

THE LOOP

*The Federation of Fly Fishers Journal for Certified Casting Instructors
Fall 2006*

Preparing for “The Masters Odyssey”

By Jim Valle, MCI

The Masters isn't easy and it's never going to be!

There's a lot of information out there that simply must be included. It's not infinite or insurmountable. It is all listed on the website---admittedly a lot to know. However, the fact is it isn't simply about memorizing, having read this or that, or even making perfect casts. Overall subject knowledge and the ability to explain and demonstrate whatever a student might ask must be included. However,

The Masters is more about Experience, True Understanding and the ability to Teach Students, Teach other Instructors and absolutely the responsibility to Test and Certify New Instructors. (Don't take this last one lightly.) **The Masters is more.**

So, how do you prepare, and ... When are you ready?

First, understand the Federation and its members. The Federation, like any business or organization has a culture, our common language and our values. It's not completely cast in stone, it's evolving. Recognize you must understand the culture in order to actively participate as a member.

Next, understand the Federation membership, our Certified Instructors, Masters and our volunteer Casting Board of Governors. These are men and women who have contributed more than knowledge or ability. They invest their heart and soul into the program because this is what they love. They trust Our Standard of Excellence will measure up to each and every one of their individual expectations. If you want to fly with the Eagles ...

*“Fly Fishing isn't Life or Death.
It's more important than that!”
Anonymous.*

With that in mind let's turn the tables and ask a few self-examination questions and find the answer to our How and When.

Why are you seeking a Masters Certification?

Want to be mediocre? I don't think so. The point of becoming a Certified Master is to Excel! That kind of sets the bar doesn't it? No one knows everything, and “It's a wise man that knows what he doesn't know” but having the overall Life, Fly Fishing/Casting Experience and Knowledge to demonstrate or reason to an answer for a student is expected from a Master. Again, it's Understanding that answers the questions.

What kind of a Master are you going to be?

When you reach your goal, what are you going to expect from a candidate? What will be your standards?

If you are already in the process you are well aware of the amount of hard work involved. Think you are going to lower the standard after your success and on the other hand, think you will make it tougher for someone else? In either case, I don't think so. It is a matter of respecting the achievement itself, maintaining the standard and mutual respect for others that have earned it. And it is definitely ... Earned!

(continued on page 2)

How experienced or confident would you expect a Masters Candidate to be?

More importantly, what will students expect from a Federation Master?

If you have the real teaching experience it will show. Simply, Been there . . .done that, or Not!

There is no substitute for hands-on experience in teaching. Confidence comes from teaching experience...and confidence is required.

“Don’t take the exam when you think you are ready.....take it when you **KNOW** you are ready!” . . . Confidence!

How much FFF instruction have you been exposed to?

Have you experienced a Conclave? Taken any Conclave courses? Have you observed or participated in a class taught by a CBOG or Master?

The Masters is a journey. It is not about just you. The journey is really an Odyssey of meeting, experiencing and understanding as many of the very special people and talents we have within the flyfishing world. The opportunity to continue to learn from the best is the “golden fleece”.

The Masters isn’t meant to be done alone, as a matter of fact *it can’t be done alone!* You learn to think and look at things from many points of view. Your quest should be to acquire a fully rounded view of what is known as a basis for your own thinking in the future. My own experience involved 14 Masters and Governors and countless authors, teachers, physicists etc. that now are entwined in my teaching DNA. I can also verify that during the oral and the casting performance their thoughts, teachings and spirit are right there with you.

Have you scheduled a Masters pre-test with a CBOG or Master?

Don’t Waste Your Time and that of the Examiners if you haven’t pre-tested or spent some critique time with a qualified caster who has been down this road! I am not saying it can’t be done, but speaking from experience they will point out such small but absolutely important things as . . . on the off shoulder cast move your off shoulder foot back to get a longer stroke length . . . Duh. . . . but this kind of thing makes all the difference!

Belong to a Masters Prep group?

Join one! Learn and Share.

Have you practiced?

It is impossible to be unfamiliar with the performance test parameters, distances and the requirements, even the sequence, if you have taken the test seriously enough to practice sufficiently. Practice . . . making it bigger or smaller, get creative, learn something! You will be pleased! Your practice becomes your physics lab!

Have you invented a new cast yet?

If you are not inventing or thinking outside the box you aren’t there yet. Play around with your newfound knowledge. Test what you read. Take it for a test drive! (To be honest I had invented a few and then I would read another article or book and wouldn’t you know, but I was experimenting and learning!) *Learn the True Potential of the Fly Rod!*

Do you have a specialty?

You will when you are ready. Some small part of all this will just fascinate you. Curves, Change of Direction, Loop Shapes, Slow Casts, Teaching, teaching Props and Toys, Handicap Teaching, Diagnosing, Physics, I can put a Master’s name with each of these.

