The loop

Table of contents.....

2012 - #1 - Winter

The loop

The Federation of Fly Fishers Journal for Certified Casting Instructors
Winter 2012 - #1

Preparing for the CI Exam - A Recent Experience

by Gail Donoghue Gallo

Preparing for the CI exam is a big commitment in time and energy. Most candidates, even very experienced fly fishers, often take a year or more to prepare. Having recently passed the CI exam, I would like to share my experience in the hope that it may be helpful to someone at the beginning of the certification process.

The CI test targets three areas: casting skill, instructing ability and general knowledge of fly tackle, casting mechanics and special casts. Each of these areas is of equal importance because all must be successfully completed to be certified. It's easy to become fixated on casting practice and to leave the preparation of the other parts of the test for the last minute. Hopefully the suggestions which follow will give you some idea of how to prepare for all three parts of the test.

First Things First

Once you decide to take the test, the first thing to do is to print the current version of the test from the FFF website. The very next thing is to find a certified casting instructor, (listed on the FFF website, if you don't know one) to guide you throughout the preparation process. Even if you are an experienced caster, it's crucial to have a trained and impartial observer assess your casting technique to identify strengths and suggest ways to correct weaknesses. As you advance through your preparation, stubborn casting problems may develop which you may not be able to solve. At such times, a mentor is a great blessing. The third thing is to download all the materials on the FFF website related to the CI exam. You will find a wealth of information about casting and teaching as well as workshops specifically designed to help you prepare. With that in mind, here are some suggestions that helped me tailor my preparation to the performance required on the CI test.

Casting Performance Practice

- Practice sessions should be regular and not so long that you experience muscle fatigue. Once your muscles get tired, performance will suffer. That's discouraging and should be avoided.

- Select a practice area with enough space clear of trees, fences and obstacles so you can perform all the test tasks. Athletic fields are good choices and are generally available even in urban areas.

(Continued on page 3)

- When the weather makes it impossible to practice outdoors, practice indoors with a yarn rod (Joan Wulff's Fly-O or Tim Rajeff's Echo Micro Practice Rod). Indoor practice is particularly suited to working on form in front of a mirror (is my hand straight, is my wrist bending?). It is also useful for practicing the roll cast and casting to targets.
- Practice outdoors in different weather conditions such as wind, cold and light rain. You don't know what the weather will be on the day of the test. Decide what clothing you will wear to keep warm and dry and audition it in advance of the test.
- Practice makes perfect only if practice is done thoughtfully. Mere repetition without analysis of the resulting cast can reinforce bad technique.
- Avoid just going out to cast. Instead, plan your practice session to include basic exercises that help you evaluate your casting. A particularly good choice is horizontal casting. Then practice the test tasks.
- Work on each test task one at a time, trying to isolate what problems you might have and how to fix them. You can get help in identifying problems from casting books and videos by the leading casters and teachers of our sport: Joan Wulff's Fly Casting Techniques, Mel Krieger's The Essence of Fly Casting, Lefty Kreh's Fly-Casting Fundamentals, Macauley Lord's L.L. Bean Fly Casting Handbook and Al Kyte's Orvis Guide to Better Fly Casting, to name just a few. Dynamics of Fly Casting with Joan Wulff, Lefty Kreh on Flycasting and Mel Krieger's Flycasting Faults and Fixes will all provide excellent video instruction.
- If you can't resolve your problems on a particular task, it's time to see your mentor. Staying with a task that isn't improving is bad for morale.
- Impose a high standard on your performance when you practice. The test requires that you perform the test tasks easily on the first try. So it does no good to be easy on yourself. You have to straighten the leader, reach the distance, hit the target and avoid tailing loops.
- Buy a 100 foot tape measure and mark the required distances for the accuracy and distance casts. Don't practice without targets (30" hoola hoops or other brightly colored discs used in field sports) in place. Your ability to hit the target and reach the distance provides important feedback about the state of your technique.
- A few weeks before the test date, make it a habit to administer the test to yourself every time you practice, simulating the test conditions as closely as possible. If you can find one, perform your mock test with an audience. It will help you get accustomed to casting with someone watching. Measure the distances, place the targets and give yourself only three attempts at each task. If you don't successfully complete a task, fail yourself and move to the next one.
- As part of the mock test procedure, immediately follow the casing portion with the instructing ability questions giving your explanations out loud while demonstrating (more about preparing for this part of the test follows). This will realistically simulate the test and build endurance for continuing to perform after you have made the 75 foot cast and feel like you are entitled to a break.
- On the day of the test, dress like a professional casting instructor, (not a fishing guide) whatever the weather, and conduct yourself with composure. Often, the examiners huddle together between tasks, discussing something (that you did, or perhaps didn't do). Try not to let this unnerve you. It doesn't mean you are going to fail the test. The examiners are on your side, provided you are prepared. Just wait with your rod in your hand for them to be done. Do not cast until they ask you to perform the next task.

(Continued on page 4)

- When you take the test, approach each task by thinking about the physical movements that you must make to perform the cast *before you start to cast*. Another way of saying this is to visualize yourself performing the task. This exercise provides the opportunity to focus on the cast and calms your nerves. My mentor, Jim Valle, gave me this advice. It was not only extremely helpful during the test, but helps me when I practice.

Instructing Ability

The instructing ability questions require the candidate to demonstrate knowledge of casting basics and to convey that knowledge while instructing. This part of the test is more difficult than it seems. Much of what we know about casting comes from physically doing it. But while we may know how to do it, it can be difficult to explain. For this reason, it is important to force yourself to articulate what you intuitively understand and then develop the skill to communicate that to someone else. I prepared for this part of the test by reading whatever I could find about the topic in the question (tailing loops for example) and then experimenting on the field (trying to make tailing loops every conceivable way). I researched the casting books to find words for describing my understanding concisely and clearly. I then wrote out the explanations using those words and decided how I would demonstrate what I was saying. These prepared responses were rewritten may times, each time paring down the number of words until every remaining word was essential. I practiced reciting the explanations daily, first at home and as the test date approached, as part of my mock test on the casting field. By the time I took the test, I was comfortable with my explanations and even curious to see how the examiners would react to them.

Written Test

The questions on the written test are not tricky or difficult. They test for basic knowledge of fly tackle, rod action and design, fly line tapers and sink rates, line weights and their uses, leaders and tippet diameters, casting mechanics and the casts needed for particular fishing conditions. Besides an abundance of information found in casting books, the FFF website, including the back issues of the LOOP and CI workshops provide excellent study material for the written. Another good source of information is rod and line manufacturer's websites which often have helpful graphics demonstrating fly rod action and fly line tapers.

Conclusion

The time spent preparing for the CI will make you a better caster and force you to think about how to teach. Once you are certified (and you will be certified if you stick with it) you will see that preparing for the CI test laid a rudimentary foundation for your future teaching. Building on that foundation and learning to be a good CI will proceed slowly, one student at a time

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Gail Donoghue Gallo was certified as a casting instructor in October of 2010. She and her husband Paul Gallo, who was also certified in October of 2010, live in New York, New York. In their first year as certified instructors they actively pursued teaching opportunities and logged hundreds of hours between them. They can often be found practicing or teaching on the great lawn in Central park or on the astro-turf soccer field in Riverside Park, just a few blocks from home.

Two Ideas To Increase Fish Hook Ups

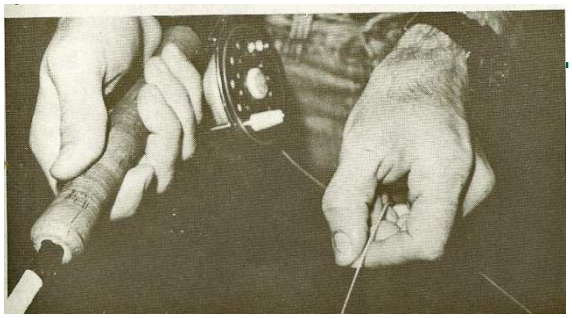
by Les Rosenthal, MCI

I've been on many bonefish trips and experienced the learning curve and those friends too kind to twist the knife. Probe as I might, I couldn't get a better answer than those written in many of the books about including the depth and sink rate of the fly, leading the fish properly, improving my wind casting accuracy, being unlucky, and blah, blah, blah. One consistent deficiency many aspiring bone fishermen endure and pray to develop, is the seeing the fish, even Picassoid as they may appear. I confess that usually to cast to a bonefish, I still need a seeing-eye dog of a guide, my prostituted friend for a day. The worthy guide, besides seeing gray ghosts, knows the fish haunts and will dramatically increase the number of shots, amber polarized bespectacled. yet blind me gets in a day.

However most recently while bonefishing in Oahu I noticed that I was again missing a lot of strikes because there was just a bit too much slack in my leader to feel the very subtle in and out suction taste of a big bonefish bite. My guide sees through the nervous water, watches the fish take it and is astounded that I don't see it as well. I've reminded my guide that there IS a survivor bias in bonefish guiding and that if he saw the fish like I did, he'd be selling cars somewhere instead of enjoying his life of poverty with a view!

Nevertheless undaunted by my vision thing, back on the practice grass I found I was too often leaving a strip set worth of slack in my leader. **AHA**…..**THIS** must be one of my previously uninumerated non-vision faults. Endeavoring to solve my problem, I have begun emphasizing two cast timing factors perhaps worth this writing.

1. First, as the cast loop is about to end unrolling, I gently brake the shooting line with my line hand 'OK' sign, to create the accurate and soft turn-over and extension of all the long leader.



2. Second, as the loop unrolls, straightens and begins to settle, I follow the extended fly line down to the water surface with the tip of the rod. With practice I can lay out the slackless leader straight to the fly with the tip of my rod just touching the surface ready for the most subtle of takes.

With these two additions to my cast, I hope to increase my bonefish hook up percentage next time, provided my seeing-eye dog continues to perform well and the wind gods are kind to me, their supplicant.

Is That A Video Camera In Your Pocket?

By Macauley Lord

Do you own a smartphone or a tablet computer, one that takes video? If so, you have a *powerful* tool for video casting analysis. I stumbled on this idea just a few weeks ago. A friend had come to me to prep for his Master Test. He said his 85-foot cast was unreliable so he wanted me to take a look. Out into my cold, windy, snowy, January-in-Maine backyard we went. After about three strokes I had seen enough to begin to formulating what I would say to him. That was the dinosaur in me, thinking that I had to *describe* to him what he was doing. Then I remembered the smartphone in my pocket. I had just taken it on a December fishing trip and had used it as my sole camera for both stills and video. They looked great!

Standing about 15 feet from my friend, I took out my phone and filmed him making some false casts while hauling. I cut him off at the waist and, in some clips, didn't even bother to capture the rod-tip. [We didn't need to capture his loops. He would know, as I did, from looking at what his rod was doing what his loops looked like.] We then went inside and in seconds the clips went from the phone to my laptop. A hit of the Play button and my friend was seeing in excruciating detail what I had just seen outside. After about the third or fourth stroke, he exclaimed, "Oh, my God!" I quietly replied with an understanding, "Yeah."

His seeing what he was doing with the rod and with his line hand told him *almost* everything he needed to know. We talked briefly inside about what he would work on so we went back out. He made some positive changes so I filmed him again. Back inside for more replay, etc. Later, I had him film me doing the same casts. We compared my stop positions and haul lengths to his. That gave him a kind of template to follow. Finally, I filmed him from in front to capture some tracking error in his stroke. Simple. Later that evening, I strung the most illustrative clips together, including mine, with some software and uploaded the movie to YouTube with a click or two. I then sent him the link, so he can look at it anytime he wants.

Why did seeing tell him *almost* all he needed? Because he was whooshing the rod on the forward cast. When I turned up the sound on the laptop, he could *hear* the whooshing as I had heard it outside. [Important details: His backcast was silent and we had a 90-degree crosswind.] This gave him more to work on: he could *hear* that he needed less overall rod/line speed on the forward cast and a distribution of power on the forward stroke that was weighted more at the power-snap and less in the beginning and middle of the stroke.

(Continued on page 7)

Video analysis is stunningly effective, particularly with beginners. I've been using it with them since 1986. After they've seen you cast and heard you describe what they should do to make a good cast, they analyze their own video. These questions and directions following the replay will be the same with beginners or experts alike.

1. What do you see in your cast? [They'll see at least the significant errors.]
2. What do you think you should fix first? [You might disagree with their thinking.]
3. Show me some *slow* pantomimes of the fix.
4. Good! Let's go do it.

Here is some techno-advice to help you with your use of smartphones and tablets as video tools.

1. Don't worry about frame rates or resolution or overall video quality. Even an older smartphone will show enough detail to shine in this application.

2. Newer tablet computers will enable you to film your student and then turn the tablet around for on-the-spot replay. Newly minted MCI John Bilotta does this with his iPad 2. No need to go inside to hook up to the laptop. Sweet!

3. The ability to see their replay frame-by-frame and in slow-motion is a great help to many students. You probably won't find these capabilities built into your tablet or computer. So, for this purpose, CI and techmeister Rich Kovars recommends a free app called VLC Media Player. http://www.videolan.org/vlc/ He says it plays nearly any format and there are Windows, Mac and Linux versions. I've tried this app on my Windows laptop and it works just fine.

4. Rich gives this very helpful guidance for slo-mo and frame-by-frame with VLC: For Mac: To advance by single frames, simply hit the e key. For faster playback, hit command + and for slower, hit command - (that is command plus and command minus). For Windows: in the View menu, bring up Advanced Controls to get a Frame By Frame button on the tool bar. For slo-mo, hit the minus key.

5. On his iPad, John Bilotta uses an app called VideoPix for slo-mo/frame-by-frame that he likes. There's also an iPad app called ReplayBooth that does the same thing.

6. In addition to using his iPad for error identification, John likes to let his students watch their replay for a few seconds and then say, "Keep it up; you are doing great." That's called good teaching!

7. For making some clips into a simple movie, I've used both Windows Live Movie Maker http://explore.live.com/windows-live-essentials-movie-maker-get-started and Picasa http://picasa.google.com/. Both do the job easily. For Mac, I think iMovie does it. Upload your movie to YouTube, email your student the link and then go fishing.

Macauley Lord received the FFF's 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award in Fly-Casting Instruction, along with Gary Borger. He is an emeritus member of the Board and lives in Maine, where he drills holes in the ice in winter and fishes with minnows. Really. He thanks CI Rich Kovars and MCI John Bilotta for their contributions to this article.

