

The Loop

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Summer 2011*

Catch and Release for Trout

by Will Shaw

Let me say from the start that I do not have a problem with killing the odd fish here and there for the table. It's a natural thing to do. I bring trout home now and again, and you can't beat the taste of a freshly caught trout. But for the most part I release the trout I catch. The reasons for this are several: I don't want to eat trout all the time, and keeping fish in the freezer and then chucking them out seems a waste to me; I don't fish solely for food; and most importantly, the waters I fish won't sustain a continued catch and kill policy for big, wild brown trout. Evidently my reasons for practising Catch and Release (C&R) are in part personally practical, part aesthetic, and mainly ecological. Your reasons may be different, and that's ok with me.

So, assuming we are going to return some of the trout we catch, how should we go about it? How can we maximize the chances of fish surviving the experience? And how can we get nice photos of these fish, and still release them safely? In thinking about C&R we need to consider the following:

- 1) The tackle you use to catch the fish
- 2) Getting the fish in without exhausting it
- 3) Minimizing handling and the time taken to remove the hook
- 4) Making sure the fish is ok before letting in swim off

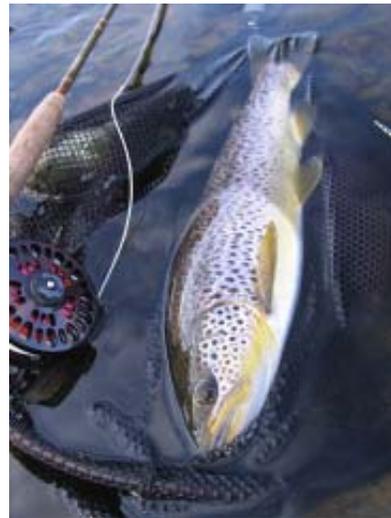
1) Tackle

This has a major influence on the other three areas. Choosing the right rod, tippet, and hook strength means you have can apply enough power to get the fish in quickly. Choosing single barbless hooks means you can get the hook out quickly and minimise damage to the fish. Having a good-sized knotless landing net means handling big fish is easier and you can rest the fish in the water to make sure they're OK before allowing it to swim off.

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So what do I mean by the right rod, tippet, and hook strength? Well here's a rough guide:

Size of fish	Minimum	Ideal
1lb - 2lb Rod weight Tippet strength Hook size	3wt 2lb/7x None	4-5wt 4lb/6x 18+ 1.5lb - 5lb
4wt 5lb/5x 18	1.5lb - 5lb Rod weight Tippet strength Hook size	5wt+ 6lb/4x 14+
3.5lb+ Rod weight Tippet strength Hook size	5wt 6lb/4x 18	6wt+ 8lb/3x 14+



2 lb. 10 oz. brown

You can see here that's there is no hard and fast rule - fish vary in size in wild fisheries, so you are looking for an outfit that suits the majority of the fish you are going to catch with the reserves of power to deal with the odd out-size trophy.

It's important to stress that the table is giving minimums that would be suitable for open waters, with no snags, and calm/slow currents. If you have snaggy waters, or fast roily currents, then you need to increase the tackle strength considerably.

2) Getting the fish in without exhausting it.

This is about the way you play the fish. The way you use the kit is at least as important as the kit itself. I am always appalled when I hear or read of people taking 25 minutes or more to land trout. Most of the trout I catch are in the net inside 2 minutes. I've not timed this, but I reckon the longest fight I've had with a trout lasted 5 minutes at the most. That includes fish into double figures, and fish that have run me into my backing.

You can guess from this that I put a lot of pressure on fish to get them in. Yep, sure the odd fish will get off through the hook-hold pulling, but that happens anyway - and who's to say it wouldn't pull out after 25 minutes of faffing about?

Assuming you've already realized that you need to keep a tight line when playing a fish (!) there are some key principles to efficient fish-fighting:

Only two things should happen when playing a fish - either the fish is taking line under pressure, or you are gaining line. Standing there with the rod gently nodding and the fish sulking means that the fish is resting, and you are prolonging the fight. Keep the fish moving!

High rods protect tippets - low rods maximise pulling power. - Lifting the rod high in the air puts all the pressure on the tip of the rod - good for protecting light tippets against the lunges of the fish, but useless for applying maximum power to stop or move stubborn fish. If you need to put maximum pressure on you need to lower the rod to transfer the load on to the bottom half of the rod. You need sensitive hands for this though; be

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ready to give with the rod to protect against sudden lunges. You will need to use a variety of rod positions when playing big fish - if you are unsure then try to aim for a mid-point of having the rod butt at an angle of 90 degrees to the line running from the rod tip to the fish.

Practise this stuff at home. Tie your tip-pet to a chair leg or something similar, and see how much pressure you can put on it with various rod positions.

Pulling fish from the side/below keeps them off balance. - Fish are quite good at resisting a pull from straight above - they get their head down and can maintain that posture for a long time. However they are not so good at resisting a pull from the side, and absolutely rubbish at dealing with a pull from below! So... when playing a big fish, I spend a lot of time with the rod over on its side (pulling away from the fish's direction of travel), and also with a good length of the rod under water (pulling from the side and underneath the fish).



Will playing a big trout

The pull from below flips the fish head-over-heels, and seems to help disorient the fish - shortening the fight considerably. It's a brilliant technique!

If a fish builds up momentum, let it run. - Once a fish gets some speed up, trying to stop it dead can lead to breakages. Letting it run under medium pressure tires the fish and protects tippets. If you need to stop it, increase pressure progressively and, if possible, from the side/below (see above). As soon as the fish stops - get it moving towards you again (see first principle!).

All of this does take practise and gets easier with experience. But you should always be aiming to get the fight over in the minimum of time. If it's taking you more than a couple of minutes regularly, then look at your technique.

3) Minimising Handling

This is the critical bit folks. You've got the fish in, and how you behave in the next few seconds will decide how well the fish goes back.

The safest thing you can do is this:

Don't touch the fish at all; don't remove it from the water. Ease the fish towards you, grab the leader with your free hand, tuck your rod under your arm pit; then using either forceps, your fingers, or another unhooking tool, reach down to the fly, slip it out (it's barbless remember?), and watch contentedly as the fish suddenly realises it's free and swims strongly away. Perfect!

I use this method for nearly all of the fish I catch and it works like a dream.

(Continued on page 5)

So why bother writing anything else? Well consider the following situations:

- You are fishing from a high bank and can't reach the fish with your hand
- It's a big fish - grabbing the tippet may risk breaking it.
- The hook is out of sight, or in a position that's difficult to grip. You can't reach it without handling the fish in some way.
- It's a big fish and you'd like a photo.

In all of these situations my preference is to use a large, knotless, micro-meshed landing net. It allows you to reach fish you can't reach with your hand. It means you don't have to risk grabbing the tippet. A net allows you to keep control of the fish without having to grip it. It allows you to keep the fish safely in the water whilst sorting your camera out.



New Zealand brown

Fishing from high banks

This isn't ideal as it means taking the fish completely out of the water, but it is something we may have to deal with from time to time. The key here is to find somewhere soft to lay the fish down. Avoid gravel and rocks and look for soft wet grass, or puddles. Gently lay the net down and unhook the fish. Don't take the fish out of the net. If the fish starts to thrash or jump, lift the net and fish off the ground to stop any injury occurring. The fish will quickly quieten down and you can then unhook it.

To get the fish back in the water, leave it in the net and place the net in the water, allowing it to swim back out. Do not drop the fish back in from a high bank.

Dealing with hooks that are difficult to grip, or out of sight.

It does happen: sometimes the hook is inside the mouth; sometimes it's visible but somehow difficult to get a purchase on to be able to slip it out. With the fish in the net, the first thing you must do is wet your hands. This stops you removing any of the fish's protective coating and is essential. *Never handle a fish with dry hands, a cloth, or anything else.*

With a wet hand, gently lift the fish, enabling you to either open its mouth or grab the hook properly with the other hand. Don't grip the fish tightly. Don't lift it out of the net, or even completely out of the water. If it flips or struggles, gently release your grip and let it sink back into the submerged net. Once the hook is out, sink the net completely and allow the fish to swim free. Easy. This should take no more than few seconds.

If the hook is very deep in the throat, and out of reach don't try to pull it into view. Cut the line as far down as possible and let the fish go. It is well documented that fish can survive with hooks in their throats. In many cases the hook will corrode and find its way out of the fish. A deep hook is not an excuse to hit the fish on the head.

Which brings us on to fish that bleed. This is a difficult one. Fish don't have much blood, and so can't afford to lose much. However a little blood goes a long way in the water, and fish blood does clot - so it may not be as bad as it looks. Fish can survive heavy injury from otters, cormorants, herons, pike and what not, so a bleeding fish isn't necessarily a dead fish.

(Continued on page 6)

I'm inclined to give the fish the benefit of the doubt and keep the fish resting in the submerged net for a while to see if the bleeding stops and the fish recovers. If all looks ok I'll let it go. If not, then ultimately I guess I'll get the priest out (oh yes, you should still carry one!), and take the fish home for tea. I've only had to do this twice in the last ten years.

Photographing Big Fish

Be honest, we all like having pictures of our big fish. Pictures probably are sops to our egos; they are definitely memory enhancers, and often a record of something extraordinary. Whatever they are we all like having them and that's ok as long as we get the pictures without jeopardising the fish. This is perfectly possible, and here's how it works.



New Zealand brown

- Keep your camera handy around your neck - not in the bottom of a rucksack, or back in the car!
- Keep the fish in the net, in the water, until you are ready to press the button
- Fish photo's should be either in the water, or held just above the water with wet hands - not on gravel or sand, or held five feet off the ground. Take a couple of quick photos and then release the fish - don't spend ages refocusing or messing around with exposures and angles.
- If it's a picture of you with the fish, keep the fish in the net, in the water until the last moment; lift it up briefly for the picture and then put it back in the water. The fish should be out of the water for no more than 15 seconds. Hold the fish with one hand around the wrist of its tail, and the other supporting its weight around the pectoral fins.

This is much easier if there are two of you, but it's still easy if you are on your own.

4) Making sure the fish is ok before letting it swim off

Finally, try and make sure that the fish is ok to swim off on its own. A healthy fish can hold itself upright in the water, and swim against the current. You can check this while the fish is still in the net. If it's ok, then let the fish go and watch it swim away.

Very occasionally you get a fish that looks ok until it's out of the net and then it turns over. If you can, re-net it, and hold it upright, facing into in a steady current until it has the strength to kick out of your gentle grip and swim off.



If the fish doesn't look right in the net follow the same procedure, keep it upright and facing into a steady clean current (i.e. not muddy). In slow or still water you might want to hold the fish lightly by the tail and move it gently back and forth to maximise water flow across its gills.

5) Summary

I've gone into quite a lot of detail here because I think it's an important subject.

In practise this is all much easier than it sounds.

Stick to the big principles

- * Use the right tackle for the fish you're after
- Get the fish in quickly
- Minimise handling and the time taken to remove the hook
- Make sure the fish is ok before letting it swim off

If you apply these principles then you'll cope with any circumstances, and 99 times out of 100, the fish you catch will go back ready to fight another day.

And if one out of 100 doesn't make it, well, feel a little sad, but don't forget to enjoy the meal!

Post Script - how to kill fish.

This didn't really fit into the above article, but I think it's important. If you are fishing to take fish home, then kill the fish as soon as it's in the net, with a couple of sharp blows between the eyes with a heavy priest. Don't, please, faff around admiring the fish, showing off to your mates, taking pictures, weighing it etc. Kill it straight away, before you unhook it, before you take it out of the net.