Recommended Reading and Video

It is there in black and white on the web site. Do as much as you can. Take the time to digest and compare the material. Think it through. Understanding is still the point. You don’t have to know it all, but you must understand what you know!

Are you getting the idea? A Master immerses him/her self in the subject and is driven to Understanding!

No more questions just a few helpful hints that worked for me maybe they will help you.

(continued on page 3)

Write the answers to every sample question in the Master Study Guide in two forms. (Do the same with questions you and your study partner share.)

- a. Brief answer
- b. More detailed answer

Get organized, for answers with lists.

A logical check list can really help. Have some kind of logic that makes sense to you. When it came to Change of Direction, for example, I took a student's perspective and then added the casts in the order I teach them, but use whatever works for you.

About the Examiners, What's on their minds?

I can tell you without any reservation every examiner takes this testing responsibility very seriously. This responsibility is from both sides... genuine concern for and fairness to the Candidate AND the Federation. Just as each of us likes to just be around fly fishing people, every examiner wants to be around others that strive for the very same achievement she or he has reached.

None are going to drop the ball out of respect for all those that have attained this level previously nor are they expecting more than they themselves have given. Understand their responsibility, it will be yours soon enough.

Each examiner looks at the candidate and thinks Does this candidate possess the Understanding to:

- a) Teach Students,
- b) Teach Instructors,
- c) Examine and Certify New Instructors?

I can also tell you how tough it is for an examiner to fail a candidate, and how thrilled they are when you pass. I had a long line of really happy examiners offering congratulations within minutes. A truly emotional experience! They made me better than I ever thought I could be!

In Closing

If it was easy it wouldn't be a Masters! Some things in life are really worth the effort! And the best part, as one CBOG recently wrote me, "It's the most fasci-

nating aspect of this entire organization: with continued interest and investment, the opportunities to learn are everywhere available."

The fact is, I am still learning and these insights come from all the Governors, Masters, CCI'S and past students who ever made me think.

Getting it right and being the best is for all the students yet to come. I learn every time we get together and pass on the traditions. Doing this teaching, casting, examining, fishing or even just standing in a beautiful stream and doing it extremely well is for some reason really important.

To increase the overall preparedness and insight ... "Understanding" of our candidates I urge every candidate to seek out a "Sponsor" or "Mentor."

I encourage Masters to seek this opportunity. This "Mentoring" has nothing to do with passing a simple milestone but rather molding a "Master" by passing on the FFF traditions and culture.

To guide and challenge a candidate's thinking, casting and teaching while supporting the candidate's growth process with encouragement.

I believe just as many corporations do, each new member needs to feel welcome, supported and comfortable to be productive. Everyone needs someone to turn to when faced with a new situation, a trusted friend. Just as a family passes its traditions we also must support the growth of our family. This is about who we are as a Federation and who we are going to be as we expand internationally. It's time to bring the process full circle.

The Conclave

The Conclave is the perfect place to learn and pass down traditions. I highly recommend taking the exam at the Conclave, there is nothing like the fraternity that exists during those few special days. And there is so much to learn, just by being there!

Jim Valle is a Master Casting Instructor from Wall, New Jersey.

Distance Casting: Not just for show!

By Jeff Wagner

Distance casting has proven to be a measure of flycasting stature. Books, articles, pamphlets and web-sites have been created to help anglers increase their long line. Tournaments such as the Best of the West at the International Sportsmen's Expositions have been centered on casting distance. Even some of the recent fly fishing tournaments have had casting qualifiers and always a component of distance casting.

So why is distance casting so often touted, is it simply for the crowd appeal, watching someone throw an entire line and some backing, doing what seems to be the impossible? Is there merit to being able to cast the long line? Steve and Tim Rajeff have mastered casting distance, both in conventional form and in ACA form. They have also been extremely successful at casting accuracy. Winning countless casting competitions and becoming the prominent flycasters in history. Steve and Tim won the Western regional qualifier of the Outdoor Life Network Fly Fishing Masters (2003) and went on to win the entire tournament. Proving that great flycasters can also be great fly fisherman. Their casting in competition does relate to fishing on the stream, making them more successful fly fisherman.

Are there technical merits to casting the long line? If one can cast 115' of line, will that really help someone in a real fishing situation? Many people I have heard in fly fishing and flycasting circles say no. That casting distance is only for show, making statements like "you'll never catch a fish at that distance" and "does that really do you any good?"

Remember "flycasting is the essence of fly fishing" (Krieger).

Let me say to start with that I have never seen someone cast the long line that couldn't also control the short line, or cast well in a variety of other situations applicable to fly fishing. So what are the benefits of practicing distance casting? Let's break down the cast and look at how practicing the distance cast can help your casting in real fishing situations

Double haul and the single haul are used extensively and are a primary component to distance casting. The haul increases line speed directly by pulling

on the line and also indirectly by increasing the load in the rod.

