

THE LOOP

The Federation of Fly Fishers Journal for Certified Casting Instructors
Winter 2005

The Snap T

By Dan Wright

The Snap T is the cast I use most when fishing two-handed rods. It is a quick delivery cast that substitutes well for a single speycast. The Snap T and a Double Spey - with either hand up - are the only two casts a working angler needs to fish from either the right or left bank in any wind. Naturally, when part of the job description is looking good from the road—as it always is—a seasoned speycaster should have more casts than these two, but they certainly will suffice.

The Snap T is one of the first casts I teach spey students. First, we learn overhead casts to help them slow down their hands and get a feel for the rod's load. Then, we introduce ourselves to the Switch Cast to begin building a solid foundation.

One of the values of the Snap T is its ease of learning. It consists of a few compressed moves with more 'wait time' between moves than most casts. Thus, it gives beginning casters a quick dose of confidence, helping to hold their interest and stimulate the learning process. Further, the Snap T and its variations are forgiving casts for the working angler ----- not as susceptible to mistiming as other casts.

The Snap T is a speycast that translates well to the single-handed rod. For small stream fishing, the trout angler would be well advised to add this cast to their capabilities. When trees or other impediments block the backcast, a Snap T can serve well as a change of direction cast, with or without a haul on the actual delivery of the line.

Three variations predominate in delivering the Snap T:

First is the basic Snap, with its flattened, reverse C-shaped path of the rod tip.

Second is the Circle Cast or C-Cast which has a more rounded path of the rod tip. The result is a softer upstream landing of the line and fly.

Third is the more angular drive of the rod top toward the water on the initial move. This powers the line over the rod tip and forcefully pops it onto the water upstream of the caster. When dealing with a slight downstream wind, this higher line speed cast is very useful.

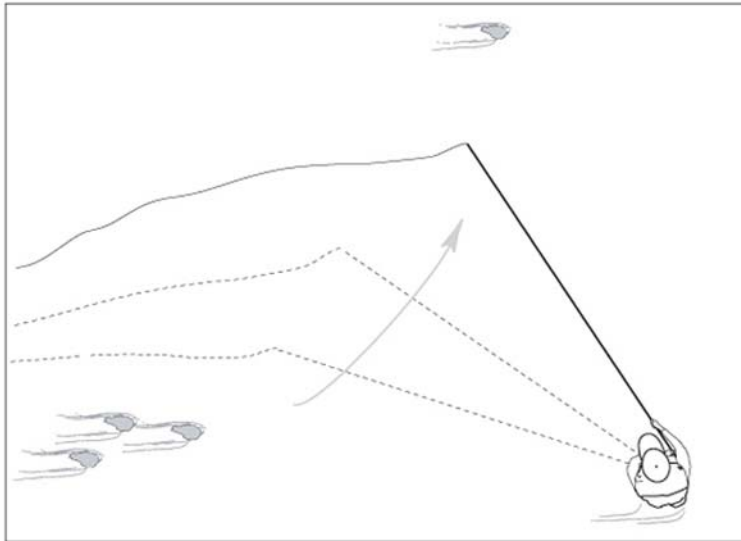
As with all speycasts, the position of the 'nail knot' and the fly should be about a rod distance from your body when you fire the line forward and up for the delivery cast.

During setup, point your rod toward the target. The line is downstream on the 'dangle.'

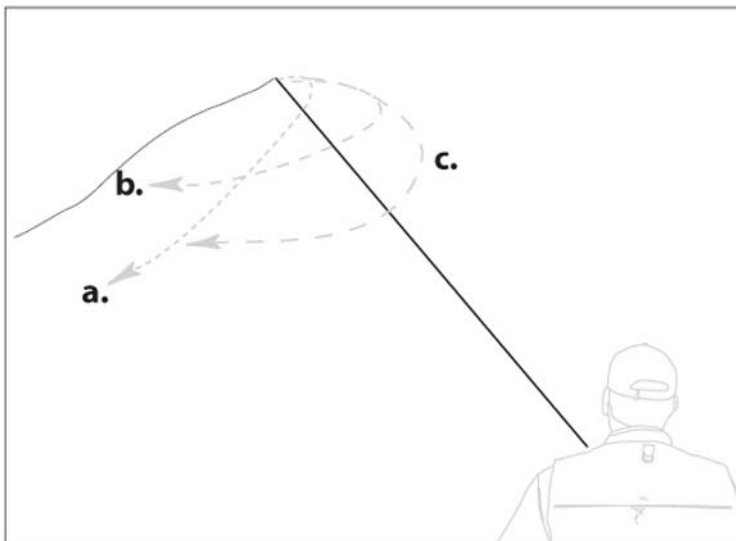
After the Snap, the line is positioned directly opposite of the set-up position, on the upstream side of the caster, in preparation for the backcast and final delivery of the fly.