Will with a beautiful brown trout

Will Shaw is a FFF certified instructor as well as holding the AAPGAI Advanced Single Handed qualification, and the Scottish Game Angling Instructor (SGAIC). He specializes in fishing for wild brown trout on rivers and fly fishing for pike. He also provides in-depth tuition in single handed fly fishing. Add to that current first aid, insurance and a full CRB check certificate.

He does all this in Edinburgh, the Lothians and across Scotland.

Check out his web site at:

<http://www.lineslinger.com/index.html>

Who in the World Invented the Double Haul?

by Gordy Hill

Many of us have concluded from what we've heard and read that Marvin Hedge may have invented and developed the double haul. Of course, the fact that he won a casting tournament as he used it back in the 1930's might have led us to that conclusion. He undoubtedly deserves credit for introducing it to competition fly casting.

According to my grandfather, Clifford Hewitson, who witnessed many of these casting events in the US and Europe back then, (I wasn't born until 1930) other fly anglers had used various line hand "pulls" to augment their presentation casts. It is possible that some of them actually used it on their back casts as well thus somewhere out there in a cloud of fly fishing endeavor, perhaps well before the 30's, the double haul by any name may have been "invented" if not used regularly by some anglers. Some may even have used it without thinking about it.

Joan Wulff has written, ***"The old timers didn't know about the double haul. Marvin Hedge of Portland, Oregon, first used the technique in 1934, breaking Chicagoan George Chatt's existing record of 125 feet (in the Trout Fly Distance event) with a cast of 147 feet."*** *

Joan teaches that a single haul is made with line hand pull on either forward or back cast without giving back line. She defines a double haul as distinct from the single haul in that the caster gives back line. This differs from a more widely accepted description of the double haul as a pull (haul) with the line hand followed by either giving back line or line release on both the back cast and the forward cast. Since neither description is "written in stone on the mount", the student of fly casting should be aware of each.

Acclaimed fly fishing historian, Jack W. Berryman, specialized in the history of U.S.A. West Coast and British Columbia, Canada fly angling developments. He paid homage to the much earlier traditions of fly fishing and fly casting of the U.K and Continental Europe.

In his book, *Fly Fishing Pioneers & Legends of the Northwest*, he informs us that Maurice "Mooch" Abraham, also known as, "Mooch Abrams", taught the technique to Marvin Hedge. Jack wrote :

"When the Portland Casting Club reorganized in 1931, Mooch became its first honorary life member and was identified as the club's principal coach. It was at this time, because of a shoulder injury from a previous automobile accident, Mooch began practicing what became the 'double-haul' technique in fly casting. He introduced this method to his fellow anglers and casting club members, but especially to Marvin Hedge, whom he coached for the 1934 national casting competition in St. Louis. It was here that Hedge first introduced Mooch's double haul into competitive casting."

".....Hedge beat the old mark of 125 feet, set in 1925 by 22 feet. THE NEW YORK TIMES reported the record-breaking event, and a St. Louis newspaper report exclaimed, 'The Westerner went into action with powerful rhythmic movements.... The gallery went wild!' It was at this event that Hedge introduced the double haul into competitive casting." "Hedge proclaimed that 'there wasn't a soul in St. Louis that had ever seen it. They took motion pictures of it and, after that, they asked me questions about it until two in the morning.' In fact, the 'Anglers Fly Distance' category at national tournaments has been often referred to as 'the steelhead event'." **

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Did Hedge actually use the line hand haul on his back casts as well as his forward strokes ? One bit of evidence that he did appears in a photograph of him warming up for a National casting event. The photo depicts him at the completion of his back cast with his line hand having completed a long haul. ***

Jack Berryman also lets us know about the very beginning of the Federation of Fly Fishers : “*Wahl and Bradner* (Ralph Wahl and Enos Bradner of Northwest steelhead fame) *drove to Eugene* (Oregon) *in June 1965 for the inaugural national conclave of fly-fishing clubs and set up a photo display for the attendees. From this meeting the Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF) was formed, and Wahl became very active in this group.* “ ****

.....Thought some of you might find that interesting.

I signed on as a member later that year. I didn't maintain my membership, however because most of the FFF contributors lacked interest in any style of fly casting other than one employing a vertical casting plane, which I rarely used and didn't teach, and no apparent interest in salt water fly fishing which is what I did most often. I had found it much easier to use the Lefty Kreh style of casting. Then I renewed years later when the CICP was formed by Mel Krieger, tested by Doug Swisher and became a CCI. It wasn't until later that the FFF CICP recognized the value of different styles of casting for different casters and various fishing challenges.

* *Joan Wulff's FLY CASTING TECHNIQUES*, by Joan Wulff, 1987, p. 109 . (11 used copies still available, today, at Amazon.com at \$15.88.)

** *Fly - Fishing PIONEERS & LEGENDS of the Northwest*, by Jack W. Berryman, 2006, pp. 114, 115-136 - 139. (Today, available from Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com and other sources. New at \$29.95, Used as low as \$16.04)

*** *THE CREEL*, July, 1964. Photo courtesy of Robert Wethern, circa 1940's

**** *Fly - Fishing PIONEERS & LEGENDS of the Northwest*, pp. 190-191.



Conclave 2011

August 30 - September 3, 2011

West Yellowstone, Montana

CBOG Meeting - Tuesday, August 30, 2011

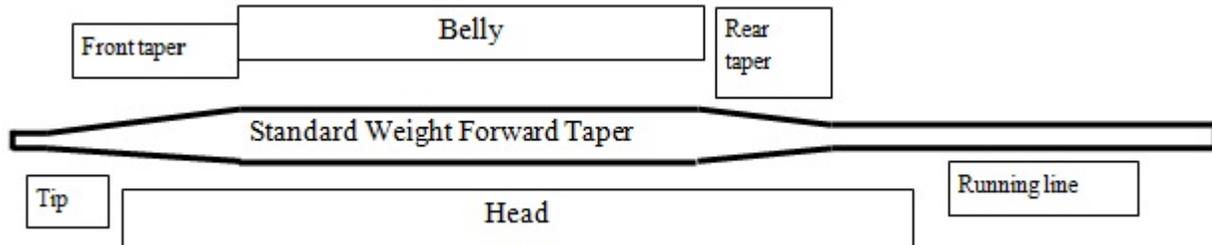
Fly Line Tapers

by Dusty Sprague

The shape of the line can provide a significant advantage in casting and fishing

The shape of the line determines the line's performance through the air, with the line's taper affecting how energy is transferred and dissipated during the cast. Basic line tapers include weight forward, double taper, shooting tapers and level lines (actually no taper). Weight forward lines offer the combined advantages of delicacy of fly delivery, distance, and accuracy. No other taper design provides all three attributes.

A review of a standard weight forward taper provides insights to the effects of taper design on casting performance.



The level tip permits tying new and replacement leaders to the line without shortening the front taper and affecting how the line casts.

The front taper serves to reduce the mass of the line's heavy belly and provide a more delicate delivery of the leader and fly. As the front taper unrolls, decreasing in diameter and mass, it accelerates and air resistance increases geometrically, dissipating the line's energy. The length and tip diameter determine how delicately or powerfully the leader and fly are delivered.

Given the same tip diameters, lines with long front tapers have less mass in the front section of the line than lines with shorter front tapers. Longer front tapers dissipate casting energy rapidly resulting in less powerful, softer delivery of the fly. Front taper lengths and tip diameters are most often directly proportional to line weights. Heavier line weights, designed to deliver larger, air-resistant flies, generally require longer tapers to permit smooth casting.

Shorter front tapers dissipate less energy, transferring more energy to the leader, for a stronger, more powerful turnover of the leader and more powerful delivery of the fly, typical for larger, heavier flies and delivering in wind.

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Lines with longer and more delicate front tapers require good loop control to straighten the line and leader on the delivery. Open, air-resistant loops result in too much energy being dissipated and the loop will often collapse, not straightening the line or leader. Lines with shorter, more powerful tapers can provide more effective deliveries even with larger loops.

Front tapers of well-designed lines deliver enough energy to straighten commonly used leaders. Casting without a leader results in too much un-dissipated energy at the end of the cast. The line tip most often 'kicks' downward. Line tips can be shredded by casting without a leader.

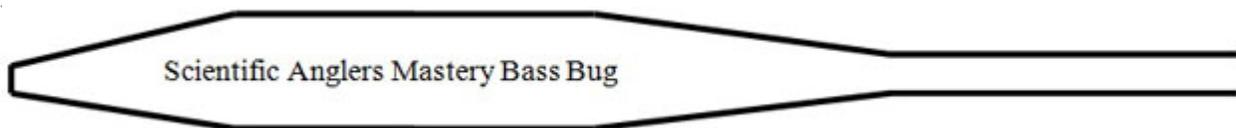
The line's belly or body, with the greatest diameter and mass, carries most of the casting energy. The diameter of the line's belly is determined by the line's design, density and designated American Fishing Tackle Manufacturing Association (AFTMA) line weight, for example, WF-8-F or WF-10-S. The length and configuration of the belly of a weight forward line varies depending on the casting or fishing task it was designed to accomplish. To determine the optimum belly length, average fishing distances must be considered. Some lines made today have compound bellies designed to distribute the belly mass toward the front or rear to achieve specific performance advantages.

The rear taper's length determines how smoothly the line will cast and contributes to the control and quickness of the line. Longer rear tapers transmit energy smoothly to the belly for increased distance and control. Shorter rear tapers put the running line in the guides more quickly for faster deliveries of the fly.

The head, comprised of the front taper, belly, and rear taper, determine the effective casting and control range of the line. Short heads cast quickly, but can be difficult to control on long casts. Long heads provide long-range control but require more false casting to get the thinner running line into the rod guides for most effective line shooting and distance casting.

The running line connects the belly of the line to the backing. Since we use weight forward lines to help achieve distance in casting, a running line that is light, small diameter, stiff, textured, and slippery will shoot line the best and can achieve the greatest distance. However, such a running line may be difficult to handle, prone to tangle, have too much memory and may also blow around in the wind. Designing the optimum running line requires tradeoffs and manufacturers vary on their approach to these issues. While most offer lines that combine all these factors to perform well, some lean to better handling and less tangling while others favor offering the features that permit greatest distance.

Many popular lines today offer a simple standard taper in a weight forward configuration and provide excellent performance. Some lines offer designs to provide certain advantages for specific casting and fishing applications. Examples of a few of these designs are offered below.

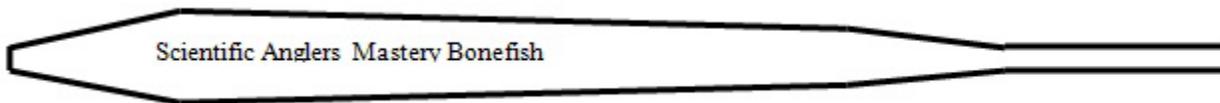


Bass - Bass flies are commonly air resistant and can be quite large, especially surface flies. Fishing distance can be short to moderately long. Delivering the fly quickly is not often a requirement. A line designed for powerful delivery at short range is needed yet its distance capability can also be important. One good example that meets these requirements is the bass line designed by Scientific Anglers. The Scientific Anglers Bass Bug line provides a longer front taper with a larger tip diameter, permitting a more powerful delivery of the fly, while their line's belly is relatively short, yet its rear taper is quite long to provide good control for longer casts. The head length of 42 feet (8 weight line) permits casting and control at moderately long range.