When distance casting; the timing, length, and speed of the hauls must be almost perfect to accomplish a long distance cast. By working on the double haul in the distance cast one becomes more familiar with this technique and comfortable using it when fishing or applying it to many situations. Hauling can be used to pick line up off the water, increase line speed, and perform other casts.

Casts such as curve casts can be accentuated by using a properly timed haul. The haul increases the line speed on the final forward motion of an over powered curve cast and increases the load in the rod, accentuating the final curve of the fly line and leader with greater power.

Hauling increases line speed, which also helps combat wind and make quicker casts. Making tight loops can be aided by hauling and tighter loops are more efficient making wind casting much easier.

Shooting line into the fore and backcast is a necessity when distance casting. The timing and length of the shoot can be tuned to almost perfection by distance casting. The ability to shoot a certain amount of line into the backcast takes practice. This practice can be put to good use when fishing in adverse conditions.

Wind casting can be aided by being able to shoot line. In windy conditions it is often not possible to carry large amounts of line in the air; even shorter lengths of line that can often be carried in less windy conditions can become extremely difficult to control.

By being able to shoot line in the forecast one can maximize fishing with a tail wind. Also, by shooting line into the backcast it is possible to load the rod properly for a strong cast into the wind where a head wind may affect a forward shoot.

Keep in mind shooting line is a good technique in countless situations including dry fly fishing, fishing in areas with little backcast room and when fishing with a strong wind into the casting arm where it may only be possible to make your backcast your presentation cast.

An often unrelated benefit to distance casting is

accuracy. A good accuracy cast comes from having the ability to make tight parallel loops and a straight line path of the rod tip. Remember this principal; the fly line will only follow the path of the rod tip. Meaning, if the rod tip moves to the right or left of the desired path in line with the desired target on the final presentation cast the fly line will also move to the right or left, the fly missing the target.

Distance casting is also accuracy casting. The same requirements of accuracy casting are also true of distance casting. When false casting 60 feet of line, if a caster does not have a straight line path of the rod tip or parallel loops the line will not lay out straight. The ability to hold that line in the air will deteriorate because of the inefficient loops created by the movements of the hand and consequently the rod tip.

Keep in mind slight nuances present in the cast at short distances may be hindering your accuracy. These imperfections in the cast will be compounded when casting distance and carrying more line. Often by working out more line little problems will become evident. By working on distance and accuracy soon you will have the ability to hit a 30 inch target at 55 feet 9 out of 10 times in a variety of conditions.

Another benefit would be trajectory change. When false casting large amounts of line the amount of time it takes for the loop to unroll often allows the fly line to drop towards the ground. If the next cast were made without trajectory change the next loop may be too low and come in contact with the ground or water. Controlling the amount of line in the air and at times compensating for the drop of the line in the back or fore cast means a greater ability to make those changes when on the stream.

Such changes can be a necessity when casting into a head wind by aiming the forward cast down and the back cast up or the opposite, making a low back cast and high forward cast when casting with a tail wind. Also, specialty casts like steeple casts, parachute casts, pile casts and the like require a change in trajectory.

All combined the final result of practicing the distance cast is control. The ability to manipulate the rod and consequently the fly line in various ways to present the fly to the fish in a variety of possibly fishing conditions is the key to catching more fish. As most any fly fishing instructor or guide has stated, "if you can not

get the fly to the fish, you will not catch any fish". All of the following points are about practice. Most flycasters today are familiar with such terms as SLP (straight line path) of the rod tip, RSP (Rod Stopping Point), power application, speed, stroke length, stop, and rod control. All of these terms are components of a well-performed distance cast. The ability to execute them properly is the key.

To take it to the next level, being able to use them efficiently is also essential. Practicing distance casting means working on various aspects of the cast and the components that make up the cast.

Each of these individual components could have an entire article written about them, too much for this article so we will only cover a few that are most pertinent to distance casting.

To make a point let me make an analogy. If a person can hold 60 feet of line in the air and can shoot out to 90 feet with a 5 weight rod - the power, speed, and timing in that cast may be used when fishing and not necessarily in a way that is evident.

If the same caster were casting into a 15 MPH head wind with a 5 weight rod and trying to present a dry fly to a fish rising at 35 feet that fisherman would have a much easier time casting in these conditions than someone that has not practiced such casting.

To make a parallel: if a fisherman can cast 100 feet of line - the power, speed and timing it takes to cast that 100 feet would be approximately the same as a fisherman working to cast 50 feet into a 20 MPH head wind

All of the following points are about practice.

#1. Falsecast using continuously less power.

Many casters use too much power when casting. Begin casting a comfortable amount of line and then progressively use less power until the cast almost fails. This helps many casters realize that it takes very little power to keep even large amounts of line in the air. When confronted with a longer cast or windy conditions, many fisherman begin overpowering the rod, instead of using the rod. The way to make the fly and the fly line deliver to the target is by loading the rod and then unloading the rod. This means that in windy conditions or long casts, more power may be needed but often a more positive stop is also required. Then add a little longer casting

(continued on page 6)

stroke. Do not get mad, get even. Learn to make that cast effortlessly.