THE ESSENTIALS:

Tip Travel - The Long & Short of It

by Gary Eaton, MCI

One must move the rod tip through a longer path to cast longer lines, compared to that needed for shorter casts. This remains *one* of the Five Essentials published by the Late Jay Gammel and his son, Bill Gammel, MCI, in their 1993 book The Essentials of Fly Casting. The original photographs and the correlated video from Bill Gammel's *Teaching Yourself to Fly Cast*, augment the written concepts. My view of this *essential* does not supersede the interpretation by Bill Gammel.

VARYING CASTING ARC & STROKE WITH AMOUNT OF CARRY cannot be separated from the other four *essentials*, which ***I*** translate as: –

***1**. SLACK ELIMINATED BEFORE, AND THROUGHOUT, CASTING MOVEMENT.*

***2**. PAUSE BETWEEN ROD MOVEMENTS CONSISTENT WITH LENGTH OF LINE BEING CAST .*

***3**. PROPER APPLICATION OF **TIP** SPEED = SMOOTH TIP ACCELERATION WITH DELAYED ROTATION.*

***4**. STRAIGHT LINE PATH (SLP) OF THE ROD TIP PROVIDES THE ULTIMATE ROD LOADING AND EFFICIENCY.*

Inattention to any one of these will compromise any in-line cast. Thus, esoteric deliberations regarding "*which essential is most important*" undermine the integrated nature of these concepts.

DEFINITIONS USED HERE

DEFINITION OF *CARRY* – The length of fly line (not including leader) that is beyond the rod tip when the casting stroke is initiated in either the forward or back cast direction and effectively straighten a loop and deliver the fly.

DEFINITION OF *MAXIMUM CARRY* — The length of carry that can be successfully turned from a back cast into a forward cast, or vice versa, resulting in a delivery loop that completely straightens in an effective, fly first, delivery.

DEFINITION OF *STATIC CAST* — A fly cast in which the amount of carry does not change due to line moving through the guides. (No line moves through the guides)

DEFINITION OF *DYNAMIC CAST* — A fly cast in which the amount of carry does change — line moves through the guides during the cast.

The entire Gammels piece may be found here:
http://www.fedflyfishers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=TPm6wdod03M%3d&tabid=4469&mid=3361

(Continued on page 9)

Their original description follows:

"**The length of the stroke must vary with the amount of line past the rod tip**.

If you are casting a short line you will need a short stroke to move the rod tip along a straight line. If you are casting a longer line the extra weight causes the rod to bend much deeper, and a longer stroke is necessary to keep the rod tip moving in a straight line. This is where the problem of creep arises. If the rod is allowed to creep forward there will not be enough stroke length to properly load the rod for a long cast. This is a common problem when lengthening the stroke for a long distance cast."

Examining this insight — "*. . . casting a longer line the extra weight causes the rod to bend much deeper, and a longer stroke is necessary to keep the rod tip moving in a straight line.*" — **reveals that the rod bend associated with the mass of longer fly line *carry* changes the amount of load in the rod**. This additional bend brings the tip closer to the rod butt. In a pure overhead cast with a vertical plane, this approximates the rod hand with the rod tip *AND* the rod tip with the surface.

In other-than-vertical casting planes, the additional effect of the smooth acceleration of the fly rod increases bend proportional to the amount of line straightened beyond the rod tip AND the pace of acceleration. MCI Jim Rogers suggested to me some concepts that made me understand that the amount of time the rod tip moves over the prescribed distance, while preserving SLP, becomes more critical with longer line carried. He also implied that the pause between strokes (a future essential) may not vary as much as we feel it does.

As an instructor, it might smooth the transition to longer casts to realize that students deal with fewer variables of rod movement if they lengthen the final cast distance through shooting line rather than by trying to *carry* more line. The late Captain Tom White, MCI, relayed this as "Carry less, shoot more".

I emphasize this in demonstrations by challenging my students to a one-hand, distance contest — static cast. Line hand stays in the caster's pocket. Line to be shot lays beneath the rod hand on the surface and the line is clamped against the handle with a finger of the rod hand. Caster takes *up to* five false casts then delivers a distance cast with only one hand. The distances achieved can be impressive and often serve to demonstrate ability that justifies beginning meaningful double-haul instruction. I also find this task helps evaluate rod & line performance and match-up.

When a caster can reliably increase his or her cast length from 25-feet carried to 55-feet total, using a 7-weight, long belly, floating line — they kinesthetically comprehend rod load, timing, tip path leading to efficient loops, and the value of smooth acceleration to a firm stop. Logical use of "Stop — shoot" verbalization embeds the necessary delay between rod stop and line release — loop completely forms during this period. Usually a caster begins to really add distance with this method after they can add over 50% to the length they are carrying. (NOTE – the fifty foot cast above carrying 25-feet of line actually only involves a shoot of under 14-feet when one adjusts for over 17-feet of rod and leader.) Informal competitions among skilled MCIs and MCI candidates have produced intermittent casting distances over 90-feet by extending length of line-carried over several false casts by slipping line under the clamping finger. Longer carry usually results in longer optimal prospective cast distance.

(Continued on page 10)

Watch a side view of the fly rod in the one-hand-shoot-for-distance exercise. The concept of longer stroke for longer casts will become visually obvious as casters lengthen carry over a few false casts. There exist inherent limits of stroke and arc that may adapt to longer line carried — at some point an individual reaches their *maximum carry* and going beyond that results in collapse of the loop. Increasing rod length provides greater possible tip travel. A taller caster with longer arms gains a significant advantage in casting stroke increase and potential *maximum carry*.

Insufficient stroke length often results in some portion of the tip path becoming concave, as stated by the Gammels'. A universal band-aid approach to tailing loop is lengthening the stroke, but the development of a concave tip path arrives through a variety of possible casting faults. Top FFF Certified Instructors and Master Certified Instructors should provide the specific antidote to each student fault rather than a panacea approach.

Lengthening rod stroke proportional to amount of line carried, and the other essentials, apply equally to back casts. **Short cast- short stroke; Long cast-long stroke.**

Key Points –

- Rod movement distance must increase as the amount of line outside of the rod tip increases during casting motions.
- The proportional change in rod motion with amount of line-carry acts to preserve straight line path of the rod tip.
- Longer tip path correlates with deeper maximum rod bend for any given acceleration pace.
- Deeper rod bend stores more potential energy to propel fly line, so longer casts (or carries) usually also demand longer rod paths.
- The one-hand-shoot-for-distance provides a kinesthetic learning experience for casters and a visual reinforcement of stroke changing as carry increases for observers at right-angles to the loop plane.
- Smooth acceleration and control of terminal tip-speed reduce counter-flex, thus preserving loop efficiency.
- Auditory timing elements enter using inner-dialogue like "Stop — shoot" to delay line release when intending to shoot line for increased distance beyond amount carried.

The Gammels' *ESSENTIALS OF FLY CASTING* present enlightened compilation and observation to inform modern fly casters. Modern high-speed video combined with the Richards-Perkins Casting Analyzer data serve to reinforce these concepts for acceleration in straight-line fly casting with a single handed rod. Longer fly line *carry* challenges the caster to demonstrate consistency, attend to visual and kinesthetic details of rod and body movement, and effective timing of "Stop — shoot" verbal cues for best results.

Author's Note: MCI Carl McNeil's 2010 DVD, *Casts That Catch Fish*, includes varying paced demonstrations of Gammels' *Essentials* that merits attention.

The Prawn Rod

By Wee Soon Cheng (Tony)

For want of a better name, this **teaching aid** was called a "Prawn Rod" as it was made from the last four sections of a telescopic rod used locally for prawn fishing. In essence, a prawn rod is similar to the modern Japanese style "Tenkara" rod which is gaining popularity in North America as an alternative to "Western" Flyfishing" in small streams.

Photo by Tony Cheng

How to make one?

This couldn't be easier. All you need is the last four or five sections of a telescopic fishing pole, depending on how long you want the aid to be. I would recommend a maximum length of four to five feet. When closed, the rod will be approx. 22 inches. Glue a grip (a half wells would be nice) to one end and fix a braided loop to the tip. To this, loop to loop some 15 feet of thin running line from a high vis 3 to 5 wt. fly line, add a short leader/tippet and yarn and you are in business. You might have to adjust the length of line to suit the "action" of your rod. All the above came to less than $20 in Malaysia …. Perhaps not more than $30 in the US of A.

(Continued on page 12)

Photo by Tony Cheng

How to use it?

This miniature fly rod has a number of uses:

1. As a casting/teaching aid :
   - Great as an aid to visually explain Bill Gammel's 5 principles.
   - Excellent when used as tool to explain SLP of the rod tip and loop control, especially on smooth floors indoors, like between 2 parallel lines. The smooth floor allows the line to slide easily for the student to see the tight loops created. Similarly, the student can easily see the wide loops resulting from a domed path of the rod tip.
   - When overhead casting, tight loops, wide loops and tailing loops can be easily made. Other casts like reach mends and curve casts can also be taught.
   - In short, nearly all casting moves can be illustrated and taught indoors.

2. As a casting rod for children:
   - It's an excellent tool to teach small kids (4 & 5 year olds) to cast as it is short and light and yet looks like a real fly rod that daddy uses.:-)

3. As a fishing rod:
   - Not unlike the "Tenkara" method, it can actually be used for tiny creeks and hill streams to fly fish for small fishes. Shorter than the normal Tenkara rod and the shortest 2 wt. fly rod, uses a real fly line and much lighter than both …. Minimalist fly fishing or what.!!!

Brain Research and Casting Instruction

Part I

by Dayle Mazzarella

Despite changes in distances, speeds, and angles, on virtually every cast, an experienced fly caster drifting down a river can throw a size 4 Zoo Cougar to within 2 inches of the bank 95% of the time, with no false casts. And that doesn't even take into account wind, undulating bank and boat path, and never ending banter with boat mates! We are talking about a task so complicated and intricate it puts a cruise missile computer to shame.

The two questions this article will attempt to answer are 1) how did it happen, and just as importantly, 2) what are the implications to fly casting instruction?

Before we get into exploring those two questions, a little background and perspective are crucial to consider.

Most of us were fairly competent casters before we took the CCI or MCI certification exams. Many of us were self-taught or had minimal formal instruction. The basis for our improvement had been imitation, experimentation, observation, mimicry, and practice. We were pretty satisfied with ourselves. I would imagine that all of us would agree that our casting, or at least our understanding of casting, has improved tremendously since our journey began. This has been in large part a result of studying the physics and bio-mechanics of casting.

We are indebted to Bruce Richards, the Borgers, the Rajeffs, Al Kyte and a host of others who have attempted to apply rigorous analysis to the "art of casting". Their work, with slow motion photography in particular, has allowed us to confirm, refute, and modify previously held beliefs regarding the fundamental truths of casting.

Unfortunately, the same thing has not happened with the "art of teaching", in any domain. I have been intimately involved in the training of classroom teachers and athletic coaches for over two decades. I can say without hesitation that classroom teachers and coaches have a very limited grasp of modern cognitive research and its implications to instruction. To form a basis for our pedagogy, most of us today rely on intuition, observation, mimicry and experimentation. Intuitively, many have developed a fairly competent bag of tricks, lessons, and "truths" that have served them pretty well.

The fact is that modern brain research is challenging many of the "truths" we have taken for granted. With fly casting instruction in particular, it is difficult to measure, quantify or even define, and otherwise determine excellence in instruction.

For our students there are few objective standards of excellence like there are on math exams or track and field events. As a result, there is no easy way to objectively compare my student's results to those of other instructor's students, especially in statistically viable numbers. For that reason alone, almost anything goes and we're back to using intuition, observation, mimicry, etc. Thank goodness much of it is pretty good stuff.

(Continued on page 14)

In the past two decades, there has been a tremendous amount of research as regards how the brain functions. This article, while grossly over simplifying, will hopefully serve as a springboard for continued discussion regarding how learning takes place and how we need to rethink some of our assumptions about teaching fly casting. Let's start with casting with accuracy as illustrated in the opening paragraph.

We see the target and our eye's receptors transfer this data and information to our Neo-Cortex (the outer and most recent layer of our brain). Here the information is relayed to the Thalmus (the processing and distribution center of the brain) where it is distributed to, among other places, the Limbic System within the Thalmus. These systems are, in part, responsible for organizing, prioritizing, and storing plans and goals.

The goal in this case is to hit the target. When our fly lands, the eye records the landing and again relays this information through the Neo-Cortex to the Thalmus. The Thalmus now sends this data to the Limbic System and to the Cerebellum which acts as a sequence- error computer that compares the desired outcome of the cast to the actual performance.

What the brain does at this point is determined at least as much by emotion as it is by intellect. If the outcome is less than satisfactory and we feel some level of frustration, anger, embarrassment or some other similar negative emotion, the brain automatically attempts a different motor sequence on the next repetition.

If, on the other hand, the outcome is consistent with our expectations and we feel some level of joy, satisfaction, vindication or other similar positive emotion, our brain attempts to "lock in" the motor sequence that resulted in the successful cast. If we cast enough to different targets with varying distances, and angles, etc. our brain automatically and instantaneously calibrates the force, angle, movement and timing required to hit any target.

This information has powerful implications to instruction:

Question: How many incorrect repetitions did the average caster make before landing a fly 2" from the bank 95% of the time? How many incorrect mends did the MCI candidate make while preparing for Task # 4 - Aerial Mends?
Answer: A lot! At least hundreds, more likely thousands.
Instructional Implication: If the brain doesn't like the outcome (the outcome doesn't match the "plan" in the Limbic System) it will NOT create a muscle memory of an incorrect repetition. Conversely, the brain will instead actively seek another motor sequence to create a more acceptable outcome.

Question: How does the brain know what is, and what is not, a successful cast?
Answer: We have seen and/or visualized what a successful cast looks like. That is our model. Our eyes relay to the brain the degree to which the cast matches our goal.
Instructional implication: Our students must be able to recognize a good model cast and differentiate it from a bad cast. (Discrimination Training) Before they leave us, our students must be able to recognize, and be able to describe the characteristics of a good cast given the expected outcome.

Question : What is a major triggering mechanism for the brain that makes it want to change a motor sequence?
Answer: Negative emotion.

Question: What is a major triggering mechanism for the brain to want to consolidate and save a motor sequence?
Answer: Positive emotion.

