (who stayed at the Krieger home), and others would visit, socialize, and lend their expertise and opinions to the never-ending debates on casting mechanics and loop dynamics. Local experts like Al Kyte, Mike Fong, Nelson Ishiyama, and Jim Adams would join in these lively conversations. Two of Mel's son Jan's friends, Tim Rajeff and Chris Korich would sometimes pop into the melee. Both of these casters would later win their shares of tournament casting championships. Korich remembers sheets of paper being taped on the Krieger kitchen wall with fly rod sections and pencils being used to scribe and defend various theories about "what the rod was really doing."

It was during these social gatherings that Mel honed his own points of view on casting and teaching. He was an avid reader about the



sport of fly fishing and amassed more than 3000 books into his personal library. He would sometimes challenge you to a debate taking one side of an issue just to see how strong of an argument could be made in its defense. This would ultimately influence his final position on the subject.

## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*

One such occasion was the topic of “spring versus swing.” The debate raged around which simple machine, the spring or the lever, contributed more to casting a fly line. From this conversation came Mel’s famous term “whump,” to describe the stop at the end of a stroke. Overall the discussion brought further clarity around the role of rod loading (bending) in the cast.

In 1987 all of Mel’s learning-to-date came together in the publication of his book, *The Essence of Flycasting*. With the help of editor Nelson Ishiyama and photographer Ben Blackwell, *The Essence of Fly-casting* outsold every fly casting instructional book ever written.

Out on the casting ponds at Golden Gate, Mel continued to both entertain and inspire. In his own charismatic way, he had the uncanny knack of convincing every student within 15 minutes that even they could cast a fly rod. As an aspiring CI and then an MCI candidate, I too



caught Mel’s passion for the sport. Each year in the month of April, the GGACC commemorates Mel’s contributions to the art of fly casting instruction with a “Mel’s Day” tribute.

In 1992 Mel would lead an august group of casting and fly fishing experts to form the Federation of Fly Fisher’s Casting Instructor Certification Program (CICP).



**Steve Rajeff:** A young Steve Rajeff began his fly casting instruction with Mel at the GGACC. Later he brought Mel on board at G. Loomis and worked with him to flesh out a proposal for the casting instructor certification program. Steve served with Mel as one of the governors charged with creating the certification program.

It was 1965 and I was 9 years old when I started learning to cast with Mel. We met at the GGACC ponds after school. I had no idea it would be, the start of a lifelong friendship, and the spark that started my career in fly fishing.

When I showed up Mel was just getting into fly casting himself, yet he made time to help me. He patiently explained to me what he wanted me to do. If I didn’t seem to get it, he would put his hand on the rod while we cast together.

## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*

He wanted me to be able to feel the cast done correctly.

Mel told me that I had to practice every day, so I could enter a tournament happening in two weeks. I said I didn't want to, but he convinced me it would be good for my fishing skills to be able to hit targets. My first tournament, competing against the 10 men and one other junior caster, was a disaster! I placed last. I told Mel I didn't want to do any more tournaments! But he convinced me to try just one more. For the next two weeks we practiced daily. As luck would have it, blistered fingers and all, I beat Mel and everyone else that day in Dry Fly Accuracy.



Mel was interested in how other instructors explained what they knew, and how they taught. This interest stimulated research for his first book, *The Essence of Flycasting*. He studied biomechanics with Dr. Tony Stellar, a researcher and trainer of Olympic athletes. Mel also talked to college educators to learn about teaching methods.

At G. Loomis we worked together designing rod actions, attending sports shows and teaching casting schools. All the classes I co-taught with Mel were conducted on the basis of sharing ideas. Everyone was invited to ask questions, "Let's have fun," he would tell the students.

As fly casting schools were starting to pop up all over, I suggested to Mel that we start a fly casting instructor school, so that everyone

shared the same common language when they taught casting. We created the concept and course outline. Mel wanted G.Loomis to organize and administer the program. I argued other companies would create their own instructor schools to compete. In addition, I thought that it would become a better overall program if organized by either the FFF or the American Casting Association.

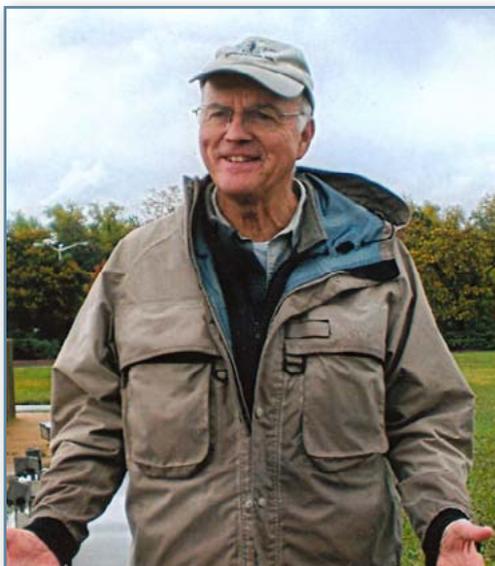
We agreed that the FFF was a better fit. Mel made the pitch to the FFF and the proposal for a Certified Casting Instructor Program was adopted. A fifteen member board of Governors was selected to implement the program, which has grown to include not only single handed but double handed certification. It is the world standard for fly casting instruction.

## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*

**Al Kyte:** Al taught with Mel at the Fenwick Fly Casting Schools. A University of California professor, Al was one of the academics Mel consulted on teaching methods. Al worked with Mel and the other governors to create the certification program.

What I liked most about Mel was his openness. I first noticed it when he advised me to purchase whatever books I could find on teaching fly casting—even those by authors I might not respect.

***“Those of us who lead the way in fly casting need to be aware of what other people are teaching.”*** He even invited people who did not see eye to eye with him to be part of the initial casting board of governors, “because together we represent American fly casting more completely.” I suspect that spirit of openness also set the tone for our becoming international.



I certainly learned from Mel’s openness in his thinking about fly casting. His article on the ***“Variable Casting Arc”*** first alerted us to the reality that a ***“10 to 2”*** casting stroke was a limiting, incomplete teaching. And his teachings on casting ***“off the tip”***, ***“off the middle”***, or ***“with the butt”*** of a fly rod were new as well. When I taught in other parts of the country, I didn’t find any other teachers who were even aware of consciously varying a fly rod’s movements in these ways.



Some of the most important things I learned about the performance of fly rods came from spending time with Mel trying to ***“feel the tip”*** of a rod, sensing its ***“continuity of flex”***, and locating any unevenness in its taper. Unfortunately many of today’s rods are too stiff through the middle to allow us to feel the rod’s tip working.

When I first taught with Mel I had a flaw in my cast from spending too many years fishing without the benefit of good instruction. I recall several times I thought I had extinguished that flaw and would drive across the bay to San Francisco to have Mel look at my cast. He would sometimes show his approval, but then put a somewhat slower-recovering rod in my hand and watch my loops start to tail. Then I would take that rod home, practice with it, return for further scrutiny, and go home with an even slower rod to work with. I was receiving an important lesson on adjusting my movements to the differences between fly rods. Even today it is not difficult to find casting teachers who lack the ability to adjust their movements to slower rods.

## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued ...*

Mel and I spent countless hours on the phone sharing perspectives and learning from each other. Often he would pick my brains on teaching ideas, while I was trying to pick his, on casting. I think the questions we were left with, as much as any of our answers, provided stimulus for his deciding to pursue his idea of a casting certification program and for my deciding to pursue the bio-mechanical study of fly casting. As I look back, I feel that his openness was like a football handed off to me to carry a few yards farther down the field.



**Tim Rajeff:** was another colleague who taught with Mel at the Fenwick schools. They also taught together at the GGACC, in other venues as well as doing certification exams.



I learned a lot of useful things about teaching fly casting from Mel. In the mid-seventies I worked with Mel at the Fenwick Fly Fishing Schools. Historically, instruction consisted of lining up people and having them mimic the instructor's motions. The profound thing I learned from Mel was to be open to and adjust my vocabulary and instructional methods depending on what was best for each student. I will never forget Mel saying: ***"Tim, remember that some of your students are a poets and some are engineers. You must do your best to relate to people using their vocabulary."***

## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*



For some people words are inadequate and they do better when they can ***'feel a good cast.'*** Because of Mel's insight into how people learn, I always am prepared to describe every aspect of a cast in several different ways so that I have the best chance of helping every student I work with.

Another fundamental of good casting instruction that I learned from Mel is ***"NEVER TAKE THE ROD OUT OF A STUDENT'S HAND."*** People tend to learn better and quicker when they can feel a cast rather than see the instructor make a cast. This simple piece of advice is one that is most often abused by instructors. It is disheartening to see a beginner standing there while an instructor whips that line back and forth while telling the student what they are doing wrong and how easy it is to make a good cast if they only do it like this.

Mel told me, ***"It's better to put your hand on top of the students hand so they are holding the rod and help them make the cast."***

Mel's contributions to fly casting instruction were many. Mel Krieger was the man who tried to unify casting instruction across geographic boundaries. His efforts to create a certified casting program have affected all casting instruction across the planet.

Mel was one of the early champions to separate substance and style. After Mel became a popular instructor people began to recognize that most instructors forced their students to adopt their style. Mel didn't force people to accept a particular style but focused on the substance of the cast, using the fundamentals of good casting. This made a permanent mark on casting instructors who followed him.



## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*

**Macauley Lord:** Macauley worked with Mel numerous times, including doing certification examinations.

I got a valuable tip from Mel in 1997 when we were testing an MCI candidate. Mel told me to take the candidate's rod and show him what Mel and I had been trying to get him to do. (It did not involve a tailing loop.) With no false-casts to dial in a rod with which I was unfamiliar, I tailed the first forward cast. "Aw, you **tailed** it," Mel said disgustedly in front of the candidate. Afterwards, in private, he gently told me, "Always make a few casts with the candidate's rod to get a feel for it before you make a cast that really **counts**."



Instructing with Mel was a great way to break into teaching. He was in love with casting and teaching. When he taught, his students **knew** that he loved it, and I mean, LOVED it. When your students know how happy you are to be with them, it rubs off on them in all the right ways. Also, he was very passionate about the value of kinesthetic teaching. Once, when we were conducting a teaching workshop for CI's, he called kinesthetic teaching, "The Big One."



Mel's contributions to casting instruction were legion. He was an early and forceful advocate for the THCI. In a BOG Annual Meeting many years ago he told us, "More and more people are using Spey-casting techniques for trout with single-handed rods and you need to get out in front of this." Most importantly, it was Mel who in 1992 persuaded the IFFF to launch the Casting Instructor Certification Program. A group of fifteen experts were charged with designing the program. They included: Gary Borger, Leon Chandler, Chico Fernandez, Jim Green, Lefty Kreh, Mel, Al Kyte, Steve Rajeff, Bruce Richards, Allan Rohrer, Barbara Rohrer, Doug Swisher, Lou Tabory, Dave Whitlock and Joan Wulff. Two years later Lefty Kreh and Dave Whitlock left the board. They were replaced with Barry Beck and Al Buhr.

**Editor's note:** *There is more information about Mel's contributions in Macauley Lord's: **A History of the Federation of Fly Fishers' Casting Instructor Certification Program**. The essay was originally posted to the CICP's section of the IFFF website.*

## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*

**Christopher Rownes:** Mel devoted a lot of his time teaching abroad. Chris taught with Mel in Europe and was one of the people who worked on the translation of Mel's book into German.

Mel Krieger was both a close friend and a mentor. I learned a great deal from him about casting. One of the things he taught me was to load the rod efficiently, that is to use just the right amount of energy for the distance being cast. One exercise he introduced me to was to cast to a target and then do it again, but using half the amount of energy in the tip! I thought it was impossible when he first asked me to do it. I discovered that it was really hard to not cover the distance with so little force. By getting me to think about how much power I was using, he taught me to cast elegantly!



Two things are central to my life, fly casting and teaching classical dance. I teach both all over the world. Mel and Fanny were fascinated that I used dance movements to teach fly casting. To encourage me they sent me videos of the San Francisco ballet. Mel encouraged me to incorporate dance into my fly casting instruction. Just as timing, grace and fluidity are important to dance, so too are they essential to fly casting.

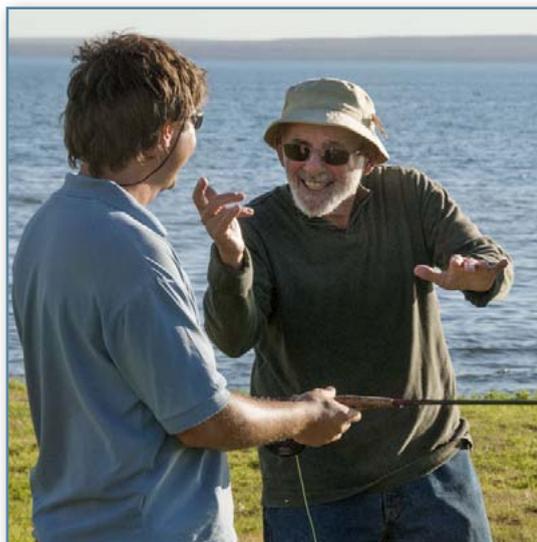
Just as Mel's mentoring was important to my development as a caster, so too was it important to my growth as teacher. He said that the essence of learning was doing. He believed that it was important to get people up and doing.

One weekend in Spain, this lesson was really brought home. Mel was the instructor and Jose Ricardo and I were there to translate and assist with the instruction. Everyone gathered on the Friday evening before the course started. Mel said "Chris tell them I am very disappointed with them!" I said, "Mel we haven't even started yet!" He said, "Just tell them Chris!" The audience greeted my announcement with shock. What had they done, they asked? Mel replied, "You all brought your wives and children and not one of them is taking the course! I want to see all of the women and children in the course tomorrow!! We have enough gear for everyone!"