#2. *False cast the most line possible without failure with hauling.* Increase the amount of line being false cast foot by foot until the loops disfigure to the point that the cast can no longer be maintained. When that point of failure is found, decrease the amount of line being false cast by several feet then false cast again.

Continue this process until you find your maximum falsecasting distance. The distance where adding one more foot of line would cause the cast to fail. Mark this point on your fly line. Practice casting this amount of line. Working on loop control, having loops that are parallel and keeping the line from ticking the ground. This exercise will increase your stamina and your efficiency making it easier to cast into a wind, shoot line, and cast larger flies and even cast more distance.

#3. *Increase casting and hauling speed continuously to max speed then false cast very slowly.* One of the best ways to beat the wind, cast more distance, or get the fly to the fish faster is to increase your false casting speed. To do this, simply continue to increase the amount of speed in the haul and the casting hand speed while maintaining proper loop shape. Line speed is a pivotal part of any casting, but may be more important for distance, wind, off vertical casting and quick casts. In these situations the fisherman must make the next cast before the line has time to touch the water or before the fish move out of range. The best way to do this is with increased line speed and increased casting cadence.

#4. *False cast the most amount of line possible without hauling.* After learning to double haul many casters forget about casting without the haul.

The casting hand is the foundation for the cast. Build on this and you strengthen your casting stroke. Start by casting a short amount of line then slip the line through your hand while holding the grip (not incorporating the line control hand) increasing your casting distance after every two to three false casts, trying to maintain good loops and control. When fisherman start casting they rely 100% on the casting arm. Then

they learn to double haul at first the relationship is 75/25 casting hand to hauling hand. When the fisherman becomes more comfortable with the haul the relationship becomes 50/50. After a short time many casters begin to rely on the haul more making the relationship 75/25. In some situations it is certainly understandable to increase the hauling power without increasing the casting hand power. Hand casting (without the use of a rod) is an example of casting almost 100% with the haul. Almost any percentage relationship is possible, but may not be the most efficient. The key when casting in adverse conditions or for distance is to find a relationship between the two that is most comfortable, usually that would be close to a 50/50 use of each.

#5. *False cast using a wide casting stroke and narrowing the stroke progressively.* Often many casters use a casting stroke that is wider than what is needed, which is fine. The wider the casting stroke the easier the cast, however, every person has a max casting stroke that they feel comfortable with. When going for more distance and power it is necessary to get the most amount of power out of the shortest casting stroke possible. Start with your normal casting stroke and try decreasing the length of the casting stroke being used until the loop shape begins to deteriorate. In a short time many casters find this very refreshing. They are able to make a 20 foot fishing cast with very short casting stroke. This exercise is great for learning to load the rod with a progressive speed up to a positive stop.

#6. *Start false casting 20 feet of line and shoot as much as possible without slack in the line, then add five feet at a time, each time repeating the shoot with as little slack as possible.* Shooting line is a necessity in many presentation casts.

Reach casts, aerial mends, pile casts, straight line casts, casting distance, roll casts and wind casts can all be manipulated and can become more effective by being able to shoot line.

This exercise will greatly help when casting streamers from a drift boat to a stream bank or casting in lakes from a float tube.

Shooting line is also a must when fishing from the bow of a boat, casting to bonefish or other species

(continued on page 8)

Two Handed Fly Casting

Spey Casting Techniques

by Al Buhr

BOOK
REVIEW



If you are looking for a “*Three Easy Steps to Spey Casting*” book, this is not it. Al Buhr has managed to create a book of significant depth that covers the needs of the thinking man, from beginner to expert.

This is a book about using two-handed rods to fish. It is not a book that is all pure theory, but a book that will transition you from historical background (there are descriptions of casts developed in the 1600’s) to modern casts that are as new as 16 years. *This book is designed to get you onto the river and get you fishing in some of the toughest spots you could imagine.*



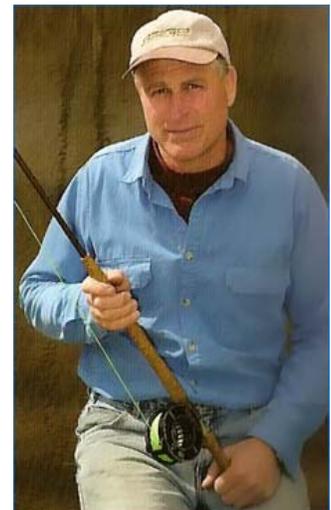
Al’s unique approach to teaching is reflected in his book. Ordinary men begin their lessons at the start of the cast, or the pick-up, and progress through the cast to the “stop” and forward cast. Al starts you at the

end of the cast, the stop. From there he details all of the elements of a good two-handed cast. Particular attention is given on how to do those elements correctly and why those elements are important. There are also discussions on common errors that beginners make and faults that may begin to appear in even the most experienced caster’s delivery. All the two-handed casts are described. The novice may already know the names of many of them, and there will be some of those casts, which even seasoned casters may never have heard of. The Circle cast, Perry Poke, Chip cast, Torque twist and other specialty casts are not only concisely described but also beautifully illustrated and photographed.