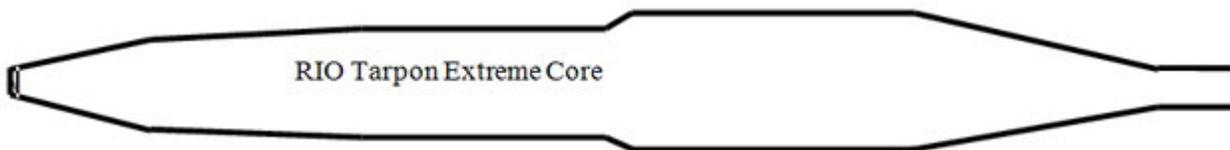
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Redfish - A line for redfish needs to provide for quick casts at close range yet not deliver the fly too heavily and spook the fish. RIO's Redfish line provides this capability with a standard straight moderate length front taper, a compound body with the mass located at the rear of the body and a moderate length back taper, adding up to a head length of 35.5 feet (8 weight), a relatively short head for quick and moderate delivery of the fly.



Bonefish - Fishing for bonefish typically requires longer casting, in wind. While some opportunities are fleeting, most do not require quickness as much as they require accuracy and delicate presentations. Effective lines offer longer head lengths permitting more controlled, longer line carry and longer distance casting coupled with front tapers that permit delicate fly delivery. Scientific Anglers Mastery Bonefish line provides a good example. This line features a longer, straight front taper for delicate delivery. The longer belly is tapered, thinner in back, thicker in front, providing for improved performance in wind. The rear taper is of moderate length contributing to line control. The head measures 45.5 feet (8 weight) and provides increased casting range.



Tarpon - Fishing for tarpon frequently benefits from longer presentations delivered quickly before the fish changes course presenting a bad casting angle, or moves out of range, or gets too close to the boat. However, fish sometimes show close to the boat, especially in darker water over darker bottoms. Better casters, able to control loops at greater distances, can benefit from the better loop control and accuracy offered in lines with somewhat longer head lengths, however, shorter head lengths permit delivering the fly with fewer false casts. One example of a line designed for tarpon is the RIO Tarpon Extreme Core line, designed for extreme tropical conditions and illustrated below. This line is slightly heavier than the AFTMA standard to more quickly load rods for quicker casts. The front taper is convex-compound and moderate in length. The compound body shifts mass to the rear of the head essentially lengthening the effective front taper to permit delivery of larger flies at distance. The rear taper is quite long to provide control on longer casts. The head length of their 12 weight line is 39 feet 5 inches.

Summary

The line's shape can provide significant advantages to casting and fishing, as we have seen from this review, although the first consideration in line selection should be line weight. Other important factors to consider are when, where, and how the line will be used.

For example, will the line be used in freshwater or saltwater? Do you need a floating, sinking, or sinking tip line? Will the line be used in primarily hot or cooler air temperatures? Will you primarily fish from a boat or fish while wading. Are you a highly skilled caster or of more modest skills? Using a properly selected line can make fishing more fun and productive.

Some lines cast better than others on a given rod. If at all possible, 'test cast' a line on the rod before making the purchase. Use a leader and fly typical for the intended fishing, testing the line at the distances anticipated for fishing and also consider the wind you might face. There can be significant differences in the performance based on the particular line, leader and fly combination on a given rod.

Dusty Sprague is a FFF Master Certified Casting Instructor in North Port, Florida. He is a member of the FFF Board of Governors and chairs the casting committee for the Florida Council of the FFF. He is a member of the Scientific Anglers Pro Staff.

Authors note: Much of the information above comes from Bruce Richard's book entitled 'Modern Fly Lines', published by Odysseus Editions, Inc., 1994, Birmingham, AL. Bruce designed fly lines for Scientific Anglers for 32 years, retiring in 2009. I am lucky to have him as a mentor. He is a cherished friend.

Wearing The Colors

By Les Rosenthal, MCI

I've noticed that few CIs, MCIs, THCIs and CBOGs wear their appropriate designation when representing the best teaching and casting the FFF and dare I say, the world has to offer.

The fact you're reading the Loop and this article indicates you're involved and proud of belonging. Often we read Loop stories of a candidate's quest to achieving their certification. So I wondered why there seem to be so few 'wearers' and decided that with some notable exceptions, we're too often a humble group of casting fanatics (geeks) in need of a nudge.

If you're not a 'wearer of the colors', may I suggest re-visiting our choice. Then consider yourself nudged, acquire and wear your designations appropriately.

Editor's Note: Perhaps we need some new patch and badge designs. Don't forget we are almost twenty years old now. Any ideas?

Two Indicators for Instructors

By Tomonori Higashi (CBOG, MCI, Japan)

Every culture has its own peculiarities, and ours is no exception. If you have seen the Sofia Coppola film called “Lost in Translation,” you know what I mean. And our Japanese fly fishing culture is a little bit off standard. Fish are small, which seems (at least to me) very matching to us who have valued smallness. The physical reason is that most rivers are of high-gradient free stone type; fish don’t grow big in pockets. However, these small fish are often well educated and demand exact imitations and precise dead drift. I sometimes wonder how many anglers these 8-inch trout have seen. So, we go very light, sometimes down to #0 weight line and 9x tippet. Leaders have become very long, up to 20 feet in total. I would say this is a very specialized setup.



Fly rods for Japanese streams are typically slow progressive rods that easily bend into the butt. Cane and fiberglass rods are still popular, as well as graphite ones. You are using a very long leader, so the actual line you are throwing is sometimes only 3 feet off the tip. In most situations you can cast by sweeping the rod up and down, using only the wrist. This “technique” is very simple and effective in these special situations. Such motions can even add slack to the tippet in a pseudo pile cast, and catch fish.

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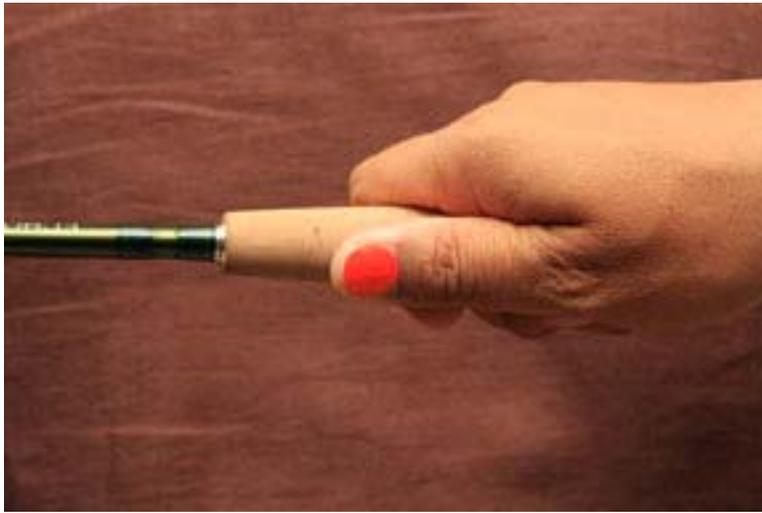
However the ingrained habit of wristy casting will have a devastating effect when the casters switch to a more “standard” tackle when they head to a lake or briny field. Since they haven’t learned to control and adjust the rod tip movement, and relied heavily on the length of the tippet for success, they cannot handle the faster-acted rods to throw tighter loops. In some lucky cases, they ask for instructions. I have coached quite a few such small stream fishers and helped broaden their field.

A couple of years ago I started to use two types of indicators during casting lessons to help the awareness of control. One is a “tip indicator.”



When I have a student who struggles with the wide loop because of the wristy stroke, I pull out a bobbin loaded with a thick bright thread and quickly wrap a band of thread, then whip-finish and cut. During the cast this band moves in the air, though the caster cannot see. If they succeed in moving this band rather straight in the air, the loops become narrower, and have more energy to go. Then I will let go of them and try. I have them imagine the path of the bright band in the air. As instructors we explain the importance of the path of the “rod tip,” but the meaning is somewhat broad. Is it the tip section of the rod, top guide, or anything else? The thread band that was just wrapped is not confusing, and it has some show effect too.





If the caster still struggles with poor loop shape, I put a bright stick-on to the thumb of the caster. I call it a “thumb indicator.” I ask him/her to cast as usual, watch their loop shape, then watch this indicator. How is it moving? Is it moving in a big arc? Then I tweak their hand movement, and ask them to watch. What is the difference? Now watch the loop.... Can you see it is different now?

It is important that the thumb indicator is of bright color so that casters can recognize it in their peripheral vision. In a pinch, a cut section of plastic insulation tape will work, and I have used it, but it is always better to have a bag full of teaching aids ready to go. It will make us look good and prepared. These indicators of course work for intermediate and advanced learners who want to optimize their casting.

As you can see they are intended to supplement Bruce Richard’s 6-step instruction method, which is a must for modern fly casting instructors to master. Thanks Bruce.



THE ESSENTIALS:

DON'T BE A SLACKER—STOP WASTING ROD MOTION

by Gary Eaton, MCI

The concept of flycasting absent **slack** line is *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.

Slack elimination cannot be separated from the other four essentials, *my* translations of these are: –

1. STRAIGHT LINE PATH (SLP) OF THE ROD TIP PROVIDES THE ULTIMATE ROD LOADING AND EFFICIENCY
2. PAUSE BETWEEN ROD MOVEMENTS CONSISTENT WITH LENGTH OF LINE BEYOND ROD TIP
3. VARY AMOUNT OF TOTAL TIP TRAVEL AND ARC WITH AMOUNT OF CARRY
4. PROPER APPLICATION OF TIP SPEED = SMOOTH TIP ACCELERATION WITH DE-LAYED ROTATION.

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. **Slack** elimination, and the other essentials, applies equally to back casts.

Practically defined, a **slack** free set-up and cast exist when any rod tip movement results in a corresponding movement of the fly. Any amount of rod tip movement that does not also move terminal tackle represents a threat of **slack** or potential decrease in effective rod loading.

Slack must be eliminated and **slack** represents a devastating threat throughout the casting stroke. **Slack** prevents adequate distance of rod tip movement if present before the cast begins. Constant and smooth acceleration throughout the entire tip movement serves as the primary preventive to avoid introducing **slack** into the cast.

Thus, beginning a back cast with the rod tip being raised and then lowered just prior to the back cast inherently creates **slack** equal to the amount the rod tip was initially raised. Merely raising the rod tip does not create **slack** but, beginning the back cast from any position but the rod tip at the surface effectively limits potential tip travel. All **slack** appearing before Rod Stop Position (RSP) must be compensated for - or a **slack** layout remains likely. The variation in rod tip movement pace demanded in compensating for induced **slack** often leads to adverse faults of loop formation including tailing loops, poor tracking, and inefficiently wide loops. Imparting excess movement of the rod tip in other than a straight line path (SLP) carries great potential to introduce **slack** into the cast. **Slack** introduced intentionally to present a *slack-line delivery* does not equal a flawed cast. Most often, intentional **slack** is introduced to the layout after the rod tip has decelerated enough for a loop to form. Thus, the alteration from straight layout constitutes a mend affecting end-position of the *rod leg* of the cast.

Reduced physical energy input by the caster may serve as the definition of casting efficiency. Ultimately, the closer one adheres to the Five Essentials, the more rod load they create for each unit of energy imparted to rod tip movement. The Gammels' *ESSENTIALS OF FLY CASTING* present enlightened compilation and observation to inform modern fly casters. Subsequent motion capture and modern high-speed video serve to reinforce these concepts for straight line, in-plane casting. **Slack** arrives inconspicuously to the untrained observer. A qualified Master or experienced Certified Instructor maintains unrelenting vigilance, making their clients aware of earliest appearance of **slack** generating casting movements. **Slack is the enemy.**

From the Mike Heritage blog.....