Begin the Snap T with the line dangling downstream by lifting the rod tip toward the 11 o'clock position (Panel 1). Move the upper hand --- the right hand in our illustration ----- just above eye level with the lower hand about mid-abdomen and close to the body. A slight pause at this position is helpful. Kicking off the actual 'snap' of the Snap T can be done in one of three ways (Panel 2, 3, 4):

(Continued on page 2)

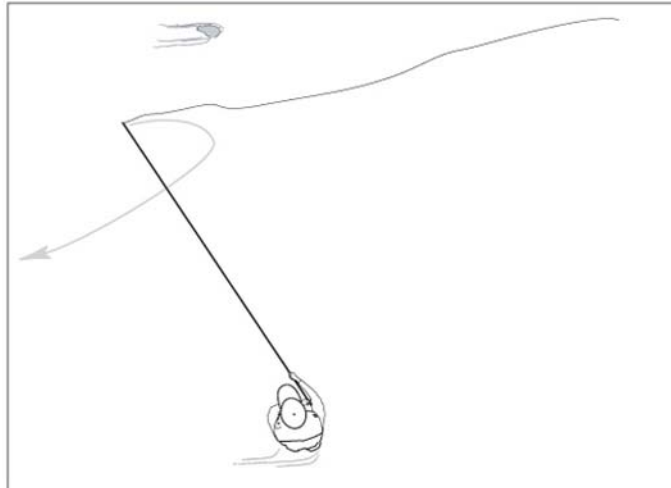


Panel 1: From the "dangle," lift the rod and remove slack from the line. Align the rod to your target line and point the rod upward to about the 11 o'clock position.

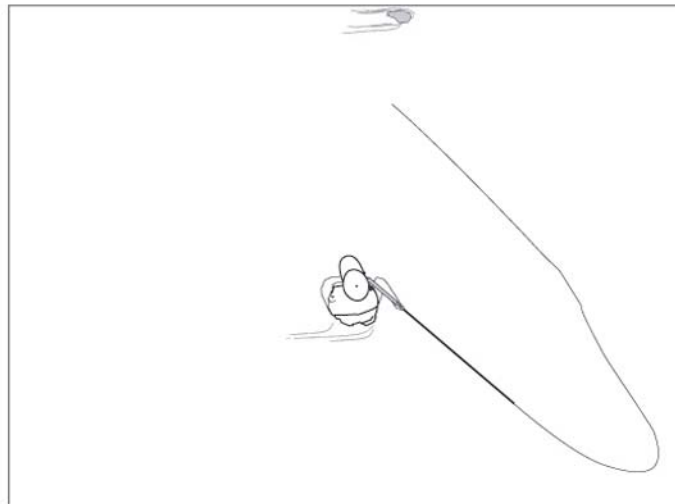


Panel 2: A quick, driving movement of the rod tip downward snaps the line upstream with force (a.). A shallow reverse C yields moderate line speed (b.), and the rounded movement is the Circle Cast (c.).

Illustrations by Dan Wright



Panel 3: Follow the Snap T or Circle cast movement with a slowing, low movement of the rod tip toward the bank. The goal is to remove slack from the line and position the line for a quality back cast and efficient delivery of the fly to the target.



Panel 4: Complete the delivery with integrity: small stick with a large D loop 180 degrees from the target on the back cast, and a high, tight loop on the outbound cast.

Illustrations by Dan Wright

NOTE: In these descriptions and in the illustrations, we are examining the Snap T from the left bank and with the right hand up. Of course, reverse the descriptions and put the left hand up for a right bank cast.

Continued from Page 1

✓ A hard drive of the rod tip from high to downstream low—waist high or so—will energetically force the line upstream about 180 degrees from its position at the start of the snap.