If you are a two-handed casting student or practitioner you will appreciate the well-organized fault diagnostic tables at the back of this

book. The problems or fault symptoms are worded in every day language so that the reader can track down what is going wrong with his cast. From the description of the symptoms, you can simply look up the fault correction.

This book will be found in any serious casting student’s library. It is both a student’s handbook and a professional’s resource manual. Al has created a valuable piece of two-handed casting literature that will become a “need to have” resource for generations to come.



Author - Al Buhr

Published by Frank Amato Books
(503) 653-8108.

Book Review by Dan McCrimmon, member of the CBOG from Vancouver, B.C.

that cruise the flats. Often the fisherman will be required to have fly in hand and with as few false casts as possible present the fly to the fish. Having the ability to shoot line in the fore and backcast will allow the fisherman to present the fly in 2-3 false casts at 30-70 feet with ease. line and start over after the shoot. This will also help when your back cast needs to be your delivery cast.

#7. *Another exercise at any distance is loop control.* In this exercise hula hoops, the 3 foot diameter size, are placed on an upright pole.

In a park this pole could be a light pole, a small tree, or a stake that you provide. The hoop is placed on the pole at various heights and the caster throws a loop through the hoop. This should be done without the loop touching the sides of the hoop.

It sounds simple, but, it can make one realize how large and inefficient of loops they are casting. The loops are the foundation of all casts.

Wide inefficient loops or crossed tailing loops unquestionably hinder the cast.

Tight loops that are parallel and from 1-3 foot in height are most efficient. Tight loops allow for greater line speed, better fly turnover, greater distance, less wind resistance, and better rod load.

#8. *Change of Trajectory.* When carrying large amounts of line it is necessary to change trajectory. For example if a caster were holding 70 feet of line in the air with moderate line speed by the time the loop unrolled it would have dropped from its original expected elevation from the trajectory of the cast.

To maintain the 180 degree rule it would then be necessary to make a higher backcast and to allow for line drop on the next forward cast. To practice this, use an amount of line that is comfortable and easy to handle and adjust the trajectory from the loop touching the ground on the forward cast to the loop touching the ground on the backcast.

#9. *Accuracy.* Accuracy is a huge part of distance casting. We know that a small change in direction at the caster means a large change of direction at the end of a long cast, being able to cast accurately means being able to control the line. Place

a 4 foot section of PVC pipe at your maximum casting distance (this may be 40' to 100' and may differ with conditions), work on lining the pole with every cast. Casting distance does not mean competing or throwing 120 feet of line.

It may mean casting 40, 60, or 80 feet of line. The point is the practice and the pursuit of increasing your distance cast has definite merits that can be seen in your fishing situation.

Keep these techniques in mind next time you are fighting a nasty tail wind, casting to fish eager to take a fly.

NOTE: Added to this should be other exercises:

- * *Making Backcast into a tail wind.*
- * *Hard Stop*

And Possibly most importantly would be:

- * *Making backcasts with a perfect loop, parallel and straight.*

Find the distance at which the loop begins to deteriorate, work on this distance.

Increase line speed, decrease line speed, learn to manipulate this line like it was 30 feet.

Then add 2-3 more feet and do the same. The amount of line you can false cast may not be the most efficient amount of line to false cast.

Jeff Wagner is a Master Casting Instructor from Fort Collins, Colorado

For Your Information.....

- 1. There is now a new search tool on the FFF Web Site. You can search for Casting Certification Instructors by name and state.*
- 2. There is also a new members only section. You need your FFF membership number to enter and then change the password.*

Check it out at:

www.fedflyfishers.org

CASTING AND TACKLE

More Fishing, Less Fussing

It is with some misgiving that the subject of casting is approached. It has been covered in most of its detail by accomplished writers. My best excuse is that I seldom meet a caster on the stream who is taking full advantage of the benefits derived from laying fly, leader and line on the water with proper relation to the water currents and fish's position. It is not possible to do these things unless plain, simple straight line casting can first be done perfectly. Any one who, as a boy, has thrown corn cobs, green apples or grozen spuds from a sharpened switch may follow this comparison.