Dragnabit.....

Drag. What does it mean to you? A forward movement of the rod? Are you moving the line? Is there an angular change? Is it a separate motion or is it a blending motion? Is drag synonymous with creep? Would you accuse someone of creeping if the first motion of the stroke was drag?

And you thought fly casting was simple. There is a school of thought that any movement in the direction of the cast that is insufficient to form a loop is creep. I know, and you know, that you added drag deliberately. You told me. 'Mike', you said, 'I am going to drag the rod forward about a foot before I start to apply a rotational force to the rod butt'. I have to tell you I was quite impressed. However, according to the 'insufficient to form a loop' brigade I would now have to inform you that you have just told me you are going to deliberately creep. A contradiction in terms because, up to now, creep has always been something you did without realising you were doing it. We have now removed creep from the fault column and added it to the motion column. Creep isn't a fault any more, it's just a motion, even though 99% of the time we try to eradicate it if we spot it. Drag, meanwhile, has been tainted by looking similar and is now stood accused of the heinous crime of being creep in disguise. I am here to defend drag and save it from that ignominy.

I regard fly casting to be about fluidity, the blending of one motion into another to produce a fly cast. Creep is the antithesis of fluid motion. It's hesitant, it's uncontrolled, it's unintentional and it robs you of something (available casting angle).

Drag is one of the good guys. It smooths out line acquisition. It gets the line moving. It loads the rod. It irons out wrinkles. It allows a smooth transition into rotational acceleration. It allows fluidity. It reduces the chance of introducing a power spike at the start of rotation. Drag may not, on its own, produce a loop. It just helps, in the right circumstances, to produce better ones.

Drag is another useful tool, like drift or double hauling. I rest my case.

PS. At the recent Newark show I was filmed casting with commentary by Charles Jardine. I'm sorry it's not the best casting you are likely to see but I was frozen stiff.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/FieldandRuralLife#p/search/0/GXFBI74jA18>

April 3, 2011

Don't Do As I Do.....

When will I know I have made it?

I have a friend who is always telling me so and so says it's done like this and so and so does that like this and if you want to know the definitive how to do that ask so and so. I will know when I have made it when I get an irate phone call from so and so asking me to shut up because he is fed up with hearing how Mike Bloody Heritage does it.

There is no definitive way to do anything, especially if it's anything to do with flycasting or fly fishing. This is the proverbial more than one way to skin a cat area. Some ways may suit you more than others. A bit of one way and a bit of another is how you develop your own style. For instance I have moved from a Hartmann/ Ardenesque style to a more Rajeff-like style for my distance casting and now I suspect I am somewhere in between, although none of them may never have recognized anything I do as remotely like they were doing. It was very

similar in my head, and that's all that matters, to me. My general casting is a glorious mishmash of possibly every caster I have ever seen and probably some I have never even met plus one or two ideas of my own.

You should never have fixed ideas. Flexibility is the name of the game. Take in the things you are told and the things you see, adapt, modify, hybridize, utilize. Never accept that that is the only way to do it. This is one reason I have such an issue with only teaching one style. Of course we all have to start somewhere with the basics but even then students have a personal preference about things like rod cant or stance. If I feel it is interfering with their casting I will offer alternatives.

Anyway, back to the subject. At the end of the day the primary purpose of fly casting is to present a fly or a team of flies to a fish and if the fly gets there then it was a successful cast. I suspect that many of the presentation casts we use today were made by accident in the first place and the caster recognised that he had just invented something useful to add to his armoury, gave it a name and passed it on to his friends who then further developed and refined it. The River Spey has a lot to answer for. We have traditional spey, modern spey, contrived spey and all sorts of derivations in between, each one done differently by whoever is performing them. I find the single spey awkward if I just lift and sweep the line in one movement. I find a cut in to the bank first adds fluidity to my stroke and anchor placement more consistent. Ok, it's not strictly necessary but it works for me.

There is often a common denominator in a cast that means that there may be only a very limited way to achieve it but get ten casters to perform it and I would bet you would get ten slightly different variations. **June 21, 2011**

Absolutely Shocking.....

I have had a couple of rather unsettling things happen in the last few days. The first was quite a shock the second was a result of the times we live in.

The new issue of the loop is out and I was reading my way through it when I came across the post I written about my masters assessment.

<http://fedflyfishers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=gbgC1b%2baU7A%3d&tabid=4469&mid=3361>.

All was going well until I got to the part where I said 'I'm a f***ing master, how the hell did that happen?' or something along those lines. To see the profanity in print, in The Loop was something shocking, literally, I think my eyebrows twitched in horror. For all my use of ripe language I am a Victorian prude at heart, it was years and years before I ever swore in front of a woman, for instance. To see that word screaming at me from such a publication as Loop was embarrassing. I am not going to apologize for using the word in the context of this blog, these are my pages and my thoughts so all is fair game. My problem is that I forget that these words can be lifted and used elsewhere (Denise has my permission to take whatever she wants). I am left with the choice of always having to remember that my words may go out to a wider audience than I anticipate and be a bit more careful what I write or I will have to ask Denise to please edit the stuff she lifts and filter out some of my courser comments. Or, perhaps I am being just a tad too sensitive and the Yanks can take it. **Mike – it got by me – I will be more careful in the future...DM**

The other unsettling event was yesterday evening when I went out for a quick chuck. There was a game of cricket going on so I had to move over to a more public football pitch. I very rarely go over there and I almost instantly had an audience of one young girl who wanted to know what I was doing. The first thing that struck me was a girl of twelve or thirteen would even come over and talk to a complete stranger, the second thing was what the hell would it look like to anyone watching. This is a sign of the times where there can be no such thing as innocence any more and I have to feel uncomfortable about being alone with a young girl (albeit in a field with the occasional dog walker passing by). You are stuck between a rock and a hard place. Tell her to go away, pack up and go away yourself, answer her questions while guiltily looking around to see if anyone is

(continued on page 20)

watching, or, as I did, risk being labeled a perv and just talk to her, explain what I was doing and why I was doing it. When she left I was joined by another group of youngsters and we had a laugh and a joke while I went through the whole demo procedure again with lots of oohing and aahing at some of the casts. Even with a group of them I couldn't feel relaxed about the situation though.

I don't know the rights and wrongs about any of this, I just think it is a sad reflection on society that I cannot enjoy the company of one or a group of youngsters without feeling uneasy about it. July 1, 2011

To Infinity and Beyond.....

So, you want to cast a long way eh? Well, pin back your ears. I'm going to tell you how to cast anything from a three weight upwards to 100'. Lay off the macho crap and concentrate on technique. There, that was easy wasn't it.

Of course there is a bit more to it than that, but not much.

Oh, your rod isn't good enough. Bollox is the simple answer to that. There are very few, if any, modern rods five (or probably four) weights or over that won't cast at least 100'. So, don't blame the rod.

Lines are a different matter, you will need a long belly WF like the Mastery Expert Distance (MED) or a Barrio GT140 or a good old DT. Something you can carry a bit of line with. There are a few short or mid length bellied lines you can carry some decent lengths of line with but on the whole they tend to hinge like mad and even if they don't hinge they don't transfer a nice loop from running line to belly. If you just want to practice increasing carry then I would go for a cheap DT and as you get better, say 60' plus, then perhaps drop the weight of the line by one weight. If you get to 75' carry with a five DT on a five rod you are getting close to rod breaking territory, be warned.

Next; yes I know you can carry 70' but go back to fifty. Just do a smooth lift and crisp stop with just enough effort to get a nice turn over and hit the forward cast just as the loop straightens, and lay it back down. Nope, less effort than that, nope, even less. You should notice that the less effort you put in the better the loops will get. Ah, that's better, nice one. Now keep doing that for a day or two. This is about building muscle memory so don't rush it. While you are doing this try different stances and grips. Do it with your eyes closed and feel what you are doing. Are you planted like an oak tree or bending like a willow, think willow. Now try a couple of casting cycles, always working on good loops and minimum effort. At this point Bill Gammel will tell you to increase your line length by one foot and repeat it all. Sorry Bill, life is too short. I say three feet. You should now have a decent grasp on what is happening so your repetitions can get shorter and your plus three feet can be come a bit faster. However there will come a point where it all goes tits up, the red mist descends and macho man is getting desperate to escape. This is the moment to drop back two or three phases and get a grip on yourself. Kick Macho into touch, he is only trying to hurt you. Oh, and while we are talking pain, if you feel any, STOP. If you get shoulder, elbow or wrist pains pack it in and let whatever you have done recover. I have ignored these warnings in the past and had to lay off casting for months. It ain't worth it believe me.

I will allow you a five or ten minute session at the end of practice to just have a blast and see if you are progressing.

The funny (not) thing is that once you can hit 100' consistently it becomes a ridiculously easy cast to make.

Let me know how you get on.

July 15, 2011

Drifting Along.....

I want to talk about drift. Let's define how I understand drift. Drift is any repositioning of the rod during the pause. During the pause. Very important that bit, it's done while the loop is unrolling. Drift, in and of itself has absolutely no effect on the line, it is essentially powerless. The most common form of drift is up and back to open up the casting angle and, possibly, lengthen the casting stroke. But drift is actually multi directional. You may choose to deliberately reposition the rod tip down (I do, on some distance casts). You may choose to drift the rod to one side or other. You may choose to drift the rod forwards. You choose the form of drift you need to suit the cast you are making or the conditions you are casting in. However, do you always need to drift? Some of us have drift inbuilt into our casts, much like hauling, and we drift regardless of whether we actually need to or not. I heard one or two comments from MCI's in Denmark last weekend that some candidates were drifting unnecessarily. I'm not sure any failed their tests because of unnecessary drift but if they were borderline I don't suppose it helped their cause any.

This isn't a knee jerk reaction on my part. My knee was jerked several weeks ago during a lengthy thread on Sexyloops. It's amazing how 99% of a thread passes over your head but a side comment made during the debate can make you sit up and pay attention. The side comment went along the lines that most people drift unnecessarily. I went into the field to find out for myself and, guess what? Whoever made the comment was right. If we are false casting to extend line and each stroke is carrying more line than the last one there may be a need to drift to take into account the wider casting angle required due to the extra line we have shot. Do we need to drift if we are casting relatively similar lengths of line continuously for several cycles (such as accuracy sighting casts, or some of the tasks in the CCI or MCI tests). No, we don't. I can do the 55 feet element in the MCI without drift, and it looks quite cool.

I may be being a bit over sensitive, I have my MCI test coming up and don't need to have a perceived fault like that getting in the way. I also don't want to be accused of creeping if I was to deliberately use forward drift for some reason either.

Talking of creep, and it appears to be the hot topic at the moment, how do you cure it? The answer has been 'teach drift'. I'm now not so sure that's the right approach, at least not initially. If a pupil is a reasonably competent caster I would point out the creep, explain what it is doing to their stroke and just ask them to try to stop doing it. Teaching drift would be the second line of attack if it became apparent that their muscle memory was so ingrained they couldn't help themselves from creeping.

Drift is a good tool in certain situations, but like all good tools, it should only be used when needed.

April 1, 2011



Reel Good Food

A FFF Cookbook

Who would have thought that the FFF would be producing a cookbook? Being a collector of cookbooks, I have often thought that the Casting Program (CICP) should do one as a fundraiser for our activities but the FFF has beaten us to it.

The goal of course is to raise money that will benefit the clubs, councils and FFF office. The result will be a collection of recipes that I hope will come from our entire international membership.