(Continued on page 15)

Instructional Implication: Either our students need to have an intrinsic desire to improve, or we need to impart in them that desire through our lesson and interactions. The extent to which we are able to pair positive emotions with practice is critical to learning. Spontaneous joy on the part of the teacher at a student's success is one example of motivation. We need to motivate students to care. A teacher who loves his/her job and expresses it openly is motivating the student. In terms of facilitating learning on the part of the student, I would go so far as to argue that the ability to motivate is, when describing a great teacher, at least as important as technical expertise, and often considerably more important.

In terms of teaching, my formal observations of over 600 teachers and coaches have been these:

1) Teachers spend considerably less time on "raising the level of concern" (a phrase coined by Dr. Madeline Hunter, a leading cognitive researcher and teacher trainer) than they should. Every lesson should start by spending a considerable amount of time motivating the student to want to learn what we are teaching. I personally spend at least 10% of a lesson on motivation. There is no sense teaching someone if they don't understand why they should really care. Why is the cast important? How can it improve your angling success? How is it fundamental to future attempts at learning new casts? How is it related to previous learning? How and why is it connected to your past and your future? What are our/your goals today? How will we know when we have succeeded? Ideally, students should leave a lesson determined to improve.

2) The lessons must be designed so that the student knows exactly what is expected. Otherwise, an incorrect casting sequence will create no disconnect between the goal and the reality. No disconnect = no improvement - as a matter of fact, now we can get incorrect muscle memory! I give students what Dr. Fred Jones, another leading cognitive researcher and teacher trainer, calls a VIP - Visual Instructional Plan. Before a student leaves my lesson, they have a detailed, written description/ reminder of each specific step required to make a particular cast. 50% of my time in a lesson is dedicated to what Dr. Jones calls Structured Practice. Structured Practice is a step-by-step rehearsal of the cast. Teach step 1, add step 2, review steps 1, 2, add step 3. Review steps 1,2,3, add step 4, etc. (While I differ with him on some issues, if you want another way of looking at Structured Practice, see the article by Macauley Lord in the Spring, 2009, edition of The Loop. - very good.) Finally, a written description of what the complete cast should look like. Through observation of my demonstration, and the written reminder sheet, the student should be able to clearly visualize the model or goal cast.

3) The student must have, at the least, a general idea of what is causing an incorrect repetition and how to correct it. Before they leave, I give them a short checklist (4 items max!) of things to consider as possible ways to solve their specific problem tendencies. "Start slowly and gradually increase your speed, Stop your rod abruptly, Make sure the line straightens, Continually check your wrist". As with raising the level of concern, the typical teacher under values the power of a student understanding specific "solution possibilities". We typically pay lip service to this subject, but objective observation of teachers in action show that less than 5% of a typical lesson is spent on discussing, reinforcing, or otherwise emphasizing possible solutions. I spend at least 25% of my time on this area of instruction. If students understand possible causes and cures, it will dramatically reduce the number of repetitions needed to attain competency. A must for instructors is encouraging students to find a partner who is able to critique casts. (Humanely, we hope.) Lots of research shows that teaching others is THE most efficient way to learn. Both parties would be benefitted. As a means of encouraging practice partners, I charge the same for a pair of students as I do for one.

The above example exposes one myth ingrained in almost all coaches and teachers: continuous incorrect repetition will create inappropriate muscle memory. As has been illustrated, this is not necessarily the case. Incorrect repetitions only become a problem if (1) the student doesn't know how to differentiate between correct and incorrect performance and believes that what they are doing is fine and/or (2) if the student doesn't

(Continued on page 16)

care enough to feel, at least to some extent, frustration, determination or anxiety when reality doesn't meet expectation.

As instructors, I would hope that one of our main goals is to create self-sufficiency in our students. We don't necessarily need to see a consistent and well-executed task performance during the instructional period. We need to give the student the tools to develop independently, through practice, a degree of efficacy they find satisfactory. We must try and convince them that with the knowledge we have imparted, combined with their desire, improvement is not magical or mystical. Improvement is simply a matter of repetition over time. Maybe our most important task is to motivate them to practice!

As in casting, certain essential principles exist in teaching and learning. This article illustrated four of those principles:

1) For optimal learning to take place the student must care about learning. (Emotion)
2) Students must know exactly what it is that constitutes success.
   (The Model and Discrimination Training)
3) Students must have the resources needed to improve. (The tools)
4) Repetition over time is an integral part of improvement. (Distributed practice.)

Using our knowledge of brain research we will, in future articles, examine cognitive overload, learning styles, short vs long term memory, primacy vs recency, the "reptilian brain", lesson plans, and other topics that are germane to understanding how learning takes place, and how best to plan instruction to take advantage of this knowledge. These articles will expose other myths and lay out a foundation of essential principles of instruction and learning. Presently there is plenty of good casting instruction going on, so the intent of this series is not to denigrate current efforts, but rather to fine tune and supplement what is already being done. One of the traits of all of the MCI and CI people I have met is their desire to improve. I hope this helps.

Dayle Mazzarella, CI, has 40 years experience as a highly successful teacher and coach, including 20 years experience training teachers and coaches, and consulting school districts regarding curriculum development, teacher training, and testing protocols. He has a Master's Degree in education with an emphasis in educational psychology. Dayle has been fly fishing for 30 years. For the past five years, he has guided fly fishing trips in Wyoming and instructed fly casting in Western Wyoming, Southern California and Florida.

PEARLS....

From a Master Study Group

Hosted by Gordy Hill

Pearl #1 - .....The Pre-Test.....

Let's see how you would answer these questions :

From Pat Damico...

1) Do you agree that a pre-test should be undertaken before a candidate takes the formal exam ? :
   a. Master candidates? Yes, I did 3 different ones
   b. CI candidates? yes

2) What is your concept of the ***purpose*** in giving a pre-test? To give the candidate the experience and have the tester give him/her their opinion of their readiness

3) Who should be asked to administer the pre-test?
   a. Master level. Ideally a BOG member or Master with testing experience
   b. CI level. At least Master level

4) The candidate has been working with a mentor for the past 6 months. Should the pre-test be given by this mentor? Could do it for first one, but a different examiner would be ideal

5) Why? Another opinion would be very helpful. Would help with the variety of testing we have been discussing

6) What should be covered during this pre-test?
   a. Master level. Do it as you would a regular test
   b. CI level. Same as above

7) When would you recommend taking a pre-test?
   a. A few days before the actual exam.
   b. Several weeks prior to the actual exam.
   c. Soon after starting to prepare for the exam.
   b. at least two months before test date

8) State the reason for your decision on question 7. If candidate needs help, time is available to do necessary work. If help is not needed (very rare) candidate will be more relaxed and know he/she is on a winning track. Candidate may have to reschedule and give someone better prepared an opportunity to test

9) Do you think the pre-test should be given by more than a single examiner? A single examiner with testing experience would be fine for first one.

10) Would you recommend that the examiner(s) correct faults after each answer or casting task? No
Or do you feel that the pre-test should be given just the way the real exam is administered and corrections/ critique be held until the end? Yes, unless candidate is very poorly prepared

11) Do you think that the examiner(s) should be brutally frank about any deficiencies or lack of proper performance during the critique? Absolutely! The rate of passing will dramatically improve.

(Continued on page 18)

12) Should the candidate be informed of his/her likelihood of passing the actual exam after taking the pre-test? Yes

13) When (if ever) would you recommend a repeat pre-test? If candidate needs more than a little work. Repeat with same examiner to see if specific areas have improved and then a pre-testing with a different examiner would be advisable

14) How should a candidate go about arranging a pre-test? In case of Master, contact closest BOG for guidance. CI candidate can contact local Master with testing experience.

From Maryann Townsend....

Maryann is a professional educator at University level. She answers questions not only from her teaching experiences, but also in the first person as she looks back upon her own experiences during her journey to certification :

Here at the University we often struggle with just such a question - -
The first question we ask ourselves is "What is the desired outcome"?

1) Do you agree that a pre-test should be undertaken before a candidate takes the formal exam ? :
It depends on the desired outcome of the FFF. If the FFF is looking for the best instructors possible, I feel what is wrong with giving them all of the tools possible to become a better instructor. **Example:** In my case, I did not pass the CI the first time, in a sense it was (after the fact) a pre-test. Even though I was disappointed, it helped me become a better caster and a better instructor.

2) What is your concept of the ***purpose*** in giving a pre-test? To help the candidate to become the best instructor they can.

3) Who should be asked to administer the pre-test?
   a. Master level. In some areas it is difficult to find a BOG – (2 Masters if available)
   b. CI level. (2 Masters if available) I like the idea of two people giving input

4) The candidate has been working with a mentor for the past 6 months. Should the pre-test be given by this mentor? No

5) Why? I worked with a mentor for quite some time - - at some point a new point of view can be very helpful. Like stepping outside of the box, the mentor may become too familiar or comfortable with the candidate – a new perspective is always welcome in my book! It is never too late to learn something new. I am always looking for opportunities to increase my technique and skills.

6) What should be covered during this pre-test ?
As a candidate they have full access to the exam – so why not run through the exam as if it were the real thing – but in this case – suggestions could be offered by the examiner during and after the pre-test.
   a. Master level.
   b. CI level.

7) When would you recommend taking a pre-test? In my opinion I would try for all three – again it only leaves room for improvement. Prepare, Learn take a breath and learn some more.

C. In the beginning, it might help answer the question that everyone wants to know. "What exactly am I getting myself into? and even though it is spelled out in black and white - - what is it the examiners are looking for?" It would allow me to ask questions as I work through the process too.

B. Several weeks prior to the actual exam – Continue to learn from the experience, get a few more pointers and work out any kinks.

A. A few days before the actual exam. Calm down the nerves - even though it is only a day or two before – there is still time to learn and become even more comfortable. I'm sure many of you still remember the Mayflies doing flips in your stomach the day of your testing.

(Continued on page 19)

8) State the reason for your decision on question 7. Stated above

9) Do you think the pre-test should be given by more than a single examiner? Yes…when available, an additional opportunity for learning – also a pre-test in my opinion is just that, an example of the original – two members are present during the actual testing.

10) Would you recommend that the examiner(s) correct faults after each answer or casting task? Or do you feel that the pre-test should be given just the way the real exam is administered and corrections/critique be held until the end? Again, it depends on the final expectation of our CI's and MCI's. Do we punish and or discourage them during the pretest or do we help them become better instructors?

11) Do you think that the examiner(s) should be brutally frank about any deficiencies or lack of proper performance during the critique? Yes . . . that would be my understanding as the candidate for testing – I am there to improve – how can I fix something if I don't know it is broken?

12) Should the candidate be informed of his/her likelihood of passing the actual exam after taking the pre-test?
Yes … In both cases - if not ready help them to continue learning and prepare for the exam.
If the examiner feels they are ready it would be a huge confidence booster.

13.) When (if ever) would you recommend a repeat pre-test? As I explained above in question #7. Multiple times as long as they continue to improve. I also think the candidate should walk away with a few notes for improvement - - not a guarantee of success of course, but areas in which need to improve before they can sit for any additional pre-test. Or possibly they could only retest once every 3-6 months???

14.) How should a candidate go about arranging a pre-test? One question first - where – when and by who- will these exams be given?

These answers may have an impact on the question above. If the pre-tests are given at the conclaves student will need to sign up for them in advance - - if they are given as needed they would just have to be arranged via possibly email to the testers in their area. Keeping in mind if it were limited to conclaves it might be difficult for everyone – I know at the Oct conclave in Mt. Home the number of candidates just about outnumber the examiners.

My vote would be to arrange them individually.

From Michael Jones.....

In reading all the positive feedback on the pre-test, I am wondering if a slightly different tangent/approach might be in order for the FFF, and the pre-exam process being examined here in our group.

When I took my CI exam from Mac Lord, he treated the day/exam in an unusual way, and made the declaration that he was going to try something he thought would be a good fit for the group size/ability. He decided to teach to the exam, by very specifically going over what was expected, and clarifying the casting expectations, as well as some of the more 'sticky' written test questions; he did not give us answers, but we knew what was being asked of us ahead of time. It was more of a thorough class, followed by an exam.

Near the end of the practical, he was testing a student having trouble with one element of the required casting: the distance cast. Rather than fail the guy, he took the opportunity to bring the problem into a teaching scenario for the group, he made several observations (teaching), and offered a few meaningful recommendations. Immediately, the guy threw a beautiful passing distance cast. Mac explained he needed to work to make those changes a consistent thing, and passed him. We all went away with a positive experience, and our CI cert!

On this note, in Maine, we have Maine Guides. We consider the Maine Guide process (prep/exam) as one of the most rigorous in not only the country, but the planet. Most people that take the exam ***blind***, fail it. As a result, many schools have opened up over the past 20 years to offer direct instruction on how to prepare for and take the exam. Naturally, there is a lot of lecture, discussion, quiz and final pre-test opportunities. People generally pay between 2-4 hundred dollars for several full day sessions to prepare them for this exam. The state claims that the passing rate from those that have been tutored is without compare to those that stumble in off the street.

(Continued on page 20)

If someone offered a MCI pre-exam course that offered pre-testing, coupled with good solid instruction/coaching, they would have my attention. Rod McGarry tried to do this a few years back in Maine (not to be confused with Rod's fantastic offerings at the Marlboro Fly Fishing Show; different). He lacked a financial component, and a willingness for both parties to have a schedule commitment in advance; it kind of diffused over time. A well planned school, sponsored by a BOG, or a couple of Masters *would*, not *could* attract a lot off attention from the CI community. I know that you (Gordy) have devoted a ton of your own personal time to help individuals prepare for both exams, and that is more than admirable. Maybe this could be a great incentive for BOG & MCI guys/gals to actively expand the sport we all love to study, through organized continuing education workshops a.k.a. pre-test camp!

I bet that there is not a single person in this group that would declare that the FFF testing does not/did not scare them. We are always afraid of what we do not know about our own deficiencies. Would it not be a huge confidence builder to wipe away at least a portion of that anxiety?
I know this is wordy, but to compare successful models is a vital element to my point.

From Len Zickler...

I have found Macauley's teaching approach innovative, positive and supportive. Michael's suggestions for a BOG sponsored pre-exam course would receive broad support from CI's! Where do I sign-up!

From Gordy.....

Something like this could be organized for Conclaves as well as regional council events. Lots of work entailed, but well worth the effort.

From Ted Warren....

Why don't we offer a multi-session comprehensive prep program for the CI and MCI at the national conclave?
I recognize that many of the elements, if not all, of both performance tests are covered in various other classes but I don't believe they are always thoroughly addressed. And, it would be practically impossible to attend all the classes due to scheduling.
I think a lot of great learning could occur with such a program taught by the best of the best.