Suppose we have a slender switch, rather flexible throughout its length, and another, rather thicker at its heavier end, but tapering rather quickly so that it feels stiffer than the first. Perhaps they are the same length and weight. If you put a very small apple on the slender one you may be able to throw it at any chosen angle, but if you put on an average sized apple, the switch can not convey enough power through its length to throw the apple directly at a chosen point, and the best you can do is to swing or toss the apple in a general direction, and will have to describe a very large arc with the end of the switch. Suppose you wish to throw the apple backwards, over your shoulder, having it just clear the top of a building or low tree, 12 to 16 or 20 feet high. You may have to start your *swing* very near the ground and heave the apple in the general direction of the tree top.

Compare the wobbly switch with one of the weepy, willowy rods which many own and because of the name on them, consider them as being the ultimate. Compare the apples to the fly line. The very tiny apple, which could be thrown from the limber switch, may be curved around and carried out of its course by a breeze. The larger one overburdens the switch to the extent that a direct throw with any degree of accuracy is impossible.

The very light lines do not permit of sufficient accuracy and, while with an ultra light rod they may at times be used with much pleasure, you will have to choose favorable conditions. A downstream breeze will upset your cast unless the line is of sufficient weight and enough drive is behind it to defeat the wind.

Now take the stiffer switch and throw an average sized apple at a target 4 or 5 feet off the ground and 30 feet away. If you concentrate on smacking the target, you won't hold the stick pointing at the ground behind you and over your shoulder but very close to the angle shown in 'B', Fig.2. Nor will you gently and caressingly swing the switch forward nor start the stroke or throw (or cast) with a jerk. You will get switch and its projectile under way without jerking the apple off, then snap it at the target, ending the snap at an angle which causes the apple to leave the point of the switch, headed straight for the target.

Now, look over your right shoulder and throw the apple at an imaginary target, 16 feet up, and 30 feet distant. The same angles and the same application of energy, force, speed, snap or what you have ARE REQUIRED. How some folks can go through ten or twenty years of fly fishing, and consistently continue to swing a fly rod clear back to a horizontal line (or below) behind them, is way above and beyond me. I have had many stubbornly continue to do it while being pleaded with not to and after holding their hand while going through the proper motions, deliberately wallop the ground with the rod tip or line, instantly on having their hand free.

It is such casters as these who think a 16 hook should turn over boulders and a 4X leader should trim streamside trees, or that a rod tip 3/64 of an inch thick should be replaced because it broke when pointing in the reverse direction to the rest of the rod.

If the target you are throwing at is moved farther away, you would naturally end the snap of the switch at a higher angle, in order to throw the apple higher and farther. Suppose we attempt, without too much 'mechanical man' simulations, to throw an apple at a target and, after the throw is made, hold the stick at the same angle at which the apple flew off until it reaches the target. Now, supposing someone has stuck on the another apple for you, throw it at the target up and behind you, *holding* this position until the apple has hit its mark. Apply the same *slow start* and *sudden, snappy* finish repeatedly, holding the pose between throws until the apple hits its mark. (The one behind which would throw it into coils and loops in an

(continued on page 10)