I hope and expect that our Casting Program members will dig out a favorite recipe - or ask their wife for a copy of a favorite one - and send it in. Please make them easy and I particularly would like camping and fishing food you take with you.

Let's get some recipes from Hungary, Croatia, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Belgium, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Germany, Ireland, the UK, Canada, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, Tasmania and of course, the USA. If I have forgotten a country, my apologies and please send in a recipe. Let's make it truly international!

The thought of all the work that is involved in producing a cookbook has been solved. This is so easy! You go online and put in your recipes directly into a program.

Here are the instructions:

1. Go to www.morriscookbooks.com
2. Click on the tab - "Recipe Pages"
3. Go to "Writing & Sorting Recipes"
4. After you have read the instructions, go to www.typensave.com to enter your recipes.

Or - to make it even easier - go to www.btsflyfishing.com/ReelGoodFood.html to access the recipe entry module all in one place. Sounds easy! In either case, your **user group is: fff - and your password is: driftboat**

The cookbook is expect to be ready in the last quarter of 2011 - which is not that far away - and available for Christmas. Order some copies as Christmas presents. Get busy sending some recipes in.

The book will sell at an advance sales program price of \$19.95 US plus shipping and handling costs. After publication, the price will rise to \$24.95 plus shipping and handling.

Orders can be place through the FFF office in Livingston, MT (406-222-9369) or library@fedflyfishers.org

PEARLS....

From a Master Study Group

Hosted by Gordy Hill

Pearl #1 -Make Teaching Fun!

*From Gordy.....*Lefty Kreh says we need to make teaching FUN. I guess that should be true as we teach one another as well. Have a look at these “teaching videos” sent by Richard Ross. The message is clear : Don’t know if you’ve seen this one, but it’s cute and might be worth sending to the group. (Richard)

<http://www.xtranormal.com/watch/7795583/>

From Bob Rumph..... The video is not just amusing, it’s absolutely hilarious. I know these two guys and see them with one face or another all the time. And Lefty is dead on correct, we should remember we’re not working on a cure for cancer, we are teaching people to become better anglers. I frequently use humor to help students to relax, particularly those that seem shy or intimidated.

Thank you for the video Richard, I am snowed and frozen in and this made my day.

Gordy, this is a good way to close my day. I love it and have several friends who fit both players. I have several special friends who will get this and of course, the group (OLAI’s CI Study Group).

Which one are you? Thanks Jim

*From Gordy.....*The funny exaggeration on this clip speaks of many things including the idea that by buying more expensive tackle the casting student will make better casts.

I do think that spending a little more for well designed LINES can make a difference.

I acquire tackle which does the job best for me. Labels mean less than performance as I fish. Somebody once said, “The fish can’t read the label”.

Some of my fly rods are expensive models. That is because a couple of high end manufacturers have sent them to me for field testing. They are great performing tools..... but not really better for what I do, than the much less expensive rods made by Temple Fork, Echo, and other modern companies.

For big game fishing in the salt, I love the one piece (no ferrules) rods made by Kennedy Fisher and Loomis. If more reasonably priced one piece rods were made by other companies I’d likely find them quite satisfactory as well. I hammered on Steve Rajeff for years to have Loomis come up with those one piece sticks.

For many guides and salty fishers here in the Florida Keys, they are seen as a good choice. Fewer ferrules = fewer problems. Better casting tools ? Theoretically, yes. Actually ? Not that I can tell. Less breakage on huge fish ? Yes. Good for travel ? No.

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Seems that it is altogether too true that many fly fishers do that and spend lots more money than they would by taking casting lessons or attending a Conclave and taking a few workshops, each at reasonable cost!

(Realizing that the cost of travel / lodging / meals of Conclave attendance is to be considered.)

Jim Valle and instructors who help him have improved the casting of scores of anglers at the “CASTING RENDEZVOUS at each Intl. Conclave. Immense value at no cost.

I’m still learning from those who can cast better than I .

From Bryan Martin: Brilliant, the wallet is firmly back in the pocket J

Pearl # 2 - How do you Teach ?- Quiz

- 1.) Do you teach the roll cast as one of the very first tasks for your new fly casting students?
- 2.) **Briefly**, tell us why.
- 3.) Do you teach the PICK-UP-&-LAY-DOWN to your new students?
- 4.) **Briefly**, support your decision.
- 5.) Include a brief outline of your lesson plan for the tasks.

If your answered NO to #1 and/or #3, then submit an alternative lesson plan outline for your “brand new” students. Include time (minutes) devoted to each event.

6.) Add commentary on how you would actually teach the subjects in your outline. Try to be brief and to the point.

From Gary Davison.....

- 1.) Do you teach the roll cast as one of the very first tasks for your new fly casting students ? Yes
- 2.) Briefly, tell us why. Because it is such an important cast in many ways, but for a beginner what come to mind more then anything else is to eliminate slack in the system in order to make a cast. Especially on water.
- 3.) Do you teach the PICK-UP-&-LAY-DOWN to your new students? Yes
- 4.) Briefly, support your decision. Because it give a sequence of events that are needed for the fly cast, This cast implements all the essentials (Slack, Pause, Stroke, Power, and SLP) that are needed to make a fly cast.
- 5.) Include a brief outline of your lesson plan for the tasks described by Robin. If you answered NO to 1.) and/or 3.) then submit an alternative lesson plan outline for your “brand new”students.Include time (minutes devoted to each event.
- 6.) Add commentary on how you would actually teach the subjects in your outline. Try to be brief and to the point. With this number of students you should have at least 2 or 3 helpers to work the group. A 3 to 1 ratio for instruction is a good guide line to have if possible. Sometimes this is not possible, so you do what you can to make the course successful for the students. I usually start with a brief introduction to the equipment, and touch on the premise behind fly casting, then address the Pick Up & Lay Down Cast first, then finish up with the Roll Cast. Reason for finishing with the roll cast is that the success rate on this cast is quite high and you and your students end on a good positive note.

Step 1 : Introduction: 10 minutes

I would begin by covering the equipment with the Student: The Rod, Line, Leader, yarn fly so they feel at

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ease and know that no hook is at the end of the line. Takes the fear out of the task. Touch on Safety and the importance of knowing the wind direction when fly casting. Show them the basic handling of the equipment. How to string the rod, then pulling line off the reel, address the drag system on the reel. Show them how to move the rod back and forth in front of them to feed the line out the tip of the rod onto the ground in front of them in preparation to make the cast. General rules watch others around you when casting.

Step 2: 5 minutes.

Demo the pick up and lay down cast for the students. Explain why we use this cast to teach fly casting: Essentials.

Go through each step of the cast.

Make sure there is no slack in the line.

Make sure they pick up or stage the line for back cast.

Make sure they make back cast back which is up and behind to Stop 1.

Make sure they have enough pause after the back cast to let the line unfurl.

Make sure they make the forward cast with a SLP to a target located about head high in front of the caster to Stop 2.

Make sure they point the rod tip at the unfurling loop, and follow the loop and line to the ground or water with the rod tip.

Do it again.

Demo this cast about 3 times with the students watching and listening to your demo.

Have a very short debrief.

Step 3: 20 minutes

Have the students begin the casting task Pick Up & Lay Down, and work one on one through the group with your helpers. When and if need get out in front of the group and demo the cast again to give them some visual feed back, plus verbalize the actions again to re-enforce all learning aspects your students may need. When the session has been completed, stop and have a short recap and debrief with the students.

Step 4: 5 minutes.

Then Demo the Roll Cast for the students.

Make sure no slack line.

Make sure pull line in to position correctly to stage the line. Stop 1 position.

Make sure you have formed a sufficient D loop behind you.

Make sure you explain the principle of casting the line if right handed to the left of the line etc.

Make sure you make the forward cast to a target about head high in front of you the caster to Stop 2 position

Make sure your line extends over the ground or water to full turn over then falls to the ground or water.

Make sure you point your rod tip to the unfurling loop and follow the loop and line with your rod tip to the water.

Demo this cast about 3 times with the students watching and listening to your demo.

Have a very short debrief

Step 5: 15 minutes

Have the students begin the casting task and work one on one through the group with your helpers. Once the task has been learned stop recap with a short debrief.

Step 6: 5 minutes

Conclusion of the lessons, thank your students for spending time with you and your helper's, & touch briefly on the FFF and the Local Fly Fishing Club or organization in the area that sponsored the event. Answer any question they may have about joining the organizations and provide sources for information to help them become better fly fishers. Hint: it is always good to have someone on the side lines helping you keep on track with your lesson agenda. Time line for each section of the lesson needs to be adhered to.

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From Dan Davala

- 1.) Do you teach the roll cast as one of the very first tasks for your new fly casting students? NO
- 2.) Briefly, tell us why. There is not always water present. (I teach in a wide variety of venues, one of which is a city rooftop)
- 3.) Do you teach the PICK-UP-&-LAY-DOWN to your new students? Yes
- 4.) Briefly, support your decision. The pick-up & lay-down introduces the very important concept of making a back cast.
- 5.) Include a brief outline of your lesson plan for the tasks described by Robin.

5 Minutes - Introduce the basic principles of the fly cast. Explain/Demonstrate the Pick-Up & Lay-Down cast.

20 Minutes - Students practice Pick-Up & Lay-Down cast.

5 Minutes - Introduce the term “Loop” and the concept of the variable “Casting Arc”

25 Minutes - Students practice making wide loops and narrow loops on command by adjusting their “Casting Arc”

5 Minutes - Brief summary of concepts learned and recommended strategies for practicing

6.) Add commentary on how you would actually teach the subjects in your outline. Try to be brief and to the point.

5 Minutes - Brief introduction of the concept of fly casting (i.e. the fly is virtually weightless, the line must carry the fly). Explain and demonstrate the pick-up & lay-down cast with an emphasis on the backcast.

20 Minutes - Spread the group out, distribute rods (already strung and rigged with a yarn fly), ensure each rod has approx. 20' of line outside the rod tip.

Allow students to attempt basic pick-up & lay-down casts as demonstrated. At this point I am unconcerned with the results. I expect to see big loops, poor stops, lack of pause, and way too much power. This is all O.K., we will address it in part two. During this 20 minute session, I make my way around to each student, find *SOMETHING* to compliment, and suggest a few improvements.

5 Minutes - Gather the students back to one place for a break. Introduce the term “loop” to the students by drawing one on the ground in front of them with the fly line (I’ve learned to always assume they don’t know what one is). I draw a narrow “good” loop first, followed by a large loop, then a tailing loop, then back to a “good” narrow loop so it’s the last one they see. Provided there are no questions regarding what a loop is, I introduce the idea of the “Casting Arc” and how it relates to the loop size and shape. I first demonstrate how the line will follow the rod tip by moving the rod tip up and down creating a visible sine wave with the bright fly line. I then demonstrate how moving the rod tip through a wide, dome shaped casting arc will result in a wide, dome shaped loop. Next, I explain and demonstrate how narrowing the casting arc until it is more of a V shape will result in narrower loops. During this demonstration, I emphasize the importance of making a good stop on both the forward and back cast.

25 Minutes - Spread the students back out to their spaces. This time, I request that they first make very wide loops *on purpose* by using too big of a casting arc. After making several BIG loops on purpose, I have them make the same cast only with a narrower casting arc, “more like a V shape”. Most students are quite surprised at how easy it is to make a narrow loop on purpose now that they understand the concept. Once I see the loops start to take shape I introduce the concept of false casting and have my students practice by making several false casts before laying one down. During this 25 minute session, I make my way to each student individually, find more things to compliment, then help each improve on whatever I see is the most pressing issue. If a few of the students have a good grasp on the basic cast, I may introduce additional basic concepts on an individual basis to each of them (i.e. trajectory as it relates to accuracy, or stripping/shooting line).