✓ Drawing a c-shape with the rod tip with the lower leg of the ‘c’ about eye level will push the line upstream with less intensity than the driving movement. Note that the ‘c’ is a reverse C from the left bank with right hand up and a true C from the right bank with left hand up. In any case, it’s easier to remember that the caster always draws the C shape with its opening downstream and the closed side of the C is upstream and in the direction the line will be sent by the rod tip’s movement.

✓ Drawing a very rounded C is the smoothest, least accelerated way to move the line upstream. This movement in the Snap T is called the Circle Cast by many. After the line is snapped over the rod tip and positioned upstream, the caster slows the ‘snap’ move and smoothly moves the rod tip toward the bank. This slips any slack from the upstream line and positions the leader and fly for a solid back cast.

If you find the leader and fly too close, start the cast again by repositioning the line downstream. If the leader and fly are too far upstream, just allow the current to ease them to about a rod’s length from your body—an ideal distance for an efficient back cast and delivery—and begin your back cast.

Because of its simple, forgiving movements and the time between them, the Snap T is a great cast for the beginning caster to learn and a working angler to use daily. Still, it’s practically impossible to learn the cast from written, or even video, instructions. Find a casting instructor to observe as you learn the Snap T and use this information as a set of road signs to guide your progress.

Dan Wright is a Certified Master Casting Instructor and directs the Fly Casting Academy at The Blue Quill Angler in Evergreen, CO, where he also serves as Shop Manager.

**WANTED:
DEDICATED MASTERS TO JOIN
THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

By Tom Jindra

The Board of Governors is seeking BOG candidates. The board anticipates an election to fill an as-yet undetermined number of vacancies.

To become a governor, the candidate must already be certified as a Master Instructor and be nominated by two sitting governors. A candidate’s record of past performance will also be an essential prerequisite and deciding factor. Questions will include: What has this candidate done to advance the Casting Instructor Certification Program in their home council? Has he or she attended the national conclave or taught a workshop? Has he or she attended an annual meeting of the BOG?

Nominations must be received at the National Office on an official nominating form prior to May 1. Each nomination must be signed by the governor making the nomination, and it must be seconded by another governor.

The Board is currently under-represented in the Southeast, Midwest, Northeast and Rockies but, most of all, the board seeks dedicated members regardless of where they are from. Interested Masters who want to serve on the board, and those who wish to serve on future BOG committees, are invited to contact the Program Coordinator at the FFF National Office (email: castingcert@fedflyfishers.org; telephone: 406-585-7592). They are urged to attend the CBOG annual meeting at the National Conclave (in Livingston, Mont., August 2005).

All Masters are invited to attend the meeting as observers.

Tom Jindra chairs the FFF Casting Instructor Certification Program.

Tight Loops

By Gordon Hill

I've come up with a modification of a method shown to me several years ago by Floyd Franke. It works very well-----especially teaching CCI and Master candidates to tighten the loop on the backcast.

I've noticed that when a student has difficulty with the tightness of their backcast loops(open loops) I can sometimes immediately improve the backcast loop simply by having them watch it *all the way through loop turnover*.

Floyd taught me that when I was trying to improve my own skills for my exam. At the time, I felt that it might be a poor move for me to be seen looking back at these loops while being tested. I never forgot what Floyd said to me, "If you don't watch it-----they will!"

Now when coaching for these exams, I've found a few candidates where this helps.....but not quite enough.

Floyd had followed up by stretching out an extra fly line on the ground and having me do horizontal false casting along that line. I could see both loops.....and it helped a lot.....same basic idea originally taught by Joan Wulff using targets at either end of a straight line. (It's in her book, too.)

Here's a modification of that proven technique:

I lay out on the grass, two hi-viz ropes. They are parallel10' apart.

The caster is asked to make some medium to large loops...always staying inside the ropes, while slowly 'ground casting' with a horizontal rod plane.

Then the student 'goes airborne' with enough line speed to keep the loops aloft. I have the student use only 25' to 30' of line out of the rod tip.

I repeat this process several times. With each repeated success, I bring the ropes one foot closer to one another. I do this until they are only one foot apart. If he regresses, we move them farther apart and start over.

Once the student can keep this tightened loop inside the ropes when only 12" apart, I have him or her raise the rod plane a bit and do it in the air, in a vertical plane between the lines.