Finally, why don't we offer free introductory casting lessons to the public at the national convention? There are a lot of tourists in West Yellowstone who are fly fishing prospects who may be looking for something free to do and it will help draw more of them into the exhibition hall than we experienced last year. This is a key part of our marketing program at Gore Creek Fly Fisherman in Vail where I work and teach during the Summer.

From Gordy.....

Sometimes candidates (Master or CI) signs up to take the actual test even though he/she ***knows full well that preparations have not been carried out to the point that there is reasonable likelihood of passing.***

Some of these folks do this in an attempt to use the actual scheduled exam as a "pre-test". I've heard comments such as, "Well, I just thought I'd give it a try...."

It can be argued that by doing this, the candidate does gain the experience of having gone through at least part of an actual exam, thus profiting to some extent from the experience.

Some of these candidates do not realize that once the examiners have determined that there is no chance of a successful outcome, the exam is usually stopped at this point. At the options of both examiners and candidate, the remaining time may or may not be spent as a teaching exercise.

A certain number of experienced examiners take issue with this practice for a variety of reasons not the least of which is that it unproductively uses up precious examination team resources for the time period.

I am **NOT** referring to the candidate who has made advanced preparation, perhaps even having taken a pre-test or two, but has not quite made the grade and so didn't pass. In this instance, a post-exam critique with some teaching can go a long way toward a successful outcome when the exam is repeated at a later date.

Pearl # 2 - ..... Diagnosing and correcting faults...

From Gordy..... We could quote Mel Krieger from his video and call this: "Faults and Fixes"

From Peter Minnick.....

I think that 1 of the most critical aspects in teaching flycasting is the ability to see, analyze and correct casting flaws...I don't see this in any of the requirements for certification either at the CI or MCI level...

The suggested guidelines for preparation are focused on the ability to perform specific casts, explain and demonstrate specific casts and a depth of knowledge about 5 different areas of fly fishing and casting. There is nothing about analyzing a fault in casting and coming up with a solution on a performance level. You could ask what might be the causes of a tailing loop but that wouldn't be the same as asking what is causing my loop to tail.

Any instructor, whether it be tennis,golf,skiing or flycasting is only going to be as effective as their ability to identify and correct flaws. I suggest that an analytical and remedial aspect be considered as an addition to certification. To be fair you could limit it to the principles of casting along with other violations that could be identified as common flaws...such as creeping,wristing,shocking,torqueing,etc... I think it would be easy and reasonable to come up with a number of casting flaws where a candidate would be might be asked to identify and suggest remedies for correction...In summary I believe we need some real life application to solving casting problems.

A test of teaching competency needs to include a section where an instructor intentionally does something incorrectly. The student should be expected to identify the error and suggest remedies for the error made. An instructor who cannot see what is being done incorrectly should not be certified to teach.

From Gordy.....

I, for one, agree. Others may argue that the CI, after passing the exam will then be expected to develop and hone that capability (Subject for later debate). That is ***exactly*** what you did !

As you point out, it doesn't appear on the CI exams at the present time, although it may in future renditions.

On the MCI exam, we expect that to be covered as the examiners purposely make faulty casts and ask the candidate to describe the fault(s) and one or more corrections. The method of doing that is usually also questioned.

Ally Gowans takes this a step further as he starts his casting instruction with information which allows his ***student*** to be aware of his own faults with a basic understanding of how to correct them.

This is a passage from one of his messages:

"We each do things differently. I expect even a beginner after an hour or so to be able to identify most of their problems (which at that stage are usually fairly simple).

Eg. Rod tip travels downwards during a back cast. Incorrect acceleration. Incorrect de-acceleration. Undesirable loop size. Timing issues etc.

I tell them early on that I want them to recognise if something is not right and when that occurs I will ask what caused it. If they don't know I tell them what I saw and usually they will make the correct call. If not I will explain further.

The reason is that when they are on their own I want them to be able to cure problems and I am happier if they go away with a good understanding of good and bad and various fixes than I would be if they cast perfectly and don't know why or how to fix the inevitable problems."

Rather than starting debate on that issue, let's keep all this in mind as we tackle specific casting problems and faults and the numerous choices we may have to correct them.

We'll develop our teaching, "BAG OF TRICKS"

(continued on page 22)

LET'S START WITH THIS ONE:

Your new student casts with big poorly controlled loops. Her back cast loops strike the ground with each attempt.

1. **Likely diagnosis?**
2. **Corrections?**

From John Bilotta.....

1. Likely diagnosis?

1. Wristing or breaking the wrist much on the backcast.
2. Ripping the pick up off the ground/water during the backcast.
3. Using a rod that is too large for the person.
4. Trying to cast pick up too much line

2. Corrections?

1. Tell her not to rotate the wrist, just squeeze and stop the rod as it approaches her ear.
2. Stop with the thumb point up.
3. Work on making the pick up smoother.
4. Make sure the rod isn't too big or heavy for the caster.
5. Shorten the amount of line she is working with.
6. Try casting on the horizontal plane
7. Use a wristlok.

From Rick Brown.....

Problem: back cast hits the ground.

Cause: Poor timing can cause the problem but the most likely cause is a combination of a convex path of the rod tip and breaking the wrist. These will always send the line to the ground.

Solution: I have found that breaking the wrist is hard to cure because students do it unconsciously but I have a ''writ lock'' (I think that it is sold under the Wulff name) and that helps break the habit. As far as the convex path is concerned, I begin with a simple explanation like ''painting the ceiling of an igloo'' and then move to a hands on demonstration of the right and wrong way so that they can feel the difference.I will also encourage them to watch their back casts.

If the student is a little more advanced, I will go to the 6 step method before anything else. If you don't know what it is that is being done wrong, then it is almost impossible to make the necessary correction.

**this is what led me to Al Crise in the beginning. I was totally self taught and reasonably good at fly casting. But I wanted to be a lot better. I found that no amount of practice made any difference at all.

From Gordy.....

The various kinds of "wrist locks" do work. However, while it they are useful in having the student see the improvement when this is used, there comes a point when he must be weaned from it.

Tom White used to place a protruding rod butt down into the student's long sleeve shirt wrist cuff. that worked, too.
Another in Tom's "bag of tricks" was to have the student cast with the reel turned around and kept tight against the forearm.

You mentioned the 6 step method. That is hard to beat as an algorithm for diagnosing and correcting faults.

Your last sentence says a lot. In order to correct our own faults (and we all have them) we need to know what to look for and what to do about it. Too many casters just keep casting hoping that the light will dawn..... and it usually doesn't.

(Continued on page 23)

From Peter Minnick.....

Your new student casts with big poorly controlled loops. Her back cast loops strike the ground with each attempt.

1. Likely diagnosis? Did not properly accelerate and stop the rod on the backcast.
2. Corrections? With a straight line layout and the rod tip pointing at the fly SLOWLY accelerate the rod to a stop. The arc of the backcast should match the length of line outside the rod tip. There must be enough gradual acceleration to bend the rod and create enough line speed so that the line will travel at a straight line {180 degrees} away from it's target. Following the principles..no slack,SLP, short line short stroke,long line long stroke ,correct application of power at the right time to a stop..... had to add keeping a firm wrist.....

From Gordy.....

Even if she had accelerated the rod to a "STOP", but did so with the rod stopping in a downward direction, she'd have still hit the ground.

I like the way Lefty addresses this as he tells his student, ***"Stop with your rod tip going back and in a somewhat upward direction."***

You are right in that the casting arc for her back cast must match the rod bend and the amount of line carried.

You have also called attention to the "180 degree rule" which is that the trajectory of the forward cast and that of the back cast should be approximately in a 180 degree line. Some refer to this as the "line plane". Had she done that properly, she'd have picked up from the water (forward and down) and made her back cast BACK AND UP.

While you are correct in her having no slack, it is likely that slack was not one of the direct causes of her problem.

You added, " **had to add keeping a firm wrist..... ".**

Failure to control the wrist is a common underlying cause of this fault. This has been variously termed, "floppy wrist", "Out of control wrist", "Wristing", etc.

From Bill Kiester.....

1. Likely diagnosis? The student is unable to control their casting arc.

2. Corrections? The corrections are dependent on the experience of the student. I have described approaches from in depth to just reminders.

I think that first the student must understand that the casting arc must be stopped at both ends and that those stops cause the line to roll out parallel to the ground or water. The point can be demonstrated using ground loops done with a clothesline. The student can usually make tight loops in fifteen minutes than the problem becomes moving those loops in to the air.

A great way to concentrate on the ground strikes on the backcast is to use the nose touch on pickups and lay downs per David Diaz's presentation. Have the student perform a pickup and lay down directly overhead such that their casting hand comes right to their face. Tell them to touch the thumb of their casting hand to their nose. They will stop the rod on the backcast.

If it is just reminders walk up to you student while they are false casting such that your body blocks the forward cast and forces a proper stop. In a like manner hold your arm up to block the student's backcast to form a proper stop.

(Continued on page 24)

From Gordy.....

YES ! ***The body blocks.*** I figured someone would add that one.
If the instructor stands close behind her, she will sense his presence and have no wish to strike him on the back cast.

In line with that: The instructor can stand behind and a bit off to her side. As she brings her rod back and down, he can reach out and stop the rod motion with his hand. Helps make the point with few or no words. You included that.

David Diaz's "nose touch" is a form of body block. Works fine when teaching to cast in the vertical plane. Of course, it won't work with an off vertical or off horizontal rod plane style.

From Marc Fauvet.....

Mark Fauvet adds to our "bag of tricks" :

Your new student casts with big poorly controlled loops. Her back cast loops strike the ground with each attempt.

1. Likely diagnosis?
Although there are others, my experience is that this fault at this stage of casting development mostly comes from two major reasons. Not looking at their Back Cast (they have no idea where the line is going) and excessive use (or better yet, lack of control) of the wrist, often brought on by the thumb on top grip. This grip for many people seems to doom them to over-flexing their wrist.

2. Corrections?
Show them and teach them to learn to look back, at least for some of the casts until they learn to 'feel' the cast and I encourage a different grip, V, screw-driver or even forefinger on top for the hardcore wristers.

From Mike Heritage.....

I am glad you suggested that there were some missing techniques in the correction of the fault. Flycasting has to mirror itself back and front. Beginners (and intermediates for that matter) tend to focus on what they can see in front of them, and sometimes, with a bit of encouragement, learn to adjust their stroke to get better results, i.e., tighter loops on the forward stroke. However,most never look at their back cast, they just make the assumption that it is ok. If we can alter their stance so that they are open enough to glance at their back cast they will then see what we see and are often able to correct the fault themselves after we have explained what they were doing and what they should be doing. Hopefully once they start to produce a decent and dynamic back cast we can then work on using less effort which will then tighten the loops even more.

Another method of course is side casting where, once again, they can see both back and fore casts and the hand/eye correlation can assist them to make adjustments with the assistance of the instructors advise.

From Lefty Kreh....

Gordy - I am amazed how complicated some instructors make things. The reason the backcast has a sag, slack or hits the ground is the rod tip stops in a down and back direction.

I see students improve their backcast in minutes by simply explaining to them IF YOUR ROD TIP STOPS WHILE IT IS RISING THE BACKCAST WILL GO UPWARD AND BE STRAIGHT.

Aside from suggesting they start with a lower rod position I don't tell them about flexing wrist, starting to high, etc. I let them figure out how to stop the rod while it's rising and they TEACH THEMSELVES (the best way to learn) in minutes to make a good backcast.

(continued on page 25)

From Walter Simbirski.....

The answers to the casting fault diagnosis/correction are interesting in that they all reflect thought processes that I expect to see from instructors with some level of experience. I'm curious how someone would instill this knowledge in someone else who wants to be an instructor. I'm not sure if anyone else is interested in this but I'll share my process and feel free to critique from there:

1. First determine if there is a fault. Is the student experimenting for example? Am I looking at things from a bad angle? If the line is hitting the ground there isn't much question that there is an issue but it doesn't hurt to be sure before spending time and effort on an issue.

2. Eliminate equipment issues. The quickest way I know to determine this is to try the equipment yourself. If I find any potential issues with the equipment it's likely that a beginner will have even bigger issues with the equipment. Also ensure that the student hasn't exceeded the limitations of the equipment or their skill level (e.g. trying to carry 80 feet of line). If casting doesn't improve go to next step.

3. Eliminate (if possible) environmental issues. Is there a tail wind for example? Many beginners have a hard time with even a slight tail wind. If casting doesn't improve go to next step.

4. Determine if there is one fault (line hits ground) or multiple faults (large loops and line hits ground). Identify all of the faults you are seeing even if they seem minor.

5. Consider all potential causes of the fault or faults - begin with the 5 essentials, look at the stop, the 180 degree rule, trajectory. What things are causing the fault(s)? Which is causing the most problems? Does it make sense that the potential cause of the fault can actually create the fault we are seeing? For example - trajectory could explain why the line hits the ground. Timing (pausing for much too long) could also result in the line hitting the ground. Breaking the 180 degree rule could explain this. Of all the things that could cause the line to hit the ground which ones also result in large loops? Eliminate the non-starters and concentrate on the realistic causes.

6. Observe to see which of these things are actually happening e.g. is the trajectory so low on the back cast that the student can't avoid hitting the ground? Is the pause long enough to cause significant line sag? Is the casting arc much too large? What is the student doing to cause this? Look at wrist movement, arm movement, shoulder movement, grip. Where is the rod stopping? Is it a distinct stop or a mushy stop? You may want to observe from more than one vantage point such as from the side and from the front (make sure the caster isn't worried about hitting you).

7. Do your observations in 6 agree with your analysis in 5? Based on your experience do you feel that you have identified the fault(s) and cause(s)?

8. If there are multiple issues decide which one or ones you will address first.

9. Suggest modifications for the student to try and observe the effect. Was the student able to adapt? If not what other modifications can you try? If the student made the desired change did it have the desired effect?

10. Have you dealt with all of the issues you want to for now. Or do you want to student to practice the current modification a bit first before making additional changes?

This is more or less the process I follow...

(Continued on page 26)

Pearl #3 - .....Quotes quiz....

Let's take the heat off for a moment and have some fun. These are a few quotes sent by Tim Lawson.

SEE IF YOU CAN MATCH AS MANY OF THEM AS YOU CAN TO THOSE WHO GENERATED THEM :

Hints: Two of them are from a past U.S. president. More than one quote comes from the teachings of the same person. A few of them come from a collection by the Napa Vally Fly Fishers. A few come from well known verbal teachings. I lifted a couple of them from texts you have probably studied.