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5 Minutes - Bring the students back in, compliment them all, then summarize and reaffirm the concepts covered. I will usually finish with a brief explanation and demonstration of some great ways to practice, such as casting on a side plane (sidearm) so they can see the loops forming and unrolling, or casting at targets with both the forward and back cast. If they get one thing out of the summary, I hope it is **PRACTICE!**

From Mike Heritage...

- 1.) Do you teach the roll cast as one of the very first tasks for your new fly casting students? **No**
- 2.) Briefly, tell us why. **For me, the essence of fly casting is loop formation and keeping a line in the air. I generally bring the roll cast in later and nearly always as a way for them to remove slack line below the rod tip so their pick up is taut.**
- 3.) Do you teach the PICK-UP-&-LAY-DOWN to your new students? **Not as a first task.**
- 4.) Briefly, support your decision. **I have a better method, for absolute beginners.**
- 5.) Include a brief outline of your lesson plan for the tasks described by Robin. **10 students for one hour is spreading yourself a bit thinly and is, arguably, not fair on the students, so:**
 1. would be to try and involve another instructor, if possible.
 2. a brief discussion on safety.
 3. I would demo and describe the casts.
 4. while the group was close together, I might get them to pantomime the stroke for a couple of minutes.
 5. get them casting and gradually put the better ones with the slower ones until I had two or three manageable groups.
 6. move between each group, encouraging them to help each other.
 7. Thank them for attending. Tell them they were the best group you have ever had the pleasure of teaching but would they mind booking as individuals or pairs next time 'cos I'm getting too old for all this running around.

If you answered NO to 1.) and/or 3.) then submit an alternative lesson plan outline for your "brand new" students. Include time (minutes) devoted to each event.

This is difficult for me as I tend to teach one to one or two to one. The student(s) may or may not know what they want from the lesson. The reply I hear most often to my question 'what do you want to get out of the lesson' is I just want to cast better. I can't make any judgment until I have actually seen them cast. I don't allocate any specific time to each event. I have had two students for two hours and at the end of the time one is double hauling and shooting line to sixty feet while the other is still struggling to master the pick up and lay down.

6.) Add commentary on how you would actually teach the subjects in your outline. Try to be brief and to the point.

Gordy, I can't be brief. I first have to explain a couple of things. My teaching to beginners is based on two things. One is a 'no fault concept' (Mark Surtees will have to explain that one, it's his idea) and the other is a method Lee Cummings first introduced to a group of us a couple of years ago. Lee's method is so jaw droppingly simple we were left almost speechless after he had demo'ed it to us. With this method we can have an absolute beginner false casting 25' to 35' of line in less than fifteen minutes. All this with fantastic loops and good timing. I actually teach the pick up and lay down to give their arms a rest. I teach the roll cast to remove the slack they may have created during the pick up and lay down.

From Mark Milkovich..

- 1.) Do you teach the roll cast as one of the very first tasks for your new fly casting students? **No**
- 2.) Briefly, tell us why. **See #4 below**
- 3.) Do you teach the PICK-UP-&-LAY-DOWN to your new students? **Yes, before teaching the roll cast for several student groups: Students in an intro Casting Lesson, 1st Time Anglers on a ¾ day guide trip, and when possible Wounded Warriors using fly fishing as Recreational Therapy.**

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4.) **Briefly, support your decision.**

Casting Students so often cast with that “wristy”, continuous motion, open loop fashion that it occurred to me that they might think that is exactly what they are supposed to be doing. I now take just a minute at the start of the class for a demo/quiz. I show them open vs. narrow loops (on the ground & then in the air) and two casting “styles”: #1 - the “wristy”, convex tip path open loop, continuous motion false casts (I do make this version look rhythmic and appealing, not farcical) vs. #2 - the firm wrist, SLP narrow loop, Pause **and** Wait false casting. The quiz question is: “Which of these two is “really” fly casting? Whether it’s because I’ve “sold” it or because it’s what they believe, the students choose Style #1 every time. This simple exercise allows me to give the students: a clear idea of what we want them to learn in the lesson, a clear contrast of the two “styles”, and a quick understanding of the key variables that makes them different.

In summer Sun Valley hosts many vacationing couples and “conferencing” professionals who include a brief (± 6 hour) fly fishing experience as part of their stay. After getting the guests licensed & fit for waders and boots, I maximize time on the water by doing a brief pick up & lay down lesson on dry ground. I make a point to get a scenic photo of them casting a nice loop on the river. After the trip I e-mail them with low resolution copies and invite them to choose any images they would like in high resolution. If I was able to get one, the casting shot is always selected; nothing says “I went fly fishing” like a casting photo.

Each summer Sun Valley Adaptive Sports hosts at no cost to the participants a week long fly fishing recreational therapy program for Wounded Warriors recovering from Traumatic Brain Injury, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and typically an additional physical disability. For the participants who are able to learn and perform the Pick Up and Lay Down cast rather than those who can only perform a Roll Cast, there are some therapeutic advantages. The more complex and greater range of motion help the participants regain more of the physical and cognitive ability they lost as a result of their injuries. Importantly the calming effect of false casting, even on dry ground, is a effective tool they can use at home for the stress and other frustration related issues which stem from their injuries.

Gordy, if I may, when Warriors leave Sun Valley and wish to pursue fly fishing they receive equipment appropriate to their home waters and we try to get them involved with their local Healing Waters program or find them a mentor in their home area. At the moment I am looking for mentors for Warriors in: Buckley, WA.; Alexandria, LA; Dallas, TX.; and Springville, NY. This mentoring can require a fair amount of time and patience because these Warriors are “learning to re-learn” what they once new very well how to do. If any of our group are interested or know others who would like to work with these individuals, I would appreciate hearing at: mark@milkojm.com, please put Wounded Warrior in the subject line in case it goes to my junk mail.

5.) **Include a brief outline of your lesson plan for the tasks described by Robin. If your answered NO to 1.) and/or 3.) then submit an alternative lesson plan outline for your “brand new” students. Include time (minutes) devoted to each event.**

1. Demo Quiz in #4 above.
2. Grip and Stance (**L.E.G.S.**) & Instructor Back Cast Demo. (Steps 1 & 2 combined < 10 min.)
3. Only Back Casts (15 min for all students)
4. Only Forward Casts (10 – 15 min depending on ability)
5. Pick Up & Lay Down Casts (as much time as needed depending on ability)
6. Roll Cast (up to 15 min for those who progressed smoothly)

Time at task does vary with student ability.

6.) **Add commentary on how you would actually teach the subjects in your outline. Try to be brief and to the point.**

1. The general approach for this lesson is detailed in Gary Borger’s Summer 1997 Loop article “Only Back Casts, Only Forward Casts”.
2. Steps 1 & 2 presented to all students at the same time.
3. The Only Back Casts sessions last just a few minutes apiece with a break. Beginning in the first short session I will begin pairing students according to ability and using them to spot/coach their partner. Ten students

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is a lot for individual attention. I typically prepare 4x6 cards for students to use in class and take away which provide memory aids and list key ideas. For example, the grip and stance info is “Get your L.E.G.S”: **L.E.** (line extended tip down) **G.** (grip is key grip) **S.** (stance - feet shoulder width apart, front foot faces forward, back foot ½ step back with toes pointed out for balance). The students who are doing better strip off more line for gradually longer back casts.

4. All students start the Only Forward Casts sessions at the same time with a short line. The more adept students are allowed to make longer casts earlier and are the first to be encouraged to put the forward and back casts together.

5. At a minimum, I want all the students to make the pick up and lay down cast even if it is a short one. Some students will not be introduced to the roll cast. The more advanced students will already know a good grip & stance position as well as a good position to begin the forward cast. They must simply learn how to create the D loop in order to make the roll cast.

From Ted Warren...

During the Summer I work at Gore Creek Fly Fisherman in Vail where we offer free casting clinics everyday for about 45-60 minutes. We will have 2-10 students, averaging around 5 most of whom are first-timers on vacation. Our goal is get them to the point they have confidence they “can do it” and then book a guide trip. I know that’s self-serving, but we do introduce a lot of people to fly fishing for free and when they catch a fish they get hooked. We adjust how much we can cover by the group but I’ve been surprised how well folks do. Here’s the outline I’ve been using. I look forward to improving it and learning how to be a better teacher.

Beginner Fly Casting Outline

Introduction - 5min

1. Three things different about fly fishing compared to other types of fishing (spinning, bait casters, salt water)? nearly weightless small fly(vs. lures, weight, big hooks), thick fly line (vs. monofilament or braid), long rod(9’ vs. 5-7’).
2. Why, purpose of each? Fly? Fly Line? Long rod?
3. Goal? get you ready to go fishing & catch fish.
4. Equipment names - rod, reel, fly line, leader, tippet, fly(yarn)
5. Stringing the rod, 20’ line out.
6. Grip, thumb on top. Trigger finger holding the line.
7. Stance, open.

The Pick-up and Lay Down Cast - 15 min

1. The basic cast for fly fishing. Keeps the fly in the water. Terminology - Pick up, back cast, stop & pause, forward cast, stop, lay down.
2. Demo and explain each step.
3. Try it.
4. What do think Most Common problems are? too wristy, too fast, no stop & pause at 10 & 2. Men - overpower, try to throw the fly too far too fast too soon. Women - under power, but often learn faster with better timing.
5. Demo the most common problems.
6. Demo the correct casting technique. remove slack, firm wrist, accelerate to a stop & pause a high back cast, introduce straight path stroke on forward cast, accelerate to a stop, lay down. Usefulness of watching back cast.
7. Try it. Individual attention.
8. Explain “Loop”. Show wide loop and narrow loop on the ground with fly line. Explain when want each type and how each is formed.
9. Demo how to produce wide loops and narrow loops.
10. Try it.

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False Casting - 8 min

1. What it is. Why do it? Change direction, feed out more line, dry fly. Otherwise, PULD, keep the fly in the water.
2. Demo false casting, changing direction, and letting more line out. Introduce use of line hand. Comment on typical distance necessary for fishing area.
3. Explain Importance of timing. Introduce rod bending (“loading”).
4. Try it. (pull some extra line out below your trigger finger.) Individual attention.

Stripping and Shooting Line - 10 min

1. Why Strip? keep slack out of the line. When occur? fly drifting back toward you.
2. Demo how to do it.
3. How get fly back upstream to target? So far, pick up & false casting. Now pick up and shoot line, more efficient, less likely to spook fish.
4. Explain shooting line and demo.
5. Try it. Individual attention. Strip some line back in and then pick up and cast, letting line “shoot” back out. (surprising how many can do this during first lesson, gets them excited.)

Nymphing - 7 min

1. What is a nymph? Why important? +90% of diet. Not as much fun as dry flies but do a lot of it to catch fish.
2. Explain use of strike indicator, split shot, multiple flies. Application for wide loop casts.
3. Explain use of short line and casts targeting nearby runs.
4. Demo short line nymphing cast. Tight line, pick up, wide arc & stroke, lay down well upstream of fish. (On grass, cast line left and drag to your right, then pick up and swing back to the left. Won’t get line tight to your right, but can demo the technique adequately.)
5. Try it. (students usually find it easy to do, need a target for accuracy)

Roll Cast - 10 min

1. Obstacles in fly fishing? bushes, trees, boulders, bank, etc. always occur at the best spots. If make full back cast what happens? get tangled, caught, lose \$2 fly.
2. Explain & demo how to perform a roll cast (aerialized). Creating the D loop, rod position, strong forward cast motion. Problem straightening line on grass. Why? Can’t get the rod loaded because of little resistance of the grass. Much easier on water due to the surface tension on the line.
3. Try it. Individual attention
4. Explain optional use of an anchor when working on grass. (lay something on the line, use a pen with clip, etc.)