## Mel Krieger - Casting Master Then and Now *continued...*

The next day everyone showed up including the women and children who had never cast a fly rod. Since they had no bad habits to overcome, under Mel's guidance, they made rapid progress. Many were casting nearly as well as their husbands and fathers by the end of the weekend.



Mel's contributions to fly casting instruction were enormous. Let me mention but two of his achievements. His book, *The Essence of Flycasting* is brilliant in its simplicity. It has been translated into almost every language and is used as a reference worldwide. In my opinion, it is a masterpiece. A second major contribution was his role in the development of the IFFF program for certifying casting instructors. This program has had a major impact on casting instruction all over the world.

### **Acknowledgements:**

*I am grateful to **Fanny Krieger** for tirelessly answered my many requests for biographical information, to **Rhonda Seller**, IFFF Operations Manager, for providing valuable advice on several questions relating to the IFFF. Finally, my thanks to **Ben Blackwell**, who took the wonderful pictures for Mel's book, for generously shared some of his photos with us.*

**Bruce Morrison - The Loop Editorial Staff**

## MEL KRIEGER'S BOOK & DVD<sub>s</sub>



### **Book**

- *The Essence of Fly Casting.*

This book has been translated into German, Spanish (Castilian as well as Argentinean), Japanese, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish. The Japanese company publishing his book is working on an eBook version.

### **DVDs**

- *The Essence of Flycasting*
- *The Essence of Fly casting II & The Essence of Spey Casting*
- *Beginnings: An Introduction to Fly Fishing.*
- *Fly Casting Faults and Fixes*
- *Tomorrow's Flyfishers* - By Fanny Krieger and Friends

# THE TRUTH ABOUT LINE STRETCH

by Bruce W. Richards, Los Angeles, California

How much should a fly line stretch - and why? Fly-line stretch, **elongation**, is a frequent topic of discussion on fly fishing forums, in magazines, and, not surprisingly, on the drawing boards of line manufacturers.

Most of today's fly lines are constructed from some form of nylon core, either braided multifilament, braided monofilament, or single strand monofilament. All of these stretch quite a bit before they break - between 20 percent and 40 percent, actually. But remember, those numbers represent the amount of stretch a line can withstand before it breaks. The truth is those are forces much, much higher than most lines are ever exposed to.

Under lesser strains, fly lines stretch much less.

The fly line industry has built a number of lines on other cores that stretch less than nylon, **Dacron** (polyester) and **Kevlar** are two. Kevlar is a troublesome fly-line core material; no one uses it anymore, but **Dacron** is making a comeback. Some interesting claims have been made for some of these lines.

It's widely believed that a fly line which doesn't stretch much will be more sensitive to subtle strikes, at least that's the major claim. Well. . .not so fast. When a fish gently takes a fly it causes a nearly imperceptible pull on the line, so little that there is virtually no stretch in either a nylon or **low-stretch** cored line. They are nearly identically "sensitive."

But, a factor many don't take into account is that neither line is

## The Truth About Line Stretch *continued...*



very sensitive if it is not straight. A line with absolutely no stretch that does not lay out straight in the water is not very sensitive; any slack in the line buffers the transmission of the strike to the angler.

Scientific studies have been done on the subject, to know the truth. A very accurate, and expensive, *Instron* tensile tester was used. The test took a variety of 5-wt. floating lines, with nylon and *sensitive*, low stretch cores. Each sample was straightened with a very light pull of 0.25 oz, or about 7 grams. (If the samples aren't pulled straight, results will be skewed.) Then each sample was pulled to a strain of 2 oz., (about 57 grams). Elongation, stretch, was measured throughout the test, but stretch at 0.5 ounces was where comparisons were made.

The subtle/light strike of a fish will exert about 15 grams of pressure on a line, about half-an-ounce worth of pull. If one line stretches very little at that pressure and another stretches a lot more, the line with less stretch will transmit the sensation of the strike better, right? And you'd think that a line which stretches less when pulled at half an ounce would also stretch less when pulled at 20 lbs., right?

It does seem logical, but isn't true. In every test but one, the tested nylon-core lines stretched less than the polyester-core lines at low strains. The one nylon-core line that did stretch more did so by a such a small margin that there was no significant difference.

To give you an idea of how much these lines stretch under low-strain tests, with 30 ft. of line out, one stretched 0.179 inches, another 0.189 inches. Interestingly, the nylon-cored line stretched less. The difference is most likely not significant - a hundredth of an inch difference at 30 ft. is REALLY small. But that's the point, lines made on low-stretch cores offer no advantage in strike detection.

But there's more to the subject than just stretch. Which line will usually fish straighter? If a line isn't straight when being fished, the slack in the line will make strike detection very difficult.

Lines come off fly reels with *memory*. Experienced anglers know that the way to remove the memory from a fly line is to stretch it. Most of the braided cores used to make the majority of fly lines today have very little memory. The PVC and polyurethane coatings that are tapered onto the core do have some memory, however. Fly lines that are built on low/no-stretch cores are more difficult to straighten; you can't stretch the coating if the core won't stretch. So, the *claimed* benefit of a line with a low-stretch core is often defeated by the fact they cannot be straightened effectively.

Line manufacturers also sometimes claim their lines have improved casting performance due to specific cores and coatings. The claim is that the line doesn't stretch in the air while being cast. This sounds good on paper, but doesn't test true in the real world.

## The Truth About Line Stretch *continued...*



Even most light trout lines have cores of about 20-lb. test. During casting, even long distance casting, relatively little force is applied to the line, not enough to cause significant stretch. If the line was stretched during the casting stroke, as soon as the loop formed and the pressure was off the line the top leg would **accordion** into big S-curves as it relaxed and returned to its original length. That just isn't seen, even with competitive casters using all but the very heaviest gear. We think we're really putting a lot of pressure on a line when we cast, but we aren't.

Many years ago some prototype heavy competition lines (1850 grains) made on light nylon cores and cast with 17-ft. rods (by Steve Rajeff), did stretch and accordion. But it took an extremely heavy line, built on a light trout line nylon core, cast by one of the strongest casters in the world, with a 17-ft. rod, to make the line stretch during casting. No fishing line I've ever seen has exhibited any significant

stretch during casting. As instructors, we'd all see it as waves in the top leg of the loop.

It's important to remember, **line stretch** is relative to tensile strength. Most lines are intentionally made to be considerably stronger than the strongest tippet ever likely to be used. Very few fly lines ever see the strain needed to make them stretch enough to cause any trouble for an angler, certainly not during a light bite, or during casting, when low-stretch lines are claimed to be advantageous.

If you think that you're putting a lot of strain on your lines when fishing please try this: Take your favorite trout rod, string your line through it and tie your leader to a 1-lb. weight (a can of beans in a bag works well). Now lift the beans off the floor. This will give you some valuable perspective on how much force your gear is exposed to while fishing, which is key to understanding line stretch.