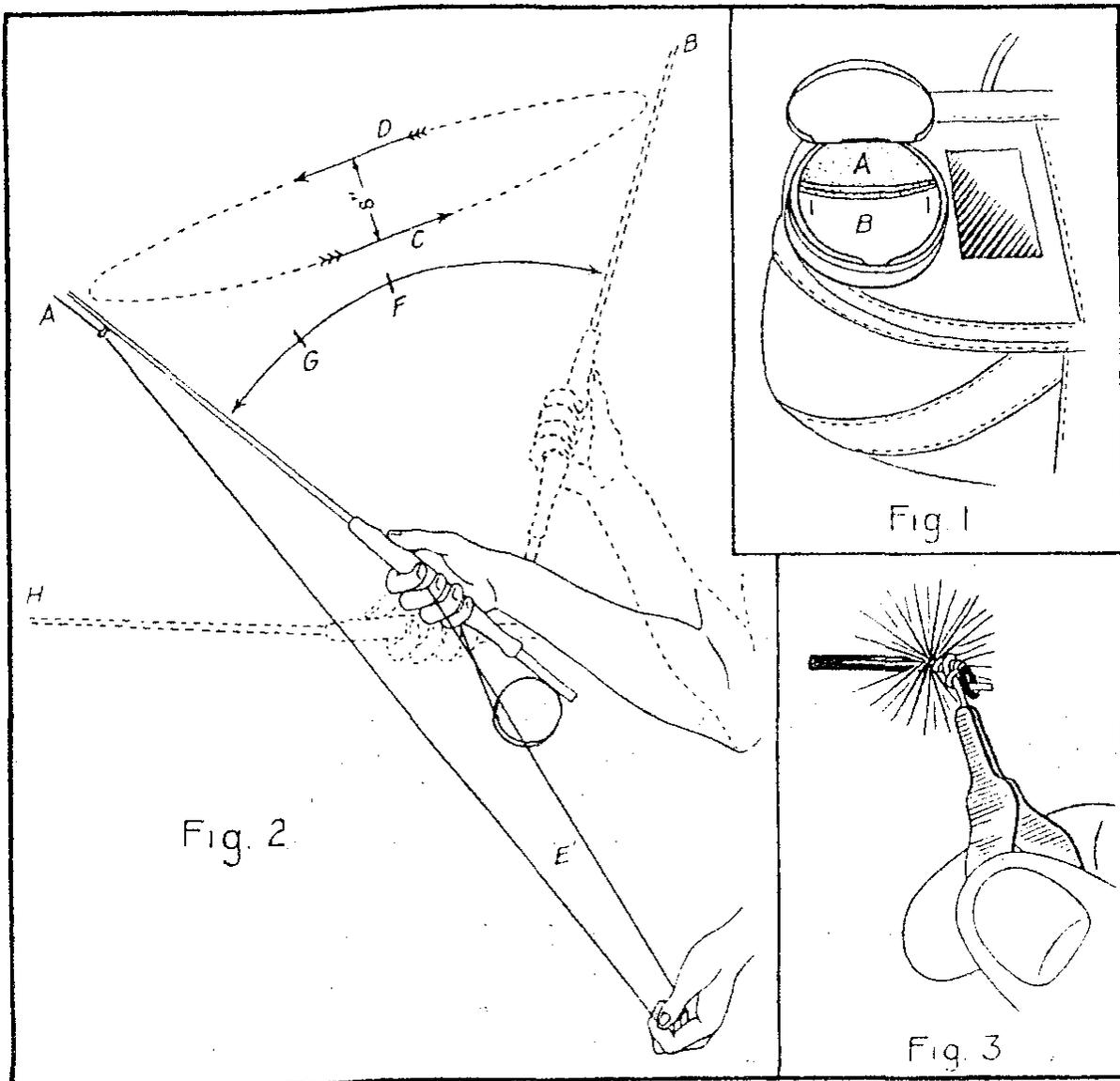


Plate XI

incompleted cast and up scores higher than the one in front.) The slow start (of throw or cast) is to avoid jerking the apple off and to avoid transmitting sudden impetus to the fly line

The *sudden, snappy* finish is to send the apple (and line) directly at and to the target.

This is to be the 'false' casting. With one added movement, that of forming an ellipse with the rod's tip as it goes back and forth, (see 'C' and 'D,' Fig. 2,

with arrows indicating directions) you must learn to walk around as long as you like, keeping 30 or more feet of line and leader in the air, with leader and fly never coming closer than 4 or 5 feet to the ground before you, and not less than 12 or 14 feet from the ground behind you.

After this becomes easy and timing of forward and back casts with various lengths of line is done automatically, then lower the casting hand to 45 degrees

from you to the right and keep exactly the same motions going. Finally lower the hand to right angles to your body (horizontal) and keep the line going, always bearing in mind the same arc described by the rod (from 'A' to 'B' and back to 'A') - also forming the ellipse 'C' and 'D' with the rod's tip no matter whether the rod is perpendicular, horizontal or half-way between.

Now cast your 30 feet of line out and let it drop to the water or ground. Lower rod tip till it is pointing at, or slightly above the fly. With the left hand, pull from the reel 3 or 4 feet more line (the line direct from reel is always held between one or two fingers of the casting hand and the cork on the rod grip) and hold in a loop (see 'E'), with rod still pointing at the fly. Pull enough through the guides with the left hand to straighten the line and leader, while raising the rod tip slowly up to 'A' when the cast proper starts, aiming your back cast as usual at the target on top of the 12-foot tree behind you.

Now, just before the back cast straightens (as the apple is about to smack the target) raise the left hand about level with the right elbow, letting about half of the loop 'E' slip through the guides, to become a part of the now extending back cast, which is lengthened by that amount.

Make your forward cast and when 'A' is reached (the apple still being thrown at the target 4 feet off the ground) release remainder of loop 'E,' and, while the line is 'shooting' through guides, lower the rod tip till the whole rod is horizontal or slightly above. See 'H'.

This 'shooting of line' is so very valuable that you must perfect it. (It will be referred to in Stream Tactics.) Not only practice it from the over-head position of the rod but at all angles, down to horizontal, and over the left shoulder (cross casting) and on the left side. When you begin 'shooting line' you will appreciate why so much attention was paid to line and leader tapers, and the discussion on rod actions which we compared with a whippy switch and one with plenty of power in its lower half. Reference may be made to list of balanced units on page 58 but bear in mind that two rods may be the same length and weight, while still being totally different in action.

A rod which, when casted with, works or bends clear into its handle, will not permit of good dry fly casting (nor wet). It is called a 'slow' rod and is rapidly being replaced by more modern rods. It cannot deliver sufficient power in a short enough time, i.e. before its power is transmitted throughout its length, it has to be bent clear into the handle and, by this time the back cast has dropped to a dangerous level. Besides, when the 'weeping willow' has caught up with the dropping line, which has formed a down curve in itself, starting at the rod tip, this curve is reproduced automatically on the forward cast. (Instantaneous photographs show this as also does a 'rolling line,' one which instead of straightening out above the water, rolls out part way and flops, with the fly short of its goal.