Landing the Fish! - 5 min

1. Have 2-3 students cast their line to my feet, hold rod in fishing position 9-10 with some slack below trigger finger.
 2. I “bite” and wiggle and pull.
 3. Explain “setting the hook” properly. Not like a bass but need to imbed the hook.
 4. Demo a fish fighting, running, getting tired out, and flopping away at the net.
 5. Coach them on maintaining tension on the fish, stripping the fish in, letting him run, stripping him back in and landing. (how close to bring the fish, net position)
- This is a lot of fun and a good way to finish up the class.



Pearl #3 -Questions on lines for distance.....

Gordy - I'm in Livingston just finishing a day of fishing in the Park on the Gardiner with Molly. We had a discussion re fly lines and I'm confused. If you want to have a test for maximum distance (fishing is not involved)'with a 10 wt rod what line do you put on a one piece Loomis Cross Current for the test?

From Gordy..... I'd do what all champion distance casters dounderline the rod.

1.) For this situation, (for me) I'd think dropping down to a 7 wt. or 8 wt. line may do the trick well. A lot depends upon how much line I can carry when false casting without my nice tight parallel arm loops deteriorating. That would take some trials.

Reason: I usually can carry no more than 55' of line when using that 10 wt. and that is under ideal casting conditions. I know I can't shoot more than about an additional 50% of the line carried. So that means I'm looking at a max distance of only about 85'. No championship there, but at almost 80 years of age, I'm not complaining.

In the event I do carry 70' of line out of the rod tip, and each 5' - 6' of additional line beyond the first 30' adds one line wt. dimension, then I'm really casting with a 14 - 15 wt. line assuming it is a line designed with a 55' head. We are approaching the range limit for that rod. Also the limit for this caster ! (Perhaps OK for the young well timed Rambo casters.)

Now, let's say I drop down to a 7 wt. line. I know that with that outfit, I can carry more line and still maintain tight loops say, about 65' to 70'. If I do carry 70', and can shoot another 50%, that means I can probably make a cast of about 105'. With that much line out of the rod tip I'm casting with the weight of a # 10 wt. line.

Joan Wulff pointed out in her book that Steve Rajeff chose a # 11 line for his 17 wt. tournament fly rod for the same reason. *

Second question: Some of the new lines are overweighted by 1/2. The heads are 35 to 38 feet. Is the rating for the line (gps and rio grand 5 wt are stated to be 5 1/2) within 30' or does the extra head length part of the calculation?

From Gordy.....

This has muddied the water quite a bit. However, a 10 wt. line is still judged by the grain wt. range of the 1st 30'. When it goes beyond that by 1/2, it really should be called a "10 1/2 wt." line... or a "10.5 wt." line. I don't know of any line manufacturer who actually does that, however except Rio. Putting it another way, that "10.5" grain wt. range is within the first 30' of line.

The length of the head has nothing to do with it for rating purposes.. It has a LOT to do with it if you are calculating the grain wt. of line carried when you cast with more than 30' of line out of the rod tip, because as you add each 5'-6' of line *beyond the head* you are into thinner line where it takes a lot more than 6' to raise the total grain wt. of that line out of your rod tip.

I have always liked Bruce Richards' proposed rating of fly lines the lighter ones rated at less than 30' and the heavier ones at more than 30'. * *

* **MODERN FLY LINES** by Bruce Richards, pp. 94-97

* * **Joan Wulff's FLY CASTING TECHNIQUES** by Joan Wulff, p. 110

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Pearl # 4 - Which Essential is the most important?

From Marc Fauvet.....

I've been rolling this question around in my head for a while and was wondering if i could get a few replies on this: We all know they ideally work as a group but among the Five Essentials which one (if any) would you consider the most important and why ?

Tim Lawson suggests.....

Maybe I have acquired the "Master's Disease" of always answering a question with a question, but I'd like to hear Marc Fauvet's idea of which Essential is most important and why before any other opinions are provided..

Marc Fauvet answers.....

Before starting I want to take a second to thank Tim for his suggestion of starting the replies myself. I also wanted to point out that this topic and my views about it is not intended for basic level teaching but as a way to think about this subject among us that are on an advanced level, both in casting form and its conception.

Short Answer- Slack and more precisely its control.

Long Answer-The more time goes by the more I'm convinced that we never truly eliminate slack. There's always some squiggle, wave, dip, you name it, going on. We can observe this with the naked eye and slo-mo video confirms it. The idea here is not to negate its existence but to put it to good use.

I can and will deviate from any and all the other Elements when performing fishing casts but nothing ever works successfully and consistently until the line is under control, even with slack ! To me, this element is the one that is the most difficult (for lack of a better word) to 'master' and is therefore the one i focus on the most in my personal research.

Since slack is there, let's use it, control it , design it and turn this enemy into a friend.

From Mike Heritage.....

If I was pushed I might consider applying the proper power at the proper time, although..... removal of slack might..... Go fishing Marc, Oh you can't - it's still dark in Sweden and all the water has gone hard.

From Rick Brown.....

I would like to take on Marc Fauvet's question.

I have been fly casting for many years. I was 100% self taught and I could do a pretty fair job of it. Until recently, I never heard of SLP, arc power, pause or slack. It was only when I decided to get better that I found that no amount of practice made a difference. Thanks to Al Crise, Keith Richard, Tom Jindra and others, I have acquired respectable skills.

So during any given cast I would be violating more than one essential. However, I could still make a cast good enough to get my fly in the water and to take some nice fish. But there is one essential which to me is inviolable. That is slack, which I prefer to think of as "lack of tension between the rod and line." If you start with too much slack you can't even pick up your line, if you loose tension during the cast your rod unloads prematurely.

The point is, you can virtually ignore some or any of the essentials and still make a cast, even though it will be a poor one, but until you can acquire and maintain tension between the tip and line you can't even begin a cast much less make one.

From Rene Hesse.....

To Mark Fauvet's question of which of the essentials is most important-

I feel all of the essentials are trying to support the most important one which is SLP of the rod tip.

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From Ckling Ling.....

Answer to Marc's question on which of the 5 essentials is most important. It was a toss up between smooth power application and straight line path of the rod tip (SLP).

I have to choose SLP as this essential is both the effect and cause of a good cast. **Effect** due to one executing all the other 4 essentials well. **Cause** because if you consciously cast the tip following a straight line path you would have to comply with the other 4 essentials especially power application and appropriate arc. It is possible to teach good loops by just asking someone to cast with SLP without knowing the other essentials.

From Jim Bass.....

Gordy - As you know I had a discussion on Ol' AL's Group on this subject and will tell you that the SLP is affected by the other four yet it (SLP) does not affect any of these. This is all about rod bend (a loaded rod) and what effects it has on the path of the line. You can cause the bend to fluctuate by having slack in the line, improper acceleration of the stroke, improper stroke length and improper pause timing. The SLP does not cause any of these but one by itself or all together will cause no SLP and thus create a fault.

Gordy weighs in.....

Here is how I look at it - I agree that all 5 essentials are important, especially if we are straight line casting with tight loops.

Let's look at each essential:

1. I can make many credible casts without a **straight line path of my rod tip**. One example is the controlled wide loop cast that I elect as I fish with a weighted fly.

I cannot make an efficient long distance cast with a tight (small) loop if I don't have an almost straight line path of my rod tip, especially near the end of my stroke.

2. If I have only a small amount of **slack**, I can make adjustments to my casting stroke and casting arc and still make a short to medium distance cast.

If the amount of slack increases, this becomes more difficult. With too much slack, I can't even make the cast.

3. I can get away with minor imperfections in the **amount of power applied and the timing of its application** for short and medium casts.

I can't make an efficient distance cast with those imperfections. If the application of power its timing is significantly at fault, even my short casts will be poor. Control, distance and accuracy will suffer. I'll have to work too hard.

4. I can make a very short and reasonably accurate cast even if I have precious little or no **pause between strokes**.

With no or too little pause between strokes, I can't make medium or distance casts. I may even snap off my fly on the delivery cast due to the "bull whip effect"

5. I can make short and medium casts even if my **stroke length and casting arc don't match the length of the line carried & the distance of the cast** exactly.

If there is a gross mis-match between my stroke length and casting arc - the layout will be a mess. I won't make my distance. I may get tailing loops or a very wide inefficient loop depending on whether my casting arc is too great or not sufficient for the amount of line carried and the casting distance.

Conclusions:

The relative importance of each essential is dependent upon :

- a. The degree to which the essential is violated.
- b. The casting distance.
- c. The objectives of the cast.

When the main objective of the cast is the achievement of distance and efficient use of energy, I'd lean toward SLP.) As Dennis Grant once said, "*IT DEPENDS.....*"

At the CI level, we don't get into the depth and detail of fly casting or the teaching of it that we do with MCI candidates. So much of the higher level of understanding includes the variables which I think are well represented by Dennis', "IT DEP[ENDS]". This, I think, speaks to the fact that almost all the factors involved in fly casting are dependent upon one another. I once wrote that they are "inextricably entwined" but I think, "VARIABLE" and "IT DEPENDS" say it better than the high octane words.

Pearl # 5 - Definitions

As we host our MCI exams, we sometimes get into questions involving terms and "definitions". Since we do not as yet have an officially approved FFF glossary, most examiners accept as answers, reasonable explanations which indicate the candidate knows how to relate them to casting and teaching.

From Dave Hutchinson.....

I really appreciate this last series on MCI prep. Particularly since I am going through that process at this time.

In my early work life, I was a Class A Professional Golfer (as designated by the PGA). I taught golf to numerous students and also struggled with terms and the definitions of various terms used in teaching.

The PGA also experienced what we now face in this area. As advances were made in equipment (golf clubs and golf balls) the problem became greater. However, when teaching beginners the terms used were very much universal. The real problems in this area became more acute with the advanced player.

It has become now popular for the Tour players such as Tiger Woods to employ personal teacher that constantly are observing their play and practice sessions. Many of these "SUPER TEACHERS" still do not agree on many of the technical terms that are used to describe the golf swings. It has been my experience while teaching beginning fly fishing students that they are not concerned with the exact meaning of the terms that we use, but just want to be able to get the fly to the fish. That is the very problem we have with fly casting terms. Definitions don't really matter when teaching new casters. They help a great deal at an advanced level as when instructors communicate with one another, as we mentor and coach MCI candidates, and as we examine at that level.

From Walter Simbirski..... Walter comes in as a Master with a scientific and mathematical background

I have a few comments about definitions. Why do we create definitions and who do we create them for?

Everyone needs to know and understand some level of definitions. For example, I teach all of my beginning fly fishing students about line weights, hook sizes, etc. I do this so that when they walk in to a fly shop to buy a dry fly rod for mountain streams they don't end up with a 10 wt rod with matching 7 wt fast sinking line and a box full of streamers and midges in size 2 or larger. I don't teach beginners terms like *rsp*, *slp*, launch point, etc. because they are already on information overload by the time the terms would be useful. But I may use terms like "smooth application of power", even though in the back of my mind I will be thinking that "smooth" has no specific meaning and "power" is the wrong word, because most people have an idea of what "smooth applica-

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tion of power” means or they quickly understand when they try it. Similarly the idea of loop size being controlled by the length of your “speed up and stop” is confusing as heck if we over analyze it but it conveys an idea to most people. All well and good but what about when we try to convey an idea to a casting instructor who lives on the other side of the globe via email. “Smooth application of power” is going to generate (or it should) more questions than answers. “Constant torque” provides a wealth of information in just two words because of the correctness and preciseness of the words being used and because most of the people in your discussion group have spent time discussing these terms and understand them.