*About the Author: **Bruce W. Richards.** Bruce started fly fishing in the early 60s and has fished around the world since. His 34-year career with Scientific Anglers ended with retirement in 2009, followed by a move to Montana. Bruce and partner Dr. Noel Perkins invented, produced and sold the electronic fly casting analyzer. Bruce was a charter member of the CICP and was board chairman for 4 years. He currently serves on the board of the Madison River Foundation.*

# QUEBEC INTERNATIONAL CASTING RENDEZVOUS A Rousing Success

by Rod McGarry, Portland, Maine, USA

The Province of Quebec is experiencing growing interest in fly casting "expertise." In 2014, two Quebecois attained their CCI designations, another the MCI designation and still another the THCI designation. Then too for the past three years *Certified Casting Instructors* and *CCI* candidates have been attending our *IFFF Continuing Education* Programs in Marlboro, MA and Somerset, NJ. Louis Lortie of Quebec City headed up a group that asked IFFF casting instructors in the Northeast if we would consider joining Casting Instructors for Quebec in an international event.

Thus with the collaboration of the CGRSE (Corporation de Gestion de la Riviere à Saumons des Escoumins) Louis organized a Casting Rendezvous on August 29-30, 2015. The intention was to offer to the public fly casting clinics for beginners to advanced fly casters on single hand and double hand rods, have IFFF testing for certification, and a model of CEP for casting Instructors.

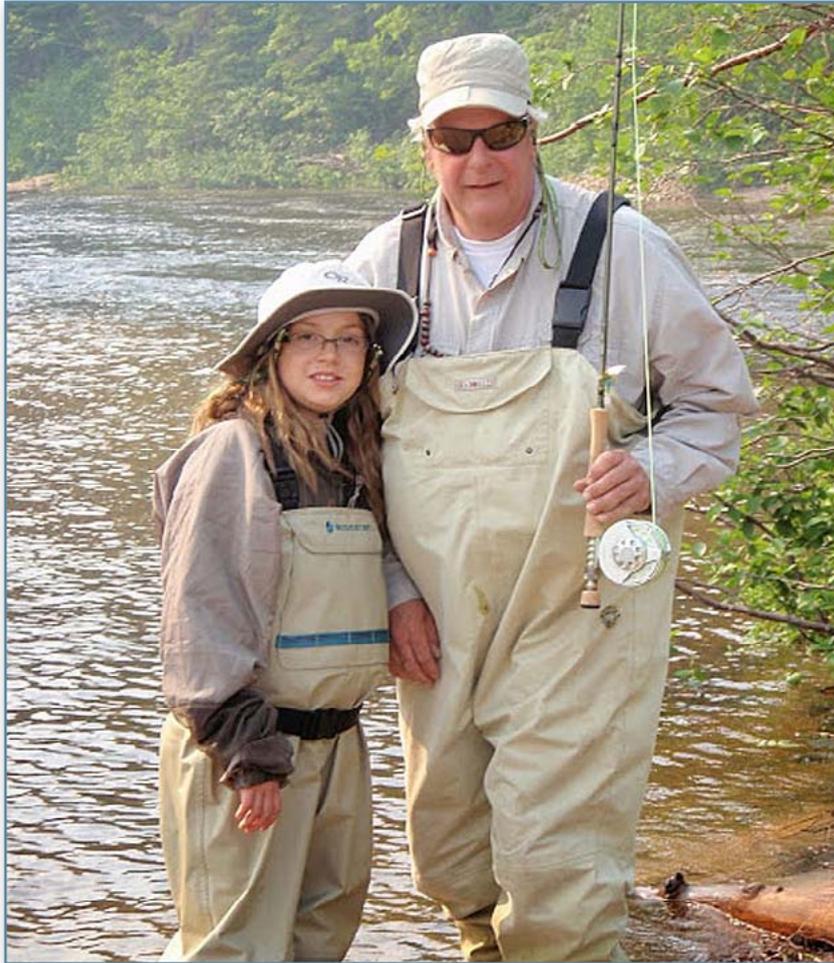
The "market" was English speaking Americans, French speaking Canadians, English speaking Canadians, and First Nations People of Canada.

We promoted the event as an IFFF testing site and we attracted English-speakers from the US and Canada, French speaking folks from Canada (90% of the attendees), and some French speaking First Nations people from Canada.



Consider the numbers: There were 138 people who registered and participated workshops or clinics. ( Louis had to pull together an additional casting clinic for 11 spouses and kids who showed up and were eager to get in on the action Saturday morning). We estimate that there were just under 200 people who passed through the gate at the event. Nearly 70 gathered for a spaghetti supper with 14 awards given for the casting games too.

## Quebec International Casting Rendezvous *continued...*



Additionally on Friday we tested two CCI candidates (one in French and the other in English) conducted the written test, administered the performance test and held a two-hour required Teaching Workshop.

Another indication of the strong reception to an event like this is that at 5 pm on the closing Sunday afternoon four clinics/workshops were still going on.

MCI's giving leadership and participating were Craig Buckbee (NY), Macauley Lord (ME), Rod McGarry (ME) and George Simon (PA). Our THCI delegation was Neil Houlding (PQ) and Alain LaPrade (PQ), CCI Pascal Moreau (PQ) played a major role as our interpreter. Pascal also worked in clinics and workshops the next two days along with CCIs Camil Geoffroy (PQ) (he and Linda were our social chairmen), Dave Jacobson (ME), and Louis Lortie (PQ), and Michel Rivest (PQ). Louis engaged three local fellows who have BIG reputations in fly fishing for Atlantic Salmon -- Antoine Richard, Didier Ross and Jaques (the King) Turcotte. They gave clinics that brought raves from the participants.

The Rendezvous engaged a local youth group to offer a hot-dog cookout for onsite lunch on Saturday, and he recruited a local business group to provide a pizza lunch on Sunday. Know too, that the site worked out very well (adjacent to the Regional Atlantic Salmon Federation office in a park just off the center of town on the banks of an active Atlantic Salmon river)

Louis's wife Sophie, daughter Alice and Linda Geoffroy (and some volunteers they recruited) ran a friendly and strong Registration Desk

While I think that IFFF has got something good going in supporting a regional event like this, ( let's do more of them). I'm absolutely convinced that Louis Lortie was the secret ingredient for this gathering.

## Quebec International Casting Rendezvous *continued...*

### **UNE INVITATION**

Les 29 et 30 août 2015, sur les rives de la Rivière Les Escoumins, en collaboration avec la Corporation de Gestion de la Rivière à Saumons des Escoumins (CGRSE) et chapeauté par l'International Federation of Fly Fishers (IFFF) aura lieu une fin de semaine de lancer à la mouche.

À ce rendez-vous, ou si vous préférez ce rassemblement, des ateliers de lancer à la mouche pour canne à une et à deux mains seront offerts gratuitement au public.