The student is instructed to watch each loop. Then I have him or her continue false casting with these beautiful loops and progressively elevate the rod plane to a nearly vertical plane. Now I ask the student to close his or her eyes and continue. The student is coached to continue up to a vertical plane.

We now take a break. Upon return, the student is asked to do it again in the vertical plane. If successful, we repeat the process with ever increasing amounts of line carried, until he can do it carrying at least 50' of line out of the rod.

With an otherwise strong caster, we can shortcut the steps. Homework is to go home, buy some cheap rope, and practice the "drill."

The caster is usually amazed at the result. It takes quite a bit of time, but it is worthit. Once the caster has made all of these beautiful tight loops this way, I submit it's ground into his very chromosomes-----part of his DNA !

Gordon Hill is a member of the FFF Casting Board of Governors. He is a retired orthopedic surgeon who lives on Big Pine Key in the Florida Keys.

Best Wishes to Julie Dennison, FFF Casting Program Coordinator

By Tom Jindra

Julie Dennison, our coordinator for the Casting Instructor Certification Program at the FFF's national office, has accepted employment with Printingforless.com, an online printing company based in Livingston. Her last day on the job with FFF was Jan. 21.

At press time, the new coordinator had not been hired.

As program chair, I consider it a privilege to have worked directly with Julie. Her gain is our loss.

Tom Jindra chairs the FFF Casting Instructor Certification Program.

Editors' note: We wish Julie the best in her new job and hope she stays in touch with her FFF friends.



INSTRUCTOR PINS AND DECALS

Prospective casting students need not wonder where you work ever again. With this issue of *The Loop*, the Board of Governors is distributing a window decal to do the job for you.

The *FFF Certified Casting Instructor On Staff* decal was originally proposed by the late Alan Rohrer, John Vanderhoof and Joe Libeu. The current stock was produced and donated courtesy of the Federation's Southwest Council. If your *The Loop* continues to come by mail, your first decal will arrive at no cost with this issue. If you have chosen to receive *The Loop* by email, your free decal will be mailed separately.

Additional decals may be purchased for \$3.00 by contacting the Program Coordinator at castingcert@fedflyfishers.org or 406-585-7592.



**FFF CERTIFIED INSTRUCTOR
AND
MASTER INSTRUCTOR PINS**



Shoulder patches aren't for everyone. For those of us who never learned to sew, the FFF Casting Instructor Certification Program now has pins.

Designed, produced and donated to the Board of Governors by Master Instructor Bill Hassan, these pins are available in two forms. The Certified Casting Instructor version is suitable for all FFF instructors. The second pin is specific to Master Instructors.

Pins may be purchased for \$9.00 each by contacting Program Coordinator at castingcert@fedflyfishers.org or by phone at 406-585-7592.

FFF Instructor Pins and Decals

Certified Instructor Pins \$9, Master Instructor pins \$9 each, Decal \$3 each

Please send me _____ Certified Instructor Pins

_____ Master Instructor Pins

_____ Instructor Decals



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Credit Card Type: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ ExpDate: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Signature: _____

FFF Offers Free Memberships to Your Casting Students

The Federation of Fly Fishers would like to offer a FREE six month membership to your casting students. We would like to reward your students for selecting an FFF Certified Casting Instructor and wish to show you our appreciation for your efforts on behalf of the Federation and fly fishing. It is also hoped this offer will encourage more people to use FFF Certified Instructors, that more casting instructors will become Certified, and that more people will be exposed to the Federation and will become more involved with us and in fly fishing.

In the near future, a standardized form will be distributed to you. For right now, copy and reproduce the form below. Please, fill out all information asked for, sign and date the form, and return it to Headquarters in Livingston. Initially, we are asking that each instructor fill out the form and return it to us for the student.

Bob Shirley
FFF Membership Committee Chair
253-581-1271
b.shirley@juno.com

Federation of Fly Fishers 6 Month Membership FFF Certified Casting Instructor Program

Please fill out student's name and contact information, sign form, and return to FFF Headquarters in Livingston. One membership per family is offered.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: ____ - ____ - ____ **E-mail** _____ **M or F /18 or under?** ____

Location of lesson: _____ **Date of Lesson:** _____

Signature of FFF Instructor & Date: _____

Mail to: FFF
215 East Lewis
Livingston, MT 59047

From The Editors

With this issue of the Loop, we begin our series on double-handed casts required in the Two-Handed Casting Instructor (THCI) certification.