1. "Share your knowledge, don't display it"

2. "You will not be lucky"

3. "The double haul just helps you throw your mistakes farther"
   [GH] (Also: "Some people use their hauls to throw their mistakes farther"

5. "When I run out of arm"

6. "I don't care what you call it, just do it"

7. "It's only fly casting"

8. "Standing on your line does nothing to improve the cast"

9. "Nothing good happens when you false cast with a weighted fly"

10. "Life's too short"

11. "You can't expect skinny line to turn over fat line"

Gordy adds a few more...

12." It's a single haul unless you give back line"

13."A double haul can be done on either the back or forward cast but is normally done on both."

14."The measured chord that subtends the arc of the fully bent rod becomes the true casting or effective length."

15. "**Cackhanded.** casting with the right hand up over the left shoulder (or vice versa)"

16."Any knot begins to slip just before it breaks."

17."Stop the back cast abruptly when your arm is vertical and the rod is 22 1/2 degrees back of the vertical position."

18."The essence of learning is doing. The essence of teaching is inspiration."

(Continued on page 27)

19. “Pushing the hand straight ahead when you stop the rod will cause the rod tip to do the same. This is the cause of all tailing loops.”

20. “The term enlightenment casts has little to do with the Buddhists’ sense of the word.”

21. “If fishing is like religion, then fly-fishing is high church.”

22. “Use the haul like a gear shift to change line speed.....”

23. “Fly-fishing may well be considered the most beautiful of all rural sports.”

24. “For all men are equal before fish.”

25. “Sometimes a poorly designed knot that is firmly closed is stronger than a well designed knot that is not firmly closed”

26. “A trout is a moment of beauty known only to those who seek it.”

27. “To him, all good things - trout as well as eternal salvation - come by grace, and grace comes by art, and art does not come easy.”

28. “Many go fishing all their lives without knowing that it is not the fish they are after.”

29. “Don’t use any more power than you did on your last false cast. Haul faster. Let your haul hand be your accelerator.”

30. “O, sir, doubt not that Angling is an art; is it not an art to deceive a trout with an artificial fly?”

31. “Now try to make the same distance cast with half the effort.”

32. “Game fish are too valuable to be caught once.”

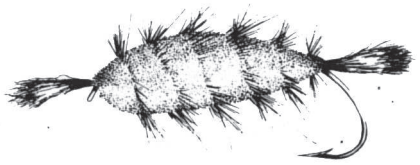
33. “The gods do not deduct from man’s allotted time those hours spent fishing.

Answers to the quiz on the next page....

(continued on page 28)

Answers to the quiz.....

1. Lefty Kreh
2. David Diaz
3. Lefty Kreh
4. Gary Borger - On Lefty's "wind cast"...Jason's, "thrust cast". *(PRESENTATION).*
5. Tom White
6. Don't know. (Scott Swartz was close with his "mantra".)
7. Dennis Grant - One of my favorite, "truths".
8. ??
9. Lefty Kreh
10. Tom White
11. Joan Wulff (Verbal from her classes.)
12. Joan Wulff (*FLY CASTING TECHNIQUES*)
13. Vincent Marinaro (*"IN THE RING OF THE RISE"*). (Don Phillips quotes Marinaro in his *"TECHNOLOGY OF FLY RODS")*
14. casting with the right hand up over the left shoulder (or vice versa)" Simon Gawesworth (*Spey Casting)*
15. Lefty Kreh (*Fishing Knots).*
16. Frank R.Steel (*Fly Fishing, 1946)* (This became taught as, "Steel's angle").
17. Mel Krieger
18. Ed Jaworowski (*THE CAST*).
19. Mac Brown (*CASTING ANGLES*)
20. Tom Brokaw
21. Joan Wulff (Verbal instruction)
22. Lefty Kreh
23. Frank Forester
24. Herbert Hoover
25. Lefty Kreh *(FISHING KNOTS)*
26. Arnold Gingrich
27. Norman MacLean *(A River Runs Through It).*
28. Henry David Thoreau
29. Lefty Kreh (Verbal instruction).
30. Isaac Walton
31. Ed Jaworowski (Verbal instruction)
32. Lee Wulff *(The Atlantic Salmon)*
33. Herbert Hoover. (One reference said that it was in similar form derived from an ancient Babylonian proverb.)



How to Be a Happier Fly Fisher: The Power of Positive Thinking

Part 1 - The Fly Fisher

by Cesar de la Hoz

We've all heard or caught ourselves saying something like, "These fish are impossible to catch", "I only use thin tippets, they're the best way to present a fly", "It's a silly thing to use streamers in a river this small!". "Practicing fly casting is useless, so I don't do it." "Why should I learn more about fly fishing if I only fish in small streams?" Yes, we've all heard or said those things ourselves!

We learn much more by dealing with feeling and emotional issues than memorizing technical data. Why does this happen? It is due to emotional learning, which is directly related to the **limbic system** that constantly leaves traces in our memory. All challenges overcome with satisfaction, will leave us an emotionally satisfactory footprint, which will make more affordable the challenges ahead. Positive thoughts create positive changes,which actually makes us happier. Likewise, dwelling on thoughts of failure will make us unhappy.

Editor's note: The limbic system is the part of the brain that controls emotion, motivation and behavior.

As an MCI and eduational psychologist, I've given this a lot of thought, and I still have some questions: After so much technical development in rods, lines, casting, loops and fulcrums... Is fly fishing something to learn only in a rational, objective and measurable way? Or can we use feelings and emotions as the most powerful piece of our tackle? Because, if it was true that your brain only sees what your emotions want to see ... Would it be useful to learn how you can become a fly fisherman who generates positive emotions that will help you to succeed? In other words, can you be a happier fly fisherman?

Fishing for Happiness

From the fly fisherman standpoint, *happiness depends not so much on your knowledge of casting physics nor of the dubbing colors, but on the passion and optimism you bring to fly fishing. I**n fact***, happiness is a state of mind subjective and continuous and we must take care of it to keep it in shape. This is why there are a series of thoughts that are important for us to understand better, because it helps us learn how to make the most of a situation, not only for efficiency but happiness.

For instance, why do some flies catch more fish than others regardless of whether they imitate the insect accurately or not? It's easy to understand, if you are using your favorite fly, the warm feeling generated that brings confidence and control over your fears. When you are focused on the target and cast this fly as if this cast were your best ever. However, when you are using another fly that is not to your liking, the self-generated doubts appear and your presentation will not be so effective since it is affected by your fears.

Therefore it is important to raise your level of optimism and to be capable of keeping your irrational ideas and fears under control as much as possible . You need what psychologist Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi called "flow." This is a state of mind in which the person is completely absorbed in an activity for their own pleasure and enjoyment. And it is the most reliable way you can keep away the stress and fear that make you anxious, and leads you to believe that you will not be able to catch this big brown trout.

(continued on page 30)

And what happens if you have lost your confidence? Then you have also missed your "flow". Typically this happens because you are guided by stress mechanisms which make you change your fly 40 times, one after another. Of course, you cast without thinking and lose control, then blame the wind and the currents for your failure. Can you believe it? You will get p***ed- off. Frustration and fear will deepen into anger and rage, and eventually change into sadness. You may even go further and state that it is luck when another fisherman finally catches and releases this slippery trout.

What are you waiting for? Fix it: Changing the way you question yourself makes you change your way of seeing things, enhances your skills and produces changes in your behavior. If you practice positive self-communication, your field of perception increases and you can capture more relevant information from your environment. Increase your attention and stay focused on what really matters. This is the key.

YOUR FISH IS WAITING

Happiness is reached not only by achieving a goal but in this case the goal is to catch the fish. Happiness is a process that comes from having a reason to catch it. The best thing about this is that the motivation depends only on you and on nobody else. Optimistic fly fishermen have fewer concerns and perform better, and therefore catch more fish than those who are not. Consequently the fisherman who catches more and bigger fish should never be the luckiest one! Who catches more fish is who expects to do so. Change your negative thoughts and become an optimist. Focusing on what you really need and forgetting unrealistic exigencies that block you will provide you with the means to generate positive emotions:

THE LANGUAGE OF HAPPINESS - change negative to positive thoughts.

"For sure because of the wind I can´t make a single cast" -	**"Today will be a good day for fishing"**
"Certainly the trout will not be where I´m going"	**"I'll try in different areas of the river, surely I find some fishes"**
"I´m sure that if a certain fly hatches, I will not have the imitation in my fly box" -	**"I have tied good flies with my favorite materials, you'll see how well they work"**
"I don´t think I am capable of putting the fly below the branches" .	**"I will try in different ways and places, so I have more opportunities to present the fly near the fish"**
"At noon the fish never rise, its best not to go to the river at that hour"	**"You never know what will happen in the river, I'll be attentive and not lose a single thing"**
"Why should I take streamers to this river if fish only eat dry flies and nymphs?"	**"When there is no surface activity I'll try to move these trout with some streamers. I´ll surely catch some fish. "**
"Impossible! the trout won´t pay any attention to my fly, even when I´m doing my best casts".	**"I will stop casting and watch the fish's behavior, certainly I will find a solution and learn something"**

Do you remember what the reptilian brain is? It is the basic unconscious brain. And what is fishing but a primitive activity aimed at surviving and obtaining nourishment? So, the reptilian brain should be the one calling the shots. This brain puts us in the present, neither in the past nor in the future. It is pure impulsiveness and there is little room there for fears and concerns other than the present ones. That is why when you fish you must let yourself

(continued on page 31)

go and use your instinct to find the fish. Do not limit yourself with negative doubts; make the cast that you think is the best. No cast will be better than this one, at this moment, because it is the one you need to find and demonstrate your confidence. Thinking that way will stop you focusing only on the fish. Focusing on the process of fishing and not on the product itself will reduce your levels of stress and fear. Remember as well that not everything is up to you, the fish of course also counts and some days those spooky fishes will never take your flies.

DISCOVER YOUR TALENTS

Some people fish very well with little technical knowledge. There are great flycasters who cast very well without knowing why a tailing loop is formed. There are people who are able to seek and find fish with more effectiveness than others, and there are fishermen who at the end of a bad day have always been capable of catching some fish while most have not.

They are people who can reinvent themselves, rebuild their talents, who can use their instinct and who know how to ask the right questions of themselves, and if some doubts arise, they will not be afraid of uncertainty. This allows them to create ideas in an ongoing process of creativity that finally results in successful alternatives, avoiding the "only one way thinking process". In so doing, they develop their capabilities and when they are focused on the process of fishing, doing it their own way, they are stimulating their creativity and curiosity which are the key aspects of fly fishing enlightenment. And as a matter of fact, enlightened persons yield more and better and of course are happier than the others.

And how would we begin to practice this new fishing approach? Start re-educating your brain. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that influences your moods; it creates optimism, good mood and sociability, and when there is a shortage of it, you feel very sad. On the contrary, Cortisol, called the stress hormone, brings tension and despair when secreted in excess. So, trust in yourself. Focus on what you want and not on what you are afraid of. Practice visualization. Think you can catch that fish, visualize it. The physiological effects of imagining a pleasant and non-threatening scene are very positive; it lowers blood pressure and heart rate, increases the concentration and balance that precede enlightenment. In short, it is the basis "to match the hatch".

Come on! Find your flow. You will be more relaxed after that, and of course, you will be a happier fly fisher *flowing* like a beautiful river. Believe in your dreams, smile as if you are catching the fish of a lifetime in those dreams.

A study published in the December 1989 issue of *American Journal of Medical Science* analyses blood samples from subjects before and after they watched comedy videos and compares these samples with those of a group that did not see the videos. They found significant reductions in the concentrations of stress hormones. So, if this big brown trout rejects your fly, smile and try again.

Our process of making decisions is typically influenced by what we imagine might happen in the future. Therefore, think and feel like a human being and give value to what you believe, not just what you are told to believe in. Be the star of your way of fishing and fish your way, not as others would have you fish. Personalize your way of casting and be creative in your fishing and casting. Invent, be creative and be confident in what you are doing. Let yourself get carried away by your instinct when fishing. Learn when to say STOP and reevaluate how to proceed. Give yourself the option of learning from your mistakes instead of forgetting it as something horrible, because mistakes are part of the way to learn creative fly fishing

Since we have learned that the mind only sees what it wants to see, practice until you can really see yourself doing that cast and catching the fish, then you will do well. No matter how good a caster you are, you will never catch that fish if you do not believe you will. Remember, a fly fisherman has to feel as well as reason. Find your flow and be one with your objective.

When you overcome your fears everything is possible. Don´t forget that. Do you know why? For the most important reason:

To be a happier fly fisherman is to be a successful fly fisherman.

Dennis is a Friend of Mine

by Capt. Pete Greenan

Dennis the Menace!

Dennis is a friend of mine. Even fishing guides have friends. I really don't pay him to hang around with me, but I do take him fishing from time to time. The problem is his casting. I cast pretty well and I would like to fish with someone who also casts well.
Now, let's get this scenario right; Dennis is on the bow of my skiff when I point out a tailing redfish about 60 feet away. He starts his cast with too little line out of the rod, makes fast, unnecessary back-casts, forces the front loop open and lands the fly short and spooks the fish. I come down off the poling platform, open the cooler and stick my head in it. Aah, I feel better now!

Dennis is a friend of mine. I want him to cast well so when I take him fishing I help correct some casting faults he has. The problems were many faceted. He couldn't get a good straight line path of the rod tip, the rod arc was too wide for the amount of bend he put in the rod and his hauls were poor. This was becoming frustrating to both of us. I decided to use what I learned as an instructor to help him. But how?

Here is what I did: I started by correcting the straight line path of the rod. I did this by having him watch the tip of the rod, then watch his wrist motion. He realized the correlation between the two, noting the straighter the path the less the wrist moved and the less the wrist moved the straighter the path. This was easy because Dennis is a smart man who pays attention.

Did I mention Dennis is a noted artist? I used this knowledge to help correct the rod arc/rod bend problem. On my note pad I drew the pictures of the arc/bend match-up with several different lengths of line. Dennis could grasp that better than any other way I explained it. Now I was facing the hauls as a problem. That was my mistake. His were not a problem, but inefficiency. Dennis knew instinctively how to make the haul, just not when or how much or how fast. In the end I managed to see him throwing slack back up the line thereby collapsing the turnover. I chose to use a vocal cadence to help make his hauls smooth. To stop the slack problem, I asked him to finish the sing-song with a deep tone at the bottom of the haul. It worked wonderfully.