Tous les ateliers de lancer seront donnés par des instructeurs certifiés de l'IFFF, et s'adresseront autant aux débutants qu'aux experts et aux jeunes et moins jeunes. Il y aura également un volet culturel et des intervenants du milieu local et scientifique feront des présentations sur différents aspects de la pêche aux saumons.

Un groupe exceptionnel d'instructeurs et d'intervenants a été formé afin d'assurer le succès de ce rendez-vous, cinq aires de lancer seront aménagés pour permettre la présentation d'ateliers, et enfin nous aurons accès à deux fosses afin de pouvoir enseigner différentes techniques de lancer en conditions réelles de pêche.



#### *About th Author:*

**Rod McGarry** lives in Portland, ME, USA. He is an MCI and a recipient of the IFFF's Harger Award for Lifetime Achievement in Fly Casting Instruction.

*Rod is also a registered professional Maine guide, and is the fly casting staff instructor for L L Bean's Outdoor Discovery Schools Programs.*



# THE DRY FLY SPEY

By Christopher Rownes and Juergen Friesenhahn

At heart I am a dry-fly fisherman - whenever I can I fish with a dry. Sometimes on the river when I'm backed up to trees I'm not able to reach a good trout with a pendulum cast. The fish might be too far away or my dry fly sinks from being repeatedly dragged through the water during line repositioning and the anchoring during Spey casts.

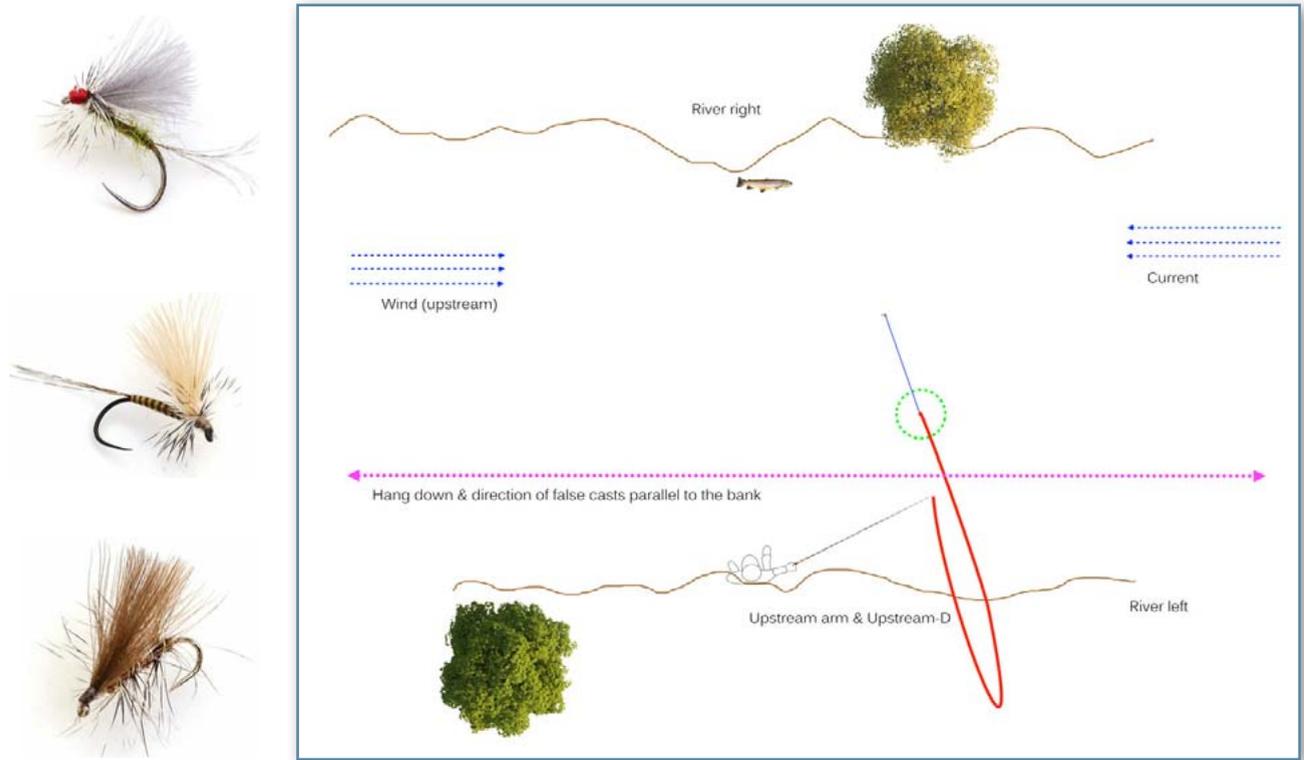
Ordinarily, spey casts are reserved for sinking flies and nymphs or big deer-hair Bomber-style dries that don't require being constantly dried before being cast out again.

But what about your average trout-size dry fly? Here for me is the Holy grail of dry-fly casting - The Dry-Fly Snake Roll Cast.

During the last few years this cast has brought me my biggest fish on dry flies. I believe the reason for its success is that the casting situation was so difficult that these fish had simply never seen an artificial dry floating down stream to them!

What a sight to see a small dry fly disappear into the monstrous mouth of huge old brown trout!!! Fish on!!

The Dry Fly Spey *continued...*



**Teaching the Dry-Fly Snake Roll**

**Step 1 - Start and Preparation (Image 1)**

While standing on the left bank, with the line and rod pointing straight down stream on the Dangle. Face the direction of the intended forward cast and hold the rod tip low to the water's surface. Start casting parallel to the bank low under the trout's radar vision, so as not to spook him.

**Step 2 - Set Up for The D-Loop (Image 2 -6)**

As the fly passes you on your last cast with your fly completely dry start by scribing a circle with the rod tip in a counter clockwise direction back toward the center of the river, with the line and leader going over and the rod coming underneath, apply a thrusting drive parallel to the water. Focus the direction of the circle to position the line to the desired anchor point.

## The Dry Fly Spey *continued ...*



This position is about a rods length away to the upstream side of the caster and to a point adjacent to the path of the forward stroke.

### **Step 3 - Anchor and Cast (Image 7 - 9)**

As the leader and fly land (and set the anchor only momentarily so as not to drown the the fly), **KISS AND GO** -- sweep the rod upstream and circle back and up to form the D Loop. Accelerate smoothly forward and thrust a flick into the stop, then finish high for the best trajectory and distance.



## The Dry Fly Spey *continued...*

*In case you'd like to watch this cast in motion here is a small video.*



### **Step 4 The Pleasure**

Watch your dry fly be engulfed by that fish and just hold on...  
Just to sum it up: the three ingredients of this cast are a parallel Side Arm Cast, a Snake roll and a forward Spey.

Practice these casts first individually and then combine them altogether.

Coordination and timing is what it's all about when going for a decent dry fly Spey.