In this issue Dan Wright has described and illustrated the Sanp T. Our series will continue next issue with the snake roll by Simon Gawesworth, followed by the single spey and double spey.

Details of the THCI program are found on the FFF website, www.fedflyfishers.org.

If you have checked out the web site lately you will notice that navigation could be smoother. A CBOG committee has been formed to facilitate finding information on the website and to make recommendations on the casting program portion of the site.

A database of workshop templates and related information and articles, which Masters and Governors can draw from for pre-certification workshops, will be posted on the web site very soon. This is just a start to our database, which will expand as instructors share their ideas and resources.

A Code of Conduct guideline is posted on the website. To protect the integrity of our Casting Program and to insure that no impropriety has occurred in testing procedures, everyone who tests for the program will know what is expected of them before they test.

We hope you are preparing for the new casting instruction season by polishing your own skills.

Cheers from your Editors,
Denise Maxwell and Liz Watson

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

By Kirk Eberhard

Punctual - Be there early.

Prepared - Know the subject and lesson plan. Present material in a confident manner. Be an accomplished flycaster, able to explain and demonstrate all facets of instruction. Organize printed material, yarn, leaders, spare rods, video camera, etc. prior to class.

Professional - Be competent and well groomed. Wear clean, appropriate clothing. Don't be afraid to show some authority to control class behavior or get a point across.

Personable - Friendly, pleasant and enthusiastic.

Patient - Be understanding, easy-going, don't lose your cool.

Persistent - Be determined and resolute. Don't give up easily.

Positive - Don't use the word "but." Use "and" instead. For example, say "That was a good forward cast and we can make it better by keeping a firm wrist."

Praise - Be free with words of encouragement. Use wonderful, great, perfect, etc. for positive feedback

Perceptive - Be able to recognize and correct casting faults, modify instruction to fit student's needs

Practice - Improve your own casting and teaching skills. Search out new methods and information. Upgrade your program. Teach lots of people. There is no substitute for practice.

THE LOOP STAFF

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tjindra@bellsouth.net, 504-392-7511

Fly Illustrations: Jason Borger

You can have a link from your FFF website listing to your own e-mail address. Contact Julie Nelson.

We welcome your submissions via e-mail or disk. Please attach a short (1-3 sentences) instructor biographical statement, including your location and Certification level. Please indicate whether or not you are willing to allow your submission's possible re-publication on the Program's web site. Any illustrations should be in TIFF or JPEG format.

The Loop reserves the right to decline any submission for any reason, and to edit any submission. All submissions should be sent to the National Office:

FFF Casting Instructor Certification Program

P.O. Box 1595

Bozeman, MT 59771

Fax: (406)-585-7596

E-mail: castingcert@fedflyfishers.org

COMING EVENTS for 2004

Pre-registration is REQUIRED

Schedule subject to change

Charlotte, NC 2/26 - 2/27 The Fly Fishing Show By 2/18/05 Instructor

Warren, MI 3/12 - 3/13 Midwest Fly Fishing Expo By 3/4/05 Instructor & Masters

Athens, TX 3/5 Fly Fish Texas By 2/25/05 Instructor

Mtn Home, AR 3/19 Sowbug Roundup By 3/11/05 Instructor

Salt Lake City, UT 3/17 - 3/20 International Sportsman's Expo By 3/10/05 Instructor

Freeport, Maine—L.L. Bean 2-Day Test Preparation Workshop and Teaching Workshop with Macauley Lord. To register please call (888-552-3261).

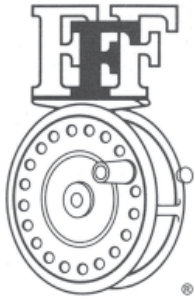
Contact The Program Coordinator at (406) 585-7592 for pre-registration (A \$50 test fee for Certified Instructor or \$100 test fee for Masters is required to pre-register)

Congratulations to new Master Casting Instructors

Bruce Chard - Big Pine Key, Florida

Rod McGarry - Portland, Maine

John Wilson - Russelville, Arkansas



FEDERATION OF FLY FISHERS

Fly Casting Instructor Certification Program

P. O. Box 1595

Bozeman, MT 59771

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