What I discovered was my interest in Dennis casting well prompted me to pull my entire teaching arsenal out of the bag. If I couldn't get him to do one thing, I tried another and then another until I found one that really made him understand. That discovery prompted me to write this note. I have found that my interest in my student doing well makes me a better instructor. Did I follow all the prescribed methods of teaching? No, but I did whatever it took to help Dennis. Being around all the wonderful CIs and MCIs I know gave me a huge pile of tools to work with to help my students cast well.

Dennis and I often fish together and now it is a real pleasure to see him do so well. He has always been an excellent fish catcher, even when his casts were not good. But by helping him cast better, I know he is enjoying himself a lot more. That is what makes my day, being able to help a friend.

Now when I sight a tailing redfish, I only go to the cooler to get a cold beer for the man who caught the fish.

Fish Hard, Capt. Pete

The 7 Core Casting Concepts

Revisited & Revealed

by Frank LoPresti, MCI

In my last article I introduced a simple idea called 7 Core Casting Concepts. Having said that, this set of 7 Core Casting Concepts was never seen and never voted upon by the CBOG in November of 2011.

The 7 Core Concept model serves to remove the initial concerns of those who had not entirely grasped the core intent of the original document and elaborates on the modifications not found within the original set of core terms.

This, the second in a series of articles, establishes the 7 Core Casting Concepts construct to be used to facilitate the ease of communication during the testing process between examiner and testing candidate, and perhaps serve as a more practical application for understanding style free core casting mechanics as they apply to overhead, roll, spey and oval casts.

This is not an attempt to integrate old wisdom with scientific fact, nor is this an attempt to reinvent the wheel. In the 20th Century, a discussion of acceleration, force and mass was not needed to teach a student, potential instructor, or an eager beginner out on his own, to learn how to cast a loop of fly line with a fly rod. Nor is an explanation of force, mass and acceleration, needed to teach someone how to cast a loop of fly line with a fly rod in the 21st Century.

What is needed in the 21st century are basic core casting concepts that establish a commonality of casting jargon that we as instructors, candidates, and examiners alike, can effectively use to communicate with each other our basic fundamental understanding of core casting mechanics without deference to style, national or international interpretation and or scientific theory during the examination process.

While the 7 Core Concepts are obviously governed by the laws of physics, an intimate knowledge of those laws, while somewhat helpful and interesting, will not make anyone a better instructor or flycaster, as only hours and hours of practice can do that. Perhaps from a scientific standpoint the only law of physics that is of any practical importance to flycasting is Newton's 1st Law, in which it is stated; **a body at rest remains at rest unless otherwise acted upon by external forces**.

To that end a testing candidate, instructor or even an examiner, who does not refine and rethink on a constant basis, his or her own casting and teaching abilities, is **a body that remains at rest** in the quest to learn how to become a highly proficient testing candidate, instructor, and or examiner. The **external force** in this case is the motivation to become the best FFF Certified Casting Instructor one can become, and a firm understanding of core casting concepts are essential to that ongoing process.

The CICP examination process does not require in-depth knowledge of the physics of flycasting. In fact, often the words we use when teaching or testing would not exactly match up with the actual "physics" behind a flycast. If they did, we'd be in the business of teaching physics, not flycasting. A simple example is very instructive.

(continued on page 34)

Most of us talk about the fly rod as a Third Class Lever when in fact that analogy is only partially true as there is no single fixed fulcrum about which the rod as a lever will rotate, other than the wrist. Using the wrist only is not the most efficient way to cast a fly rod. Casting a fly line with a fly rod uses rotational torque from the shoulder, elbow and finally the wrist. These all rotate around and about a constantly changing ICR or Instant Center of Rotation. In other words the idea of the fulcrum or lever as it applies to a fly rod is simply an analogy of convenience much like the analogy of the straight line path of the rod tip. SLP is a teaching analogy that is not based on scientific accuracy, yet we accept these "truisms," as if they were fact or indeed accurate accounts of established scientific facts.

Scientific concepts such as force, mass and acceleration as they apply to a fly rod and fly line are simply repetitions of established scientific principals in as much as each and every flycaster or instructor must apply a force to the rod (acceleration), in order to move the mass of both the fly rod and the fly line over a certain distance. Perhaps not the most eloquent way to describe it, but in a nutshell, that's what we need do if our goal is to form a loop of fly line off the tip of a fly rod.

Again the goal of a core common casting vernacular is not the need to subject it to the rigors of well-established scientific principles, as much as it should facilitate the ability to render such a vernacular as; a useful simplistic diagnostic tool used to encourage and facilitate the ease of communication between a candidate and an examiner during the examination process, and in preparation for that process. To that end I will now explain how the 7 Core Casting Concepts completely achieve that goal.

What is a Casting Stroke?

A casting stroke can mean many things to many people but essentially its the same for each and every one of us. A casting stroke is comprised of 2 core constituent components, rotation and translation. The rotational, or angular acceleration aspect of the casting stroke is the engine that drives loop formation. Without rod rotation or "angular acceleration," a functional loop most likely will never form. The "non angular" or translational aspect of the casting stroke for overhead casting is simply linear, and or lateral movement of the fly rod. In the case of oval and spey type casts, a phase of the casting stroke is often noted as "curvilinear" or moving along a curving hand path. Overhead casting incorporates the straight hand path of the rod hand throughout the entire casting cycle.

We must now ask ourselves, what is the purpose of the casting stroke? Without a purpose, the core concept of the casting stroke is essentially meaningless as to what its core functioning parts are responsible for doing. I can only assume therefore, that the purpose of the casting stroke is to form a loop of fly line off the tip of a fly rod. Logically we must then ask ourselves, how do we rotate and translate the rod in such a manner that a loop does indeed form off the tip of our fly rod? Well, we know we need to apply a rotational force to the rod butt in the form of acceleration. However, how do we avoid the trap or the allure of scientific eloquence in explaining how task this must be achieved? We do so by simply removing the argument as to what constitutes "proper acceleration," and when that process should begin, as that will differ from one learned mind to the next. Some say *near constant acceleration*, others say *constant acceleration*. Another person might suggest smooth and gradual acceleration. While all are correct for the most part, the simple approach or answer, in order to avoid confusion and misinterpretation during the testing process, is simply to make some form of generic comment about loop formation itself and propose a general proposition about the force actually needed to indeed form a loop.

After spending 6 years in the Glossary Committee on this very topic the choice seems to boil down to 3 simple versions for a definition of Casting Stroke

1. Rod movement sufficient to cause loop formation.
2. Rod movement of significant force that results in loop formation.
3. When the rod first moves in the direction of a cast that results in loop formation.

(continued on page 35)

Anyone within reach of a dictionary will note that the more concise of the 3 options is "*sufficient to cause loop formation*". The second example comes close with the additional words "*significant force,*" but essentially says the same thing as the first but with more words.
Let's examine the 3 options more closely shall we....I'll start with version one.

Option 1 - Casting Stroke - Rod movement sufficient to cause loop formation.

What we have here is a bare bones statement of fact, no more no less. If the purpose of the casting stroke is loop formation, and I believe it is, sufficient angular or rotational acceleration will result in loop formation. "Wait," someone might say. "Why not include the word rotational when defining casting stroke?"
Well perhaps the not so obvious answer is that we have another term to describe the rotational aspect of the casting stroke and that term is casting arc, which I will address further down the page. Next is the not so alternative reality for the second definition of casting stroke.

Option 2 - Casting Stroke - Rod movement of significant force that results in loop formation.

(And there is a third and final choice that might not be so obvious that works as well.)

Option 3 - Casting Stroke - Rod motion from the first motion of the rod to loop formation

Many of you reading and considering these 3 similar options as a possible definition for casting stroke, might think that trying to define the term casting stroke is easy. That is because the original Glossary Committee members have done the work for you!
What you might not be willing to agree with is the idea of simplicity. Of not over complicating a simple term with excessive and unwarranted words. Keeping the simple concept of a casting stroke without adding subjective and stylistic interpretations into the mix.
The next question to ask now is, " What makes the words you are using any more or less subjective than anyone else's point of view or words?" The answer is simple. The words used in the above definition for casting stroke are "style free," or free from "stylistic interpretations." While that might seem not possible, it is none the less true as those words simply tell you that all you need is a sufficient or significant force applied to the rod that results in loop formation, and in point of fact that statement is quite true. What is not so obvious is that when you add the word force or power to the mix you are then adding stylistic word preference or choice that is subject to misinterpretation as in " how much power " or "how much force."

Grab your dictionaries and lets look at two words. Okay, I'll do it for you.

1. Sufficient - Ample, Adequate, Enough.
(How ample is irrelevant, only that it be ample, adequate, enough or sufficient force to form a loop.)

2. Significant - Crucial, Important, Major.

(Something that is significant (a force), applied to the rod for the express purpose of loop propagation cannot be considered as insufficient, insignificant or marginal if the desired result is the formation of a loop of fly line off the tip of a fly rod!)

That said, the 1st and 2nd iterations by and large work, with the noted exception of including force alongside the word, significant, which is not at all problematic. However, that is exactly why *sufficient to cause*, in the first iteration is the obvious and correct choice as the question need not be asked, "How much force?" or "When should that force be applied?" Only that it be **sufficient** to cause loop formation that suffices the task at hand.
That leaves the 3rd possible option for the term casting stroke to being; rod motion from the first motion of the rod to loop formation. Lets consider it as a viable option.

(continued on page 36)

One argument goes something like this: If you are wading upstream in the direction of your next cast, would that first movement be considered as "rod motion from the first motion of the rod," that - and take your pick now - (1) "resulted in loop formation," or - (2) "that ended at RSP, (rod straight position)", or that ended at either - (3) "maximum counter flex," or - (4) "line launch."

The problem with option 3 is twofold;
a) How to describe what that motion actually should lead to, or how it should end, is an exercise in pure semantic and or stylistic interpretation, and
b) Simply stating that "*rod motion from the first motion of the rod to loop formation*", incorrectly assumes that any and all, **first rod motions**, result in loop formation, and clearly this is not the case. Many first rod motions are quite often simply used to reposition the line and or rod and are not of sufficient force or intended to cause loop formation by themselves. This is why option 3 is very possibly the worst of the 3 options to choose from.

Later I will discuss why I think the word significant or the 2nd option is perhaps a better choice to use for the definition of casting stroke, but for now I will move on to the term casting arc.

Casting Arc - Angular change of the rods position during the Casting Stroke.
A simple statement of fact.

Stroke Length - The distance the hand moves during the casting stroke.
Very simply it is the combination of rotational and translational hand movement during the casting stroke.

DRIFT - DRAG & CREEP

These are the Big 3 as I like to think of them. They are the most often confused terms in the casting community at large - both nationally and internationally. They are easily understood terms that apply to all forms of casting be it static roll cast, spey casts, oval casts, or overhead casts. What these three terms have in common is that they are all, to a greater or lesser degree, repositioning moves that do not involve significant applications of force to the rod. They are what I describe as, rod movements of *marginal force application*. At this point I will explain why the term **significant** is perhaps a better choice for inclusion in the definition of casting stroke. *Rod movement of marginal force*, as in the case of drift, drag and to a lesser extent creep, have always "conventionally," been referred to by instructors and examiners alike as moves involving " less power," "no power," or "little force." The concept of marginal force clarifies and reduces those vague word choices into one proverbial nugget. Before going further lets look at what the dictionary has to say about the word 'marginal'.

Marginal - Insignificant, small minimal, or some baseline force with little change in that force.

Essentially this means that the marginal force applications applied to the rod by the caster for drift and drag do not, or would not result in aerialized loop formation. Nor were they intended or designed for that express purpose, as marginal forces in and of themselves. To put it bluntly, they are not *sufficient to cause loop formation*.

The static D loop set up for the basic roll cast does not carry with it sufficient or significant enough force to aerialize or project the D loop much beyond then the length of the casters arm and or rod tip. *To that degree simply reaching behind you to form the D loop for a static roll cast does not constitute loop formation as much as it constitutes line and or rod repositioning*.

The dynamic D loop is a different matter entirely and I will come back to that later. The static D loop for the static roll cast while often noted correctly as a *loop* is not so much a full loop as it is a half loop, as instructors around the world seem to agree that a half loop is the result of half a backcast, not a full one, and would not constitute itself as a full on casting stroke with sufficient force that would result in fully aerialized loop propagation.

(continued on page 37)

If the set up motion for a static D loop resulted in an aerialized loop then that would constitute a casting stroke. However in this instance it would be considered a fault to be corrected by the instructor, as static D loops were not meant to be aerialized and for good reason; limited backcast space is the first thing that comes to mind.

Drift - Rod movement of marginal force that increases arc size and or stroke length.

If drift increases the size or length of the casting arc there is no need to mention that this happens between casting strokes simply because there would be no point to increasing the size of the casting arc with drift during the actual casting stroke, therefore drift will always remain outside of the actual casting stroke as previously defined. It is also important to point out two additional issues: The first is that drift is an *add on* move, and all that simply means is that it's up to the caster or instructor, whether or not to drift a fly rod. In fact many instructors, including Joan Wulff, do not advocate teaching drift right out of the gate. That said, some may drift more, or less, or hardly at all, as drift and even drag, for the most part, are stylistic endeavors. The second point is that drift may also be used to connect two different rod planes as seen when Oval Casting. While this is one of the obvious advantages of drift when Oval Casting, it is none the less a stylistic connection between disparate rod planes and remains unmentioned in the definition of drift, because for as long as I've been a part of the CICP program, the FFF does not advocate the use of any given style or casting technique. That is left up to the instructor's discretion to not impose his or her own style upon the student. Nor should the definition of drift reflect an element of style about it.

Drag - Rod movement of marginal force that decreases stroke length.

Simple enough to understand, it is the mirror opposite of drift without the rotational element.

Creep - Rod movement of marginal force that reduces the size of the casting arc.

Again this is a simple enough concept to understand. If you begin the casting stroke with marginal force angular reduction, (casting arc reduction), you will compromise the size of the casting arc for that casting stroke by decreasing the rotational distance over which the rod can then be efficiently accelerated, if the goal is to maintain the hypothetical straight line path of the rod tip throughout the duration of the casting stroke.

**** Creep and drag can happen at the same time and sometimes do, but not always.

**** Rotational and translational drift can happen at the same time as well, at the casters option or instructors prompting.

Tip Path - *path* of the rod tip during the casting stroke.