Most of the stuff we are struggling with has little to do with beginner students. We want them to have fun so they will enjoy the sport. The technical definitions are for us - not the students.

Another comment is that we often try to use technical terms from other fields (physics, engineering, medicine, etc.) because they seem to make sense but this can lead to confusion. A case in point is the word “load” - in engineering terms “load” is the amount of force exerted on a body. I don’t know how “load” got into the fly casting instructor lexicon but my guess is that somebody (most likely an engineer) realized that the amount of bend in the rod is a direct measure of the “load” on the rod so it was logical to think of load and bend as being synonymous. As instructors we like to know that, all other things being equal, the greater the bend in the rod the longer the cast and -what are the things that bend the rod?

As the skill levels of our students increase we find ways of introducing these ideas to our students but we will communicate them in ways that make sense to our students. So the introduction of the term “load” has been beneficial to our sport but since we don’t have a formal definition it can lead to confusion. We’ve probably all been presented with the scenario of holding a rod horizontally by the handle such that gravity bends the rod and then been asked if the rod is loaded. If our definition is that load is a measure of the bend in the rod then by definition any time a rod is bent it is loaded. But if we lack a formal definition we open the door for the question, “Is it possible to bend the rod without loading it?” This is a bit of a pet peeve for me because it is a time waster and also it allows words in our lexicon to be used as weapons (i.e. how can I confound this CI candidate?) rather than as tools.

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We welcome your submissions via e-mail. 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 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.

CONGRATULATIONS

New Casting Instructors

Paul Bourcq – Arlington, VA
Barry Heller – Myrtle Beach, SC
Marlene Huston – Chatfield, MN
Mike Flint – McLean, VA
Ford Schwing – Houston, TX
David Mays – Chattanooga, TN
Todd Kaplan – Ketchum, ID

Lewis Hunt – Boise, ID
Bobby Foster – Ketchum, ID
Jason Buck – Ketchum, ID
Victor Gonzalez-Carrion - Spain
Gavin Davis – Australia
Holger Herold – Germany
Jerry Siem – Quilcene, WA
Charles (Chas) Elliott – Alfred Station, NY

Upcoming Events for 2011

West Yellowstone, MT	Instructor	Aug. 31
National Fly Fishing Fair & Conclave	Master	Sept. 1
	Two-Handed -	by arrangement

You must sign up through the Conclave pre-registration link below to sign up for this location:

<http://www.federationconclave.org/>

Sweden 2011	Sept. 2-4, 2011	Instructor	International Testing Event.
Piteå, Sweden		Master	
Fredrik Hedman		Two-Handed	

Mountain Home, AR	Oct. 5-8, 2011	Instructor (FULL)	For more information contact
SOC Conclave		Master (1)	Chuck Easterling

For more information on the conclave
<http://www.southerncouncilfff.org/conclave/conclave.php>

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

A Pocket Tool

From Tony Wee in Malaysia.....

At the international testing event in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - Tony Wee showed us this handy dandy pocket tool. Most of us were jumping up and down because it was such a neat, tidy tool. I couldn't wait to get my camera out to take pictures. The hardest part was getting them to put it down as everyone wanted to try it out.

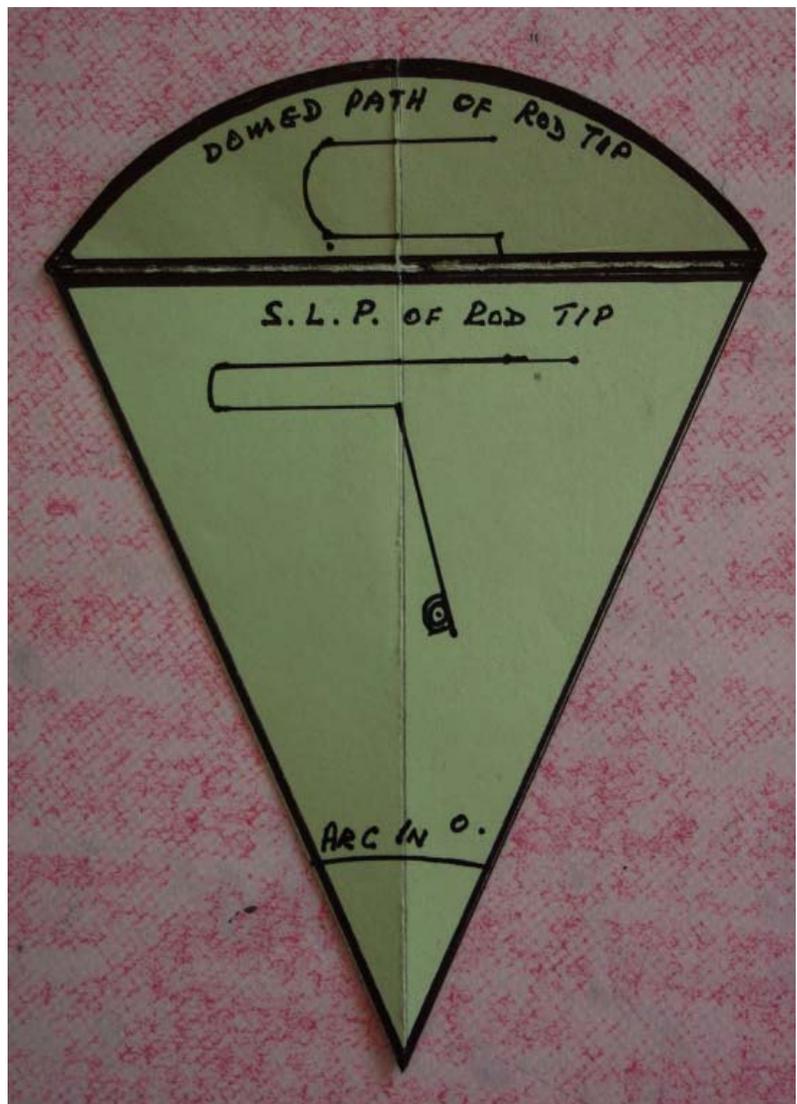
It doesn't originate with Tony and he was the first to say that. I believe Peter Hayes said it came from Michael Duzinski (?). Wherever it originated, thank you.

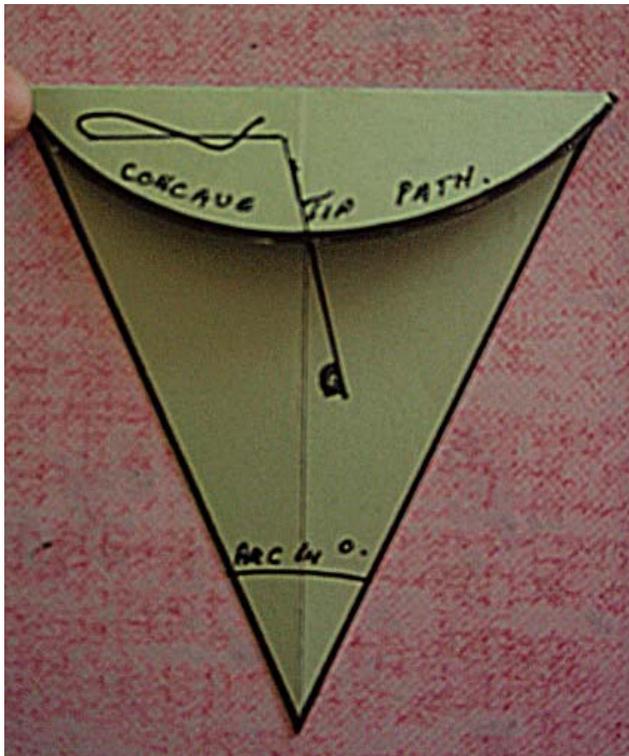
If you look closely, it resembles the shape of a coffee filter - you know - the cone shaped ones. Note the folds in the tool and then turn the page.

If you follow the domed path at the top, you get a wide or domed loop. The path of the rod tip as well as the wide loop is shown in the diagram.

If you follow the straight line - it represents the straight line path (SLP) of the rod tip which gives you a narrow loop. The diagram of the rod below shows a good loop.

At the bottom of the 'v' - you will see the rod arc which can be measured in degrees.





Straight line path of the rod tip at the top of the tool.
Concave tip path when you fold down the top and the result is a tailing loop.



Fold the tool in half lengthwise and you get a reduced rod arc which can lead to??

Thanks again for showing this to us. A great example of members sharing.

Monday, August 29th, 2011

This is the Monday before the CBOG meeting in West Yellowstone, MT. In past years it has been used for workshops such as THCI, MCI test reviews of new tests and this year we have not one - but two workshops going on. Here are the details:

1. **MCI Examiner's workshop** - Joe Libeu & Dusty Sprague (co-chairs of the MCI test committee).
 Located at City Park in West.
 Starts at 8:30 AM and finishes at noon.
 Open to all certified casting instructors.
2. **CI Examiner's Workshop** - Denise Maxwell, Dave Barron & Jeff Wagner.
 Located at City Park in West.
 Starts at 1:30 and ends at 4 PM
 This is a CI test with MCIs and BOGs scoring the test, followed by a discussion of the scoring.
 Open to MCIs and CBOGs.
 You need to e-mail Dave Barron at: dbarron=wicw.net@mail2.us1.mcsv.net so we will have enough copies of the new CI test.
3. **Informal casting get together** - open to all certified instructors. Come meet everyone and have some fun, bring your rod and join the casting games.

From The Editor

It seems that time is flying by way too fast right now. The conclave is approaching really fast and I don't think I am ready yet. Not only do I have to get ready for the conclave trip - but when I return I get to leave right away for my guiding. Another 14 hour trip!

Got to get out the camping gear - got some new tent poles. Pack the warm sleeping bag and the fleece clothing because who knows what the weather will be like?

Unfortunately I won't be able to stay for the whole week -just the BOG meeting and the President's dinner and then I have to leave! So I intend to enjoy the time I have there.

This issue came together after a certain amount of angst on my part. I committed to having this issue out before the Conclave and here it is.

When I started - I didn't have much to work with in the way of articles. I spent about a week working through my options - checking the folder with articles - no luck. Then sent out a few e-mails and articles started coming in.

I hope you enjoy this issue! The article on Catch & Release is one that grabbed my attention. Being a guide, all of our steelhead are released. Many times however we see anglers who don't know how to, or believe they should get the fish in quickly and then spend a lot of time taking photos. Sometimes the fish doesn't recover.

Part of our teaching should be how to land a fish quickly and how to release the fish with the least amount of stress. I hope you teach this and if not, please incorporate the technique into your teaching.



Cool steelhead flies

I am looking forward to the trip. Along the way I visit my family in Calgary and then head down to Montana. Amazing how many years I have been making the trip and the places along the way are like old friends.

I will spend a day or two in Livingston visiting and then head down to Idaho Falls for a couple of days and then up to West Yellowstone. No fishing this trip though!

Hopefully the weather in West Yellowstone will be a bit of summer. Amazing that summer is still over and I am still waiting for some warm weather. It has been grey skies, clouds, rain, coolish weather and maybe a bit of sun once in a while.

I'll have lots to share after the conclave. If you aren't coming, we will miss you. Part of the trip is catching up with friends and spending some time enjoying ourselves doing what we do - cast and talk about casting and fishing. Sounds great!

***Talk to you soon.
Denise***