### **About the authors:**

Originally from England **Christopher Rownes** now lives in Switzerland where he works as a consultant for Guideline. He's been flyfishing for four decades and is an IFFF Master Fly Casting Instructor. Chris studied fly casting instruction under the guidance of the legendary Mel Krieger. He has searched the globe for trout with a dry fly and he's instructed all around the globe as well.



**Juergen Friesenhahn** is an IFFF MCI who runs [www.wurfkurse.de](http://www.wurfkurse.de). He has organized flyfishing courses and guidance for more than a decade. He writes for international fly fishing magazines and is a caster at angling fares around Germany.

*Text: Christopher Rownes and Juergen Friesenhahn*

*Illustration:*

*Juergen Friesenhahn*

*Photos & Lay-out: Nicholas Maier*



# TEACHING ON THE WATER

by Pete Greenan, Sarasota, Florida, USA

My onwater schools stress fly fishing, not just fly casting. Although I start students on grass fields (covering the basics of casting), they eventually want to get out on the water. Below, I detail how by teaching to cast, and also teach them how to fish. I believe this method can work for all sorts of on-water programs; e.g. from a skiff, drift boat or float tube.

Before we enter the boat, we discuss rod rigging, leader choices and a general overview of what the student should expect. I instruct them on good safety techniques, how to store and protect their equipment and how to manage line. When I feel they have grasped those concepts, we go to a location where wind and water movement are minimal. This eliminates the stress of having to learn under adverse conditions. I stop the boat and check that the student is comfortable.

And then we review. I ask them to make some short casts to acclimate themselves to their surroundings and the movement of the boat. We review the basics one more time. Throughout all these exercises I take time to demonstrate the casts, and explain why it is done that way. I often use the three teaching methods: visual, kinesthetic and key phrases. At each juncture, I allow time for self-discovery, only discussing their casts when they are done.

When the student is ready, I concentrate on two factors needed to catch fish-accuracy and distance. We work on accuracy first. I choose targets in or on the water within their normal range, then ask them to cast from one to the other with a minimum of false casts. On each cast, I adjust their stroke and speed until they show proficiency.



Here again I encourage them to remember the basics - the straight line path of the rod tip, matching rod bend with rod arc, etc. I also encourage them to use all the casts in their arsenal, switch casts, roll casts and others. Now is the time for a short break to discuss what they are doing, relax a little and refresh. I might go over the knots we use, why we choose the leader construction or why I picked a particular fly. All this usually takes about two hours.

Often, I'll move them close to obstructions to hone their skill. Shorelines or bushes are great for accuracy practice, because they know immediately when they miss. Weedless flies help here.

## Teaching On The Water *continued...*

Here also is the time to work on different planes of the casts. When casting to a narrow opening, I teach an upright plane and when casting under the bushes, a more horizontal plane. The exercise also helps them cast a tight loop.

Distance is the easiest for me to teach on the water. I look for three targets in a row as if they were target rings. In a five-weight contest, with the closest being the student's average cast, and the farthest about 60 feet. I'll often demonstrate how to extend line by increasing the stroke length. Beginning at the first target, I'll ask them to reach out for the second. Using the phrase "reach out" generally helps them increase the bend in the rod. I'll also demonstrate and explain again how rod arc changes with rod bend.

At this point we are entering advanced casting techniques. These include line speed and the double or single haul. Demonstrating how to use the haul to pick line off the water, increase speed and shoot line to the last target is my next step. Once I see acknowledgement, I have the student make the cast. When I feel they are comfortable with the distance it is time to put it all together. But first, we take a lunch break. You have to feed the horses too. All this has eaten up about four hours.

To test their new skill level, I pole the skiff along a shoreline moving in and out while they cast. This makes them use all the arrows in the quiver. Even a little success here is important. The student can see the results of their hard work immediately. While poling I analyze their casts, complimenting them on the best and offering advice on the not-so-good. Here is where I work on reading the water. In my case it covers things like where fish would be holding, how to see fish in the water or how to read signs of feeding fish.

This is a good time to explain how the fundamentals work, too. You can help them understand the pluses and minuses of each cast relative to the essentials. You can see how this might be applicable to a drift boat or float tube, or even wading a stream.

The last thing I do when giving on-water instruction is let the student catch a fish or two. I think everyone understands how important that is. So, I take them to a spot where I am confident they can hook up. When they do, I talk them through fighting the fish, proper handling and a good release. I encourage them to look around, be observant and I point out the wonders of the environment we are in. I talk a little about courtesy, why we fly-fish and how they can further enjoy fly-fishing.

I believe this process is what my students are looking for. They want to catch fish with a fly, but are not enthusiastic unless they are on the water. Most are result-orientated and so am I. The more enjoyable the learning experience is, the more apt I am to develop good clients and strong supporters of IFFF.



*About the Author:*  
**Pete Greenan** is an MCI and CBOG based in Sarasota, Florida, USA. He began guiding professionally in 1980 and he founded the IFFF Florida Council



# LINE HAND SKILL

## ***Training the Partner Hand for Better Casting***

By Dave Cleaves - North Potomac, Maryland, USA

*“The line hand plays an important role in fly casting. . .In really long casts, the left (line) hand will be as busy as the rod hand. . . line-hand control is half the battle in making a talented caster.”*  
 -- A.J. McClane. *The Practical Fly Fisherman*. 1953. (pg 33)

The line hand is a sometimes overlooked stepchild in the world of fly fishing. But the reality is, the line hand is both a necessary and important part of the cast, a component that partners with the rod hand in an intricate and dynamic dance which influences every aspect of our connection with the fish – casting, presentation, line management, striking, and playing the fish. (Line hand in this context, refers to the hand, arm, and shoulder—not just the hand itself.) Guidance and coordinated practice utilizing the line is needed and necessary if a fly fisher wants to vastly improve his or her levels of performance.

As casting instructors, we need to consider the importance of emphasizing the systematic training of the line hand for its various roles and look closely at its influence in improving casting performance. Line-hand adjustments influence the loop through the management of slack, line speed, and interference/support of the alignment and stroke length.

The line-hand’s influence on loop shape and direction can be cemented by hours of fishing or by unsupervised (unguided) practice. Many students come to instruction from previous fishing experience

and quickly return to fishing where the use of the line hand can quickly revert to “survival” in managing line in real time.

### ***Functions of the line hand in conjunction with the rod hand include:***

- Positioning for the cast (pick up)
- Managing slack before, during, and after the stroke
- Changing line length being casted
- Supplementing the stroke through line speed – (hauling)
- Retrieving the fly
- Striking and playing fish.

These functions are served by three fundamental line-hand skills—holding, giving, and taking line. These skills should be introduced deliberately, in a sequence, at first separately from the rod-hand skills. In acquiring these skills, a student should develop the feel for the line hand’s direct influence on the line and understand its role in the work of casting and fishing. Many students acquire line-hand skills quickly. . .and the best instructional response is applause and a reminder to fix not the unbroken. But even quick learners need targeted practice and pointers as they stretch their skills and start to false cast different lengths of line, mend, and haul.