Again this is another simple concept to understand. The input from the caster transmitted to the rod will determine the path of the rod tip to be either convex or concave. No need to mention that in the definition, as it's up to us as instructors and examiners to recognize how tip path effects loop formation when analyzing loop formation during an exam, with our students

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Mend - Rod movement of marginal force that repositions the fly line.

A very simple idea in as much as it could be an aerial repositioning of line, or a water borne repositioning of line, take your pick.

(continued on page 38)

Now to the big question everyone wants an answer for. Do these 7 Core Casting Concepts relate to every and all manners of casting? Let's examine the facts. Yes, drift connects different rod planes when oval casting. Yes, spey casts involve a series of repositioning mends prior to the propagation of the dynamic D loop. That spey casting gurus have their own way of describing these *mends* as sweeps, lifts, or even *figures of eight*, this type of language variant, comes down to a matter of stylistic interpretation or word choice which needs to be exorcised from core casting terminology if for the simple reason that we can all be communicating with each other using the same basic core terminology.
The old joke, I suppose, is how many instructors does it take to make a double spey? The answer is 1, and 12 others to explain to you how to do it, all using somewhat different stylistic terminology, depending of course, where they are from.

But let's go back for a second and now revisit the idea spey cast movements and dynamic D loop formation as seen when speycasting, and how these things apply to our definition of casting stroke, as *rod motion of significant force that results in loop formation* and mend as, *rod movement of marginal force that repositions the line, and look at the facts*.

Yes, you do have to mend the line when speycasting with less than significant force in order to reposition the line prior to dynamic D loop formation. If you use too much force or apply significant force to the rod during the mending or *repositioning* process your line placement will be everywhere, except for where you want it to be! It stands to reason that this mending or repositioning action will essentially be a lesser or marginal force application which simply acts in the express purpose of mending or repositioning your fly line on the water. A question that some may now be asking themselves is; if a mend is done with too much force would it then be considered a part of the casting stroke? Of course it would, and that is fine if it meets the definition for casting stroke, but in that special case, this is a flaw to be fixed by an instructor.

Now to the dynamic D loop side of the coin, which for the sake of argument becomes both water-anchored and fully aerialized. More to the point the DD loop is fully aerialized and in order to achieve a fully aerialized dynamic D loop of any kind, a *significant or sufficient force*, (not a marginal force) must be applied to the *rod in order to cause a dynamic D Loop to indeed form off the tip of a single handed or double handed rod*. That's a flycasting fact of life. In the end it comes down to aerialized loop formations, and both formations, overhead and dynamic D loop types, will be the result of a *significant force* applied to the rod by the caster, *sufficient to cause a loop formation*. Style is at the caster's discretion, **loop propagation is not**!

In closing, I'd like to point out that the FFF CICP Program does not advocate any given technique or style to achieve the goal of loop formation, only that in deed and action, a loop may be formed, and to that end the 7 Core Casting Concepts embody the FFF CICP ideal of pure substance, over stylistic interpretations of how to form a loop of fly line with our fly rods, and how to describe how that takes place to one another during the examination process, and to our students. *The words we use to describe basic fly rod movements should allow any instructor or test candidate the opportunity to describe the basic nuts and bolts of any type cast and then more importantly, apply their own stylistic interpretation over those words which in effect, acts as a blueprint or template for every and all modes or styles of fly casting and to many of the various teaching methodologies applied to that endeavor.* The 7 Core Concepts remove the ambiguity of regional and international word usage from the testing process and will facilitate a common universal understanding of core casting mechanics.

CONGRATULATIONS

New Casting Instructors

Mark Allen – Dana Point, CA
Dennis Tsuyuki – Torrance, CA
David Cargile – Beaufort, SC
Charlie Beaden – Ridgeland, SC
Masahiro Kanagawa – Japan
Lachlan Hayes – Australia

Cody DeGuelle – Black Hawk, CO
John Anderson – Fairfax, CA
Jeff Thorp – New York, NY
Matt Brower – Boise, ID
Thomas Dempsey – Mobile, AL

New Master Casting Instructors

Lee Cummings – United Kingdom
Lewis Hinks – NS, Canada
John Bilotta – Washington, DC
Dan Davala – Centreville, VA

FFF Fly Fishing Fair
July 10-14, 2012

- Spokane, WA

- Event at the Spokane Convention Centre

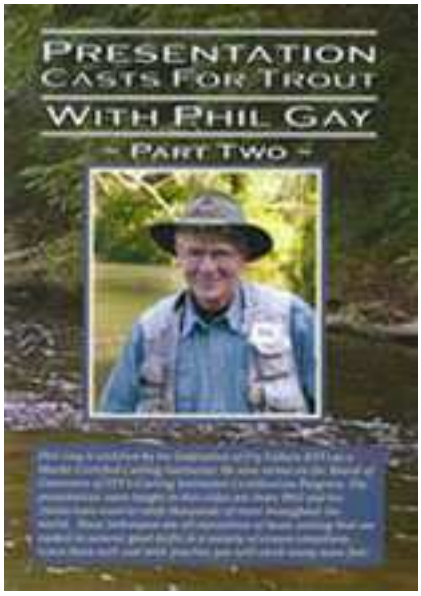
- Event Accommodation - Red Lion Inn

Some Good Viewing.....DVDS

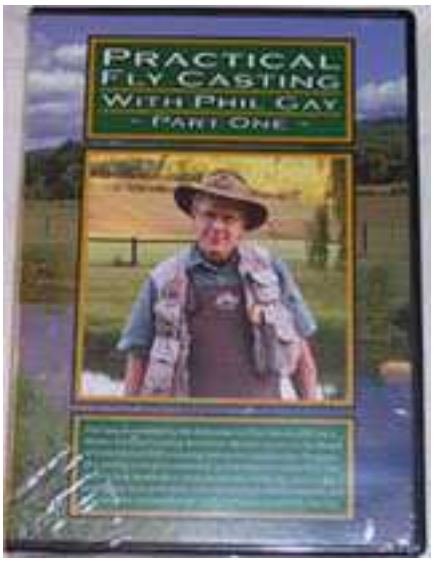
Phil Gay, CBOG .....

Phil Gay has produced two excellent dvds that I would like to highlight.

1. **Presentation Casts For Trout - Part Two**.
   Available from Amazon or from Phil Gay. Price is $25 plus shipping.



2. **Practical Fly Casting with Phil Gay - Part One**.
   Available from Amazon or from Phil Gay. Price is $25 plus shipping.

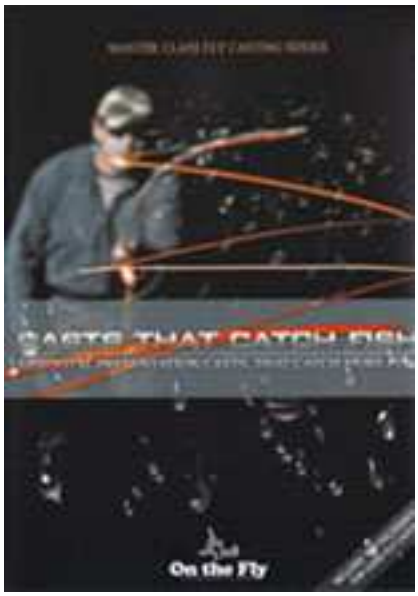


(continued on page 41)

Carl McNeil, MCI.....

Carl McNeill has generously allowed the FFF to feature clips from this DVD on the FFF monthly E-News. So please make sure you watch the clips. The DVD is well done and the title is appropriate - casts that catch fish.

Should you wish to purchase the DVD, check it out at Amazon for $29.95 plus shipping.



Bob Jacklin, CBOG.....

For anyone who fishes in West Yellowstone, Bob Jacklin doesn't need an introduction. Bob is a strong supporter of the FFF and has received many prestigious FFF awards. He has served on the BOG for many years and offers free flycasting classes in the summer in West. This is one of a series of DVDs, the others are flytying dvds.
Price is $29.95 plus shipping.

Upcoming Events for 2011

Testing Dates.....

March 16-17, 2012	- CI / Test#1205 US	- Sandy, UT (CLOSED)
March 24, 2012	- CI / Test#1209 US	- Mountain Home, AR (CLOSED)
March 24, 2012	- CI, MCI / Test#1203 US	- New Brunswick, Canada
April 14-15, 2012	- CI, MCI, THCI / Test#1218 US	- Long Beach, CA
April 19-20, 2012	- CI / Test#1215 US	- Cressy, Tasmania
April 19-21, 2012	- CI, MCI / Test#1212 INTL	- Furstenfeldbruck, Germany
April 28, 2012	- CI / Test#1211 US	- Helen, Georgia
April 29, 2012	- CI, MCI, THCI / Test#1213 INTL	- Ukraine
May 4, 2012	- CI / Test#1210 US	- Ellensburg, WA (CLOSED)
May 12-13, 2012	- CI / Test#1217 US	- Quebec, Canada

Casting Continuing Education Events.....

March 11, 2012 - Hands-on workshop with Mac Brown for all Certified Instructors, NW Expo, Albany, OR

April 20 & 21, 2012 - Professional development event for all Certified Instructors - Texas Shootout, Van Alstyne, TX

May 5, 2012 - Two 4-hour Continuing Education Workshops - Ellensburg, WA

October 25, 2012 - Continuing Education Program open to all CI, MCI & THCI's - Kissimmee, FL

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

Some History

How Far We Have Come....

34 Ways to Cast a Fly
by John G. Lynde
1969. $6.95

How many of us realize how far we have come since this book was published? It seems the more things change, the more things remain the same. New words, new equipments, new everything - but the basics are the same. I have exerpted two segments from this book to remind us.
The two segments are the Forward and a partial chapter on "Balanced" Trout Fly Tackle.

First is the Forward to this book

Many fly fishermen are content with no more than two or three casts – say, overhead, roll and backhand. Others develop a more extensive repertoire by natural ingenuity or by imitation. Very few of us could name, much less describe, more than a dozen casts. Yet we may be using more than that number, in some sort of a way, every day we fish. Recognizing them for what they are and something of the mechanics behind them, can be a real help in performance.
Few people are better equipped than Mr. Lynde to undertake this intricate exposition. An outstanding caster himself and a fisherman of long experience, Mr. Lynde learned under some of the great English masters and was himself a professional teacher of flycasting for seven years. He has put this long experience to the test of some twenty years of practical use on the waters of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest. His descriptions are clear and complete when read with the diagrammatic illustrations and fishermen should have little difficulty in following them.
One of the secrets of pleasure in fly fishing is comfort and ease under all conditions. I can think of nothing that contributes more to this than a full battery of alternative casts that the fisherman can use almost without thinking. To be able to cast effectively with trees and bush immediately behind, with the wind from any direction, at almost any force, to be able to clear a drowned line, switch direction without effort, float or drift a fly without drag – all these are essential not only to comfort but to rising and hooking fish. Any fly fisherman can learn something from this book. The casual fly fisherman or the fly fisherman of limited experience may find himself transformed into something like an expert.
The real gain to us all, though, should be an increased comfort and effectiveness on the water, a sense of mastery over the fine implements we use and the adverse elements that often beset us.

29 June 1967. Roderick Haig-Brown. Campbell River, B.C.

Balanced Trout Fly Tackle

With gentle movements of the wrist transmitted and amplified through the rod, the line picks up cleanly from the water, rises in a backward curve and extends high in the air; then swiftly and surely the forward cast unfolds, lengthening out and poising for a split second before the line falls and the fly drops lightly in front of a rising trout. There is a feeling of satisfaction in the co-ordination of eye, hand, rod, line, leader and fly working in unity that can only be experienced when all the related pieces of equipment are perfectly balanced.

(continued on page 44)

Since a fly fisherman spends a considerable proportion of his fishing time in casting, some care spent in attaining this delicate balance would be justified in only for the pleasure derived from casting with a well-balanced outfit; but in order to achieve any degree of casting proficiency, or even to execute some of the more skillful casts at all, correct balance is absolutely essential.
Dealing with each item separately, first let us consider the rod. This is the instrument that does the work, and it should be suited to the type of fishing that it is likely to be called upon to perform. For delicate fishing on small streams a light rod is desirable; for big fish in big waters where long casts are necessary, a strong rod with plenty of backbone is required. On the other hand, the rod must suit the angler's physique.

Fly rods may be of split bamboo or synthetic materials, such as fiberglass. In my opinion good-quality split bamboo is infinitely superior to any synthetic material when used in fly rods, although the better quality glass rods are better, than the cheapest bamboo rods. Synthetic rods are of tubular construction, and the strength of a tube diminishes as its bend increases simply because its circular section becomes oval under stress. Consequently tubular rods develop their maximum power at the instant of straightening, and this 'snap' action is undesirable in a fly rod although it may be admirable in a spinning rod. conversely, a split bamboo rod's power develops as the rod bends and eases as it straightens, allowing the rod to come to rest smoothly – a characteristic which is favorable to both casting a fly and setting a small hook in a fish. Moreover it is conceivable that some indefinable affinity with the angler may be present in a bamboo rod but lacking in a synthetic rod. I therefore recommend that your fly rod should be of split bamboo, or built came, which is the same.

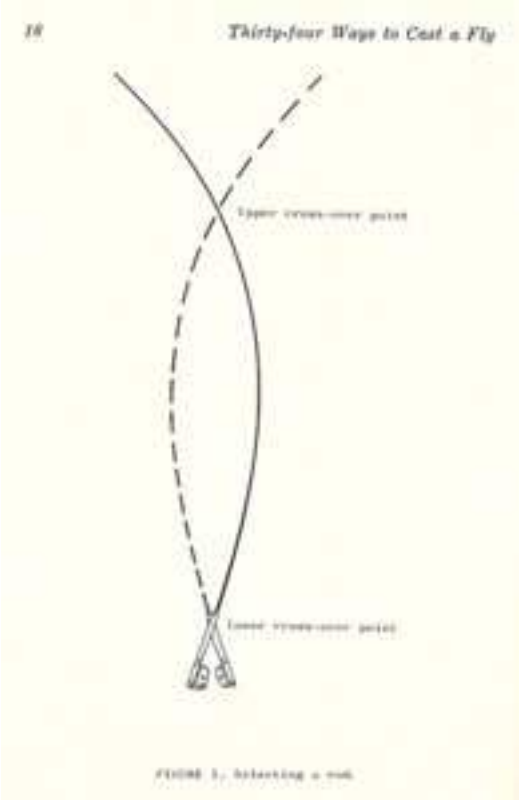
Rods come in all kinds of actions. Wet fly rods tend to be on the whippy side, while dry fly rods are 'quicker', though not necessarily stiffer. Rods with a 'tip action' are ideal for casting against a strong wind, although they require more effort and are less versatile than rods that have their actions distributed moore generally throughout such as 'parabolic' rods. For general purposes some compromise is necessary, but this need not imply that an all-purpose rod will fall far short of the ideal in any circumstances likely to be encountered under normal fishing conditions. What constitutes a good all-purpose fly rod may be a matter of opinion, but the following suggestions will serve as a general guide.

Let us assume that you have decided to choose an all-purpose trout fly rod between eight and a half feet and nine feet in length, weighing approximately five or six ounces, with a fairly quick action and a curve that spreads evenly down to the butt yet is slightly more pronounce towards the tip. When waved about as in casting the rod should feel light and sensitive, and there must be no weakness at any point throughout its length. See how quickly it will come to rest; then it should be perfectly straight. Examiner it thoroughly for blemishes, and check that the fittings are to your liking. Attach a fly reel, then take a loose hold of the grip ad shake it rapidly from side to side so that you set up a vibration through the rod – the lower cross-over point should be near the center of the grip (Fig. 1), otherwise you might feel a 'kick-back' in casting.

Pick out a number of rods which you think will suit you, even several with exactly the same specifications, and compare them all for action, feel, curve, straightness, blemishes, and vibration cross-over points. Lay aside all the rods except the two or three that have the greatest appeal to you, then compare those again until you are left with only one, which will be your final choice.

The reel plays no part in casting a fly. Its purpose is merely to store line, therefore it may be quite simple. However, certain features must be considered, such as weight, line capacity, soundness of construction, fittings and finish. The weight of a fly reel should be such that, when the reel and line are attached to your rod, the rod's point of balance will be two or three inches forward from the grip. Its line capacity must be sufficient to carry an adequate length of strong backing in addition to the fly line to meet with your fishing requirements. The reel should be sturdy, its bearings sound, and its check mechanism reliable. A contracted spool, say one inch wide, facilitates the distribution of the line on the reel. Make sure that the reel seat fits properly on your rod,

(continued on page 45)



otherwise it may require modification. You will probably wish to carry a floating line and a sinking line, so you may decide to acquire a spare spool with the reel; obviously a spare spool is more economical than a second reel. A quick release catch is better than a screw to retain the spool, and a chrome line guard will protect your lines from unnecessary wear. If you expect to fly fish in salt water, your reel should be anodized or corrosion-resistant.

Fly casting proficiency cannot be achieved with level lines, so we may as well discount them, but there are two entirely different kinds of tapered lines, each requiring its own technique. They are double-tapered lines and forward-tapered lines.

A double-tapered line, as its name suggests, has a long, thick level section in the center and is tapered equally at both ends; when one end becomes worn, the line can be reversed on the reel. A forward-tapered line consists of a long, thin level section, a 'hinge' or back-taper, a short, thick belly, and a front taper similar to one end of a double-tapered line.

The merits of a forward-taper line are first that the fly can be cast further than with a double-tapered line; secondly that the rod is required to lift only a relatively short length of line in order to make a long cast; thirdly that the short thick belly makes casting more effortless; and fourthly that a beginner can obtain more pleasing results with it than with a double-tapered line. On the other hand a double-tapered line is far safer to use in a cross-wind, and in my opinion more versatile. I only use a forward-tapered line for fishing when continuous long-distance overhead casting is necessary, but under such conditions it excels. I recommend that you have two double-tapered lines to suit your rod, one a floater and the other a sinker, as well as a forward-tapered line if you intend to indulge in long distance fishing to any extent. The technique of casting a forward-tapered line will be explained in the section devoted to casting a long line.

The prime consideration in choosing a fly line is whether it will balance your rod correctly. If it is too light it will be impossible to cast properly, particularly if there is any wind; if it is too heavy it will 'kill' the action of your rod and damage the rod. Fly lines are made in different thicknesses to suit various rods, and these thicknesses ar usually designated by letters of the alphabet. For example, ICH denotes a forward-tapered line that would balance our average all-purpose fly rod, which is 8 feet, 9 inches long and weighs between 5¼ and 5½ ounces, while HDH denotes a double-tapered line for the same rod. The 'C' and 'D' refer to the bellies of these two lines, and it would be quite in order to use a forward-tapered line one size thicker than its double-tapered equivalent. Most rod manufacturers specify the correct weight of line to balance a particular rod, and line manufacturers provide a rough guide by quoting the length of rod that will handle a certain thickness of fly line. If there is any doubt as to which will be the right one for your rod, it is best to err on the light side than to acquire a line that is too heavy.

Since lines play such a prominent role in fly fishing, they must be chosen carefully. Silk may still be used in a few of the fly lines on the market, but modern synthetic materials are superior in many ways. Dressings are very important; they should be smooth ad soft to the touch, not wiry, yet extremely tough and durable. Most of the cheap lines are coated with varnish, which soon cracks and flakes off. A good line improves with use.

Having chosen your lines, see that they are firmly spliced to the required length of strong backing when they are put on your reels.

Surprisingly few fly fishermen are award of the effects which can be produced by leaders with various tapers. These tapers will enable you to cast your fly straight into the teeth of a gale, to curve your leader in either direction like a shepherd's crook, to bump and skip a bug on the surface of the water, and to drop a dry fly as delicately as thistledown. Even the most experienced angler cannot accomplish all these feats with the same leader.

Call to Action (continued from page 47)

It should be stated also that the FFF is once again offering a FREE 1-Year e-membership to ALL STUDENTS participating in the Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 classes. FFF Certified Instructors will likely be their very first contact with our organization. Will you be there to give them a reason to join?

In the next few weeks, I and/or several other fellow CI's will be reaching out and contacting you on an individual basis to help connect you with the nearest Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 teaching opportunity. I realize and respect that for some of you, there is serious resistance to any non-FFF casting program, Orvis or otherwise. Some of these reasons are quite valid, others are quite petty, but ALL must be buried or discarded for the sake of the individual student with nothing but a desire to learn. This individual has no baggage, and we as professionals must release our own if we are to meet them on their path and be fully present as their teachers. Ultimately, all of us reading this have made a decision in one way or another to become a fly casting instructor, and to share our love of a stick and a string with others. I hope we all take a moment and realize the significant opportunity we have before us through the Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 program to do just that. I look forward to speaking and perhaps even teaching with you soon.

Sincerely,

Dan Davala
FFF MCI
Fishing Manager - Orvis, Arlington
Founder/President - www.tpfr.org

CALL TO ACTION!!!!!

by Dan Davala, MCI

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION OF FLY FISHERS CASTING INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM! Presently, we stand at a very important crossroad, and one that is of great consequence to thousands of future FFF Members - many of whom have yet to touch a fly rod. In fact, the majority of these future FFF members at this moment have no idea they will even be taking a fly fishing/fly casting class only a few short months from now. I am calling on EVERY SINGLE ONE OF YOU before they do!

My name is Dan Davala, and I am a MCI in the Washington D.C. area. Additionally, I am the full time Fishing Manager of The Orvis Store in Arlington, VA., and one who has dedicated my life and career to our sport and to the teaching of others. By now, most if not all of you are aware that The Orvis Company has developed a very successful "Fly Fishing 101/201" program, and that this program has generated some serious momentum over the past few years. You may even recall a recent article in the Loop - Fall 2011 issue by BOG. Bruce Williams titled FFF 101 regarding the success of the program, and the important part FFF Certified Instructors played at many locations. If you are one of those instructors that participated and helped during the 2011 Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 season, I most sincerely thank you! I thank you not only on behalf of Orvis, but also as an individual and fellow CI who is charged with the incredible logistical task of setting up, organizing, and facilitating the teaching of hundreds of new casters week after week. Most importantly though, I thank you on behalf of the thousands of students that benefited directly from your involvement, some of whom at this very moment are casting a fly in the hope of catching a fish even as you read these words from me. You have left your mark on the rest of their fly casting life by donating your time to the beginning of it.

If you were not aware of or were unable to participate in the 2011 Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 season, then your opportunity to help in 2012 awaits. This year through Fly Fishing 101/201, we will again teach over 10,000 students how to cast a fly line, most of whom have never done so in their lives. While there is an obvious benefit to Orvis and the fly fishing industry at large in a commercial sense, I believe there is an even greater opportunity for all of us in the FFF CICP to expose a new wave of fly fishers to our level and quality of instruction. If, from the very beginning, these new fly fishers are exposed to the idea that there are, in fact, "Professional Fly Casting Instructors", and that these professionals provide a high quality and valuable service, than the long term benefit to us as FFF Certified Instructors is immeasurable. If, on the other hand, FFF CICP involvement is minimal but Fly Fishing 101/201 students learn how to cast and take up the sport anyway, they will be far less likely to accept the need for or validity of "professional" or "certified" fly casting instructors.

Simply stated, from May 5 through July 1, 2012, over 10,000 students ***will*** learn to cast through the Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 program - with or without FFF Certified Instructor participation. This is already set in motion and it will come to pass. The question on the table is, will you be there to make a significant impact for the FFF CICP? I firmly believe that this is our golden opportunity in time to influence not only the massive influx of new students, but also any non-certified instructors, Store Managers, and Fishing Managers participating in the program as well.

(continued on page 46)

CASTING BOARD of GOVERNORS AWARDS

NOMINATION REMINDER

The cutoff date of April 1st for nominating members for our CICP awards nominations is fast approaching. We have four CBOG awards to recognize and thank our hard-working instructors.

The awards are:

- Lifetime Achievement for Fly Casting Instruction
- Mel Krieger Fly Casting Instructor
- Governor's Pin
- Governor's Mentoring

To nominate an instructor go to the FFF web site and under casting certification fill out the nomination form and e-mail to the addresses shown.

THE LOOP STAFF

Editor: Denise Maxwell
goldnwst@telus.net, 604-945-9002
Program Coordinator: Barbara Wuebber
fffoffice@fedflyfishers.org, 406-585-7592
Chair, Board of Governors: David Diaz
ddiaz444@ bellsouth.net 205-444-0921

Fly Illustrations: Jason Borger
Loop Logo: Djordje Andjelkovic
Proof editor: Les Rosenthal

Mailing Address:
FFF
PO Box 1688
Livingston, MT 59047

For UPS & Overnight Shipments:
FFF
Buffalo Jump Building
5237 US Hwy 89 S
Livingston, MT 59047

We welcome your submissions via e-mail. However when you submit an article(s), please attach a short (1-3 sentences) author/instructor biographical statement, including your location and Certification level on every article.
Also be aware that the back issues of the Loop are posted on the FFF web site. Any illustrations should be in JPEG format, articles in word format and submitted separately, if possible.
The Loop reserves the right to decline any submission for any reason, and to edit any submission.
Submissions may be sent to the editors or the National Office:

The Loop is a quarterly publication of the Casting Board of Governors for the FFF Casting Instructor Certification Program.

From The Editor

Hello to all of you! This issue has finally come together - hope you enjoy it. Lots going on for me and lots of work to get done before the new fishing season. However I shouldn't complain - it is always like this.

This issue of the Loop has a lot of input from our members and a lot of international content. As always, when I ask our members for some articles, they respond with some great content.

I would like to thank our ongoing contributing authors like Gary Eaton, Pete Greenan, Mac Lord, Mike Heritage and many others. Special thanks to Rod McGarry who gave me a heads-up about the Continuing Educating weekend recently **plus** who to ask for articles....I can't forget Gordy Hill and the MCI Study Group for allowing me to 'lift' topics from the discussions and publish them in the Loop. A great bunch of members who believe in the Loop and its value.

Suggestions about what to include in the Loop have come from others and I consider all suggestions carefully but the Loop is a specialized journal. It highlights our CICP casting instructor program, providing articles intended to help and inform our members and share with everyone.

These same articles are open to other newsletters who may want to re-publish articles from the Loop. Our policy is that articles submitted to the Loop are open for use - as long as they ask us and then acknowledge where the article came from and who the author is. We always give credit to contributors and sources.

How doe I decidewhat to include? I want to provide a mix of old and new material as well as a variety of subjects. I rarely refuse to publish an article as long as it is appropriate for the Loop. So if you have been hesitating to submit - talk to me! Or if you know of some good blogs, etc. - send me the link.

This issue also features some DVDs from our members. We have a lot of talented members in this program and they have produced some valuable material. It is always a struggle to publicize that material and I hope this points potential customers to them. Next issue we will feature some books by our members.

Bulkley River steelhead flies

Awards Nominations

In this issue you will also find a notice about nominations for our CICP Awards. This is the time to be thinking and nominating deserving people for those awards. The deadline is soon - April 1, 2012.

Do you know a great mentor? Someone who should be recognized? Now is the time to nominate them for a **Mentoring Award**.

Do you know someone who contributes a lot to our program? Now is the time to nominate them for a **Governor's Pin.**.

We don't know everyone in this program (although we would like to) - so help us out by nominating deserving members.

It is a favorite 'beef' of mine about awards. The thinking is that someone else will do it - I don't have time - or I will have to fill out some forms and write a letter of nomination. Yes but the result is great!

Members should be recognized in a timely manner. From personal experience, when a deserving person is dead, that is not the time to nominate them for an award.

The recognition we give to our members is a small reward for the contributions they provide to us.

Help us do that!

Talk to you soon.
Denise

SERBIAN OPEN - FIRST FLY CASTING COMPETITION

DISCIPLINES:

1. **Fly Casting Accuracy**
2. **Distance Fly Casting**

MAIN AWARD

SAGE ONE 590-4

Date: 27 of May 2012.

Place: Perucac, Bajina Basta, Serbia – Football Field

Organiser:
-FFF MCI Djorđe Andjelkovic – Serbia

Main Referee:
-FFF MCI Paul Arden - England

Assistant Referees:
-FFF MCI Erno Paskay – Hungary
-FFF CI Oliver Kuzmanovic - Serbia
-FFF CI Igor Stankovic - Serbia

Tehnical support: The Serbian Sports Fishing Association, OOSR „MLADICA" - Bajina Basta

Media support: www.FlyCastingNation.com, www.Musicarenje.org, www.Musicarenje.com, www.SexyLoops.com, Weekly Fishing Magazine: RIBOLOV

Main Sponsor: Sage Fly Fishing Company

Download rules from: http://www.flycastingnation.com - in part INTERNATIONAL BOARD

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Additional info:
-E-mail-a: info@musicarenje.rs
-Phone: +381 64 1993 781