### ***Three fundamental skills:***

#### ***Holding and Organizing line***

- Maintaining tension on the line during casting, fishing, and playing fish.

## Line Hand Skill *continued ...*

- Holding loose line off the water or the deck and keeping it organized and out of the way as it moves in and out of the **casting system**.
- Moving the line to and from the “control point” finger on the rod hand.

Some students have difficulty with the idea of loose line hanging down and laying at their feet, finding a place for it, and then getting it back when they need it.

### ***Taking In Line - The Essence of the Hauling Motion***

Off the reel, off the water, retrieving the fly (stripping, hand twist, other), taking up slack, striking and playing fish. This is a companion skill in changing line length. Taking in line includes starting the line in motion as well as changing the speed at which it is taken in. This is the essence of the hauling motion.

### ***Giving Line Back***

Where? On the shoot at the end of the stroke and when creating mends in the air or on the water. This is a key skill that often needs work on timing and a feel for the moving line and distance. The classic mistake is to release too early on the shoot, too late on aerial mends. To change the length of the cast we use this skill to shoot, false cast different lengths of line, and get enough line outside the rod tip to start a cast.

Progress in developing each of these skills can be judged along four attributes:

- Sensitivity to the line tension,
- Speed control,
- Timing in application, and
- Tracking with the rod-hand movement.

Problems with the line hand are easy to miss. Hand and finger movements are swift and hidden from the instructor’s view. Line-hand problems can be translated into loop symptoms that can be mistaken for problems with the rod hand’s basic stroke. Problems can sometimes be tracked down to some combination of skill and attribute. For example unintentional curves (usually to the line hand side) on long casts are sometimes caused by hauling with the line hand aggressively out to the side – an issue of taking/giving (releasing) and tracking.

Line hand diagnosis and correction can be guided by the five essentials of fly casting (***Gammel and Gammel, 1993***). Different “styles” of line-hand work can achieve the same substance in performance, so here is a way to recognize and legitimize different styles and treatments of the line hand’s work in the casting literature.



*Click Here To View*  
***Line Handling Chart***

For each of the basic skill sets, I’d advise working through a line-hand progression with students. It doesn’t usually take long and we work toward integrating and coordinating movements with the rod hand as quickly as possible. Laying a good foundation provides a reference for later work on specific line-hand improvements, which makes more complicated movements such as the double-haul easier for a student to understand and acquire.

***Explain*** – As clearly and briefly as possible, explain what, when, why, how, and provide analogies, such as sorting berries, straightening the garden hose, pulling in the puppy, whatever works.



## Line Hand Skill *continued...*

**Demonstrate** – As you explain, demonstrate clearly what action you want the student to perform - assuring that the student sees hand, arm, and finger movement. Possibly wear a white glove on the line hand to highlight its movement

**Hands-on Pantomime** – Using no rod, practice two-point control (line hand and index finger of rod hand on grip) starting, varying speeds, stopping and other line hand moves.

**Hands-on With Half a Rod** – (At first with no line, then with the line through the stripping and first guide.) Practice two-point control with the instructor varying the line tension, as the student demonstrates holding, taking in (tight line and slack), and giving line, as well as moving the line and rod hand together in simulated strokes. The instructor creates slack to be taken in and held and organized, creates tension to be held and released (as is shooting), or given back under control (as in playing a fish). This gives the student immediate visual and tactile feedback and focuses attention on the movement of the line-hand and rod-hand coordination without the distraction of the line overhead. It is an opportunity to help the student develop sensitivity to line tension, speed, responsiveness of the line to starting and stopping, and how slack can be managed with the line hand. It also allows the instructor to get physically close enough to the student to observe what is going on without violating his/her personal space.

**Hands-on With Full Rod** – Next, integrate the above practices into the regular casting instruction, including introducing both hands moving together during the cast, stripping, shooting, hauling, and other two-handed tasks. Frequently zoom in on the line hand at work, and separate line hand and rod hand to check out any possible influences the line hand might be having in loop formation.

**Use Bruce Richard's Six Step** model to trace line symptoms back to rod hand, line hand, or coordination problems.

From here, introduce working with different lengths of line, taking, giving and holding to reach different target distances on the ground. Practice straightening (positioning for pick-up), lengthening (as in false casting), shortening (as in retrieving), and pulling the line to speed it up in the cast (as in hauling).

### **Some instructor advice:**

- To feel what the students feels, try switching rod and line hands and performing line-hand functions with other hand in your own personal practice sessions. For me this was best done in private. I was pretty clunky starting out. It provides clues about what the student goes through.
- Observe the student from different angles. Line-hand problems are hard to spot because students move quickly, finger movements are obscured when the hand is held low or moves with the rod hand. Observing from the front and from the line hand side allows you to detect problems in timing and tracking.
- Watch for changes in the rod-hand movement (the basic stroke) as the student begins working with the line hand. Sometimes students with a good stroke alter their rod hand movement as they introduce the line hand. Some of this comes from the line hand now sharing the tension the student felt only through the rod before. He or she may try to reach back farther and downward to find it.
- Alternate one and both-hands casting to see if the loop changes and help the student assure that the line hand is helping, not replacing or altering the rod hand stroke.

## Line Hand Skill *continued ...*

Try five reps of pick up/lay down or false casting with line pinned to the control point, five reps with the line hand at a given length, and five reps with line hand providing changes in length and line speed (hauling).

These are just a few techniques instructors might utilize when working with a student's line-hand skills. Once we recognize the importance of line-hand training, as instructors, we can begin to develop our own techniques for helping students improve their overall casting performance.



*About the Author: **Dave Cleaves** (CI, MCI) of North Potomac, MD recently retired from the US Forest Service as the agency's climate change science advisor. Dave teaches fly fishing and guides in Maryland and has worked for "Trout & About" (Phil Gay), the LL Bean Outdoor Discovery schools, and writes the Adaptive Caster column for the Seneca Valley (MD) Trout Unlimited Chapter newsletter.*

## **EDP TRAINING WORKSHOP** **Ruskin, FL, December 5-6.**

The Examiner Development Pathways Committee of the CICP announces an EDP Training Workshop in Ruskin, FL on Dec. 5-6, 2015 at The Resort at Little Harbor on Tampa Bay. The workshop will feature relevant workshops on IFFF casting examiner training, including, Examiner Effectiveness Workshop, CI Workshop, MCI Workshop, Peer Performance Confirmation. There is no charge for the EDP Training Workshop, but attendees must be registered with the Examiner Development Program and they must have purchased the Examiner Training Manual from the IFFF (\$30 at the IFFF store).

### **Schedule:**

Friday evening – Check in 6pm to 8pm at Tiki Hut (at hotel)  
 Saturday 8:00 am – 12:00 pm - Examiner Effectiveness Workshop  
 Lunch (included)  
 Saturday 1:00pm to 5:00 pm – CI Workshop  
 Sunday 8:00 am to 12:00pm – MCI workshop  
 Lunch  
 Sunday 1:00pm on – Casting and PPC

To register, contact: Pete Greenan, CBOG, at **941-232-2960** or **captpete@floridaflyfishing.com**

For reservations, call The Inn at Little Harbor, 813-645-3291 (ask for the non-contracted group rate) (Approx. \$90)  
<http://www.theinnatlittleharbor.com/>

# GETTING BETTER AT GETTING BETTER

## George Forster - Wodonga, Victoria, Australia.

It's been my experience that many CICP candidates prepare well for their casting instructors tests, but just when they need the most control and confidence, things go belly up. They forget answers, their casts look sloppy, and they struggle to with answers they knew before the test.

To address those specific issues, I've put together Getting Better at Getting Better, a two-day course for CI and MCI candidates that is designed to help them excel during their test and to also help them improve both their casting and their teaching after they've attained their certification.

We recently completed a second two-day Getting Better at Getting Better (GBGB) for potential CI/MCI candidates here in Wodonga, Australia.

The two days were divided into three parts.

The first day we discussed preparing mentally for a challenge and the challenge of performing our best on testing day.



When a candidate derails during a test, it's often difficult for him or her to get back on track, to regain that focus, confidence and assuredness needed to gain their certification.

Getting back on track requires discipline of mind. Importantly, this is a learned skill. During the first day of GBGB, we teach the candidate to recognize emotions and learn to respond to them.

## Getting Better at Getting Better *continued...*



A candidate needs to learn which part of his/her brain is in control on exam day. We teach them that they are in control of the situation and that they control of what happens on the test. They can only do their best if they understand, recognize and respond quickly to potential derailments. Then they can regain the self-confidence that allows them to enjoy the testing experience.

The second day of the Getting Better at Getting Better clinic, we teach learning and developing a skill using deep practice, which is an accelerated learning technique. Deep practice is about setting a blueprint, a practice plan, a method of breaking a task down, slowing it down, making mistakes and correcting them in a manner that increases and accelerates memory. Part three of the two-day session is practical teaching, using the skills, practice plans and mindsets candidates learned in the clinic.

We put candidates to the test by having them teach the basic straight-line casts to a small group of strangers, people with varying casting abilities and with a variety of rods actions and lengths also a variety of lines.

By the end of the course the instructors come away with new knowledge, skills, and mind-sets to use during their testing, but also later when they teach casting.



**George Forster** is an IFFF MCI from Wodonga, Victoria, Australia. George runs fly casting clinics also CI/MCI Prep Courses. George's website is [www.GeorgeForster.com](http://www.GeorgeForster.com). Contact on: [georgeuforster@gmail.com](mailto:georgeuforster@gmail.com)

## NEW REGISTERED INSTRUCTORS AND TEST EVENTS

*Certified between June 28, 2015 to October 12, 2015 listed according to test date.*

| First Name | Last Name | City           | Region             | Country Name   | Certification | Test Date  |
|------------|-----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
| Peter      | Scafaru   | Peoria         | AZ                 | United States  | CI            | 06/28/2015 |
| Pete       | Robertson | Fredericksburg | VA                 | United States  | CI            | 07/01/2015 |
| John       | Adametz   | San Diego      | CA                 | United States  | CI            | 07/16/2015 |
| Jonathan   | Connelly  | Sandy          | OR                 | United States  | CI            | 08/13/2015 |
| Keisuke    | Sugisaka  | Okazaki        | Aichi              | Japan          | CI            | 08/13/2015 |
| Karen      | Brooks    | Deloraine      | Tasmania           | Australia      | CI            | 08/13/2015 |
| Tom        | Nolte     | Estero         | FL                 | United States  | CI            | 08/13/2015 |
| Lee        | Butler    | Toledo         | OH                 | United States  | CI            | 08/14/2015 |
| Evelyn     | King      | Harpwell       | Maine              | United States  | CI            | 08/24/2015 |
| Michel     | Rivest    | Montreal       | Quebec             | Canada         | CI            | 08/28/2015 |
| Lani       | LaCasce   | Greenville     | ME                 | United States  | CI            | 08/29/2015 |
| Andrzej    | Wnekowicz | Rabka Zdroj    | Malopolskie        | Poland         | CI            | 09/20/2015 |
| Ralf       | Hoppe     | Zandt          | Bavarian Forest BY | Germany        | CI            | 09/20/2015 |
| Mark       | Foley     | Exeter         | New Hampshire      | United States  | CI            | 10/03/2015 |
| Steve      | Davis     | Hamilton       | MT                 | United States  | Ci            | 10/12/2015 |
| Paul       | Brown     | Upton Wirral   | Merseyside         | United Kingdom | MCI           | 09/11/2015 |
| Tapani     | Mikola    | Tampere        | Länsi-Suomen Lääni | Finland        | MCI           | 09/11/2015 |
| Brian      | McGlashan | Kirkcaldy      | Fife               | United Kingdom | THCI          | 09/10/2015 |
| Christian  | Marseiler | Girlan         | Eppan              | Italy          | THCI          | 09/19/2015 |

All information above are correct at the time of publication. For the latest up to date information, please visit:  
<http://fedflyfishers.org/Casting/CalendarofEventsTestingDates.aspx>

## The Editorial Team



**Eric Cook** is an MCI and a member of the CBOG. He is a degreed Mechanical Engineer from Atlanta GA, USA. Eric fishes for carp. Cook is the editorial director of *The Loop*.



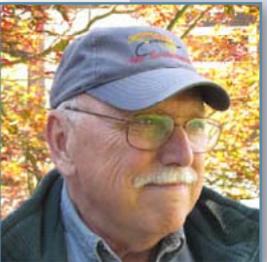
**David Lambert** is an editor of print and digital media. He also writes for outdoor-oriented publications. He is an MCI who lives in North Florida, USA. He was youth chair for the FFF-SEC for 12 years and is an IFFF - Florida council director. Lambert is managing editor of *The Loop*.



**John Bilotta** is an MCI & THCI who lives in Washington DC. He is a former journalist. Bilotta is associate editor of *The Loop*.



**Carl McNeil** is an MCI living in New Zealand, he teaches, makes films, designs gear and generally tries to have a good time - and not get caught. McNeil is media editor of *The Loop*.



**Bruce Morrison** is a retired professor of anthropology who has worked in South and Southeast Asia, Canada and the Caribbean. He is a book author and editor. He is the chair of the Fly Fishing Education Committee of the Mid-Island Castaways Fly Fishing Club in Vancouver Island, BC. Morrison is associate editor of *The Loop*.



**Bintoro Tedjosiswoyo** was born in Java, Indonesia but has lived in Melbourne, Australia since 1978. Bintoro is a commercial graphic designer and illustrator. He is a certified CI & THCI. Bintoro is *The Loop's* graphic design editor and illustrator.

All correspondence to be addressed to: [loopeditors@gmail.com](mailto:loopeditors@gmail.com) - Website: [www.fedflyfishers.org](http://www.fedflyfishers.org)

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