They are also too slow to meet a rise quick enough, which results in misses. The one thing in their favor is that they will hold a larger fish on lighter gut once he is hooked, but our problem first, is to raise the fish and then hook him. This is done most often by good casting which the rod being considered won't do. Such a rod may be cut down; a 9-foot rod may be cut to 8 1/2 or 8 foot 3 inches and becomes a very fine dry fly rod. It is usually cut off at lighter end of butt joint, lighter end of middle joint and big end of tip joint. A rod which has a reputable maker's name on it is usually of excellent material and workmanship, even if of the wrong design, and is worth remodeling.

One of the best casters it has been my pleasure to know, uses a rod made up of pieces of three different rods. My repair shop remodels many whippy rods each season. The number 8, 15, 20 and 23 in my experimental rods have had this treatment.

Compare two rods of the same length and weight, one of which is 'soft' slow action (built with a straight taper throughout its length), the other thickened up in the butt and part of the middle section but thinned down to a rapid taper throughout its upper one-third. One sags from its own weight if held out horizontal, the other stands out straight. The sagging rod feels considerably heavier, particularly so when casting and is far more tiring to use. In its use, the caster in endeavoring to make his line straighten, is tempted to help the rod by swinging his arm and carrying the rod tip through

(continued on page 21)

Flycasting Faults & Fixes

with Mel Krieger

DVD
Review

A Detailed Look at Flycasting Problems and Their Solutions

The cover of the DVD says that this is a reference work of flycasting faults and fixes. *This is an understatement and I believe that it is a truly **superb** resource for flycasting instructors and fly fishers.* Anyone who is serious about their casting and instruction techniques should view the DVD and have one in their reference material.

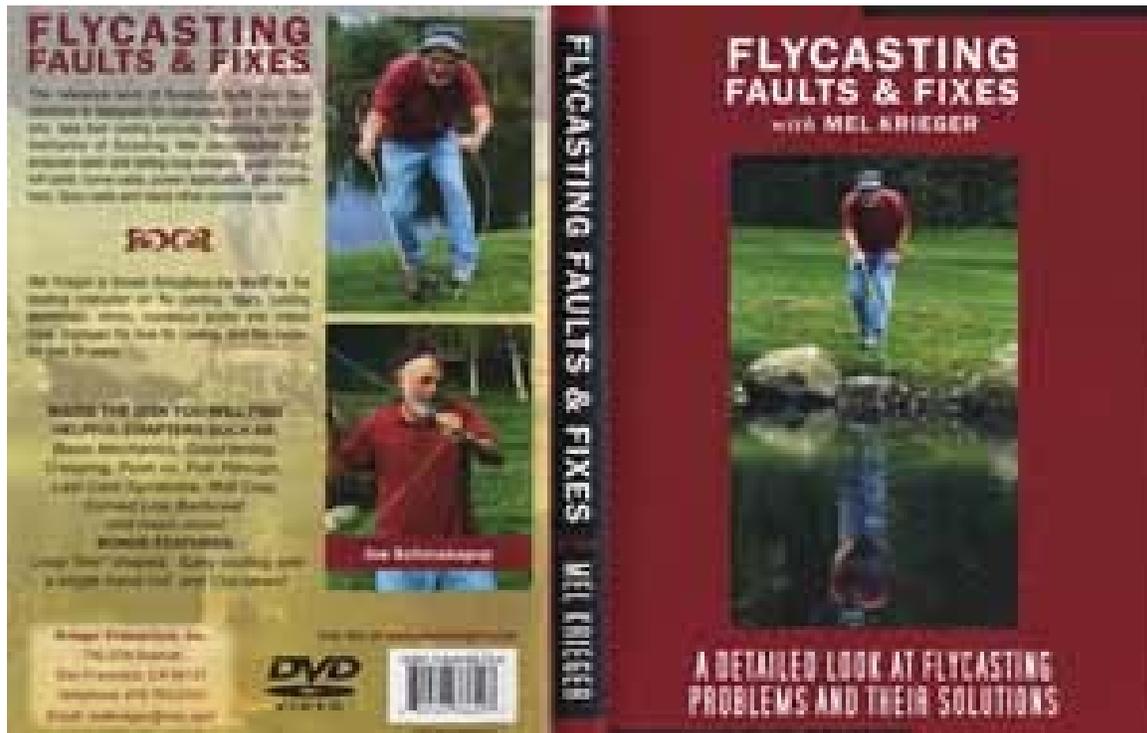
Mel is a great instructor and flycaster and still loves and enjoys it. This shows in this DVD - Mel is having fun while laying out some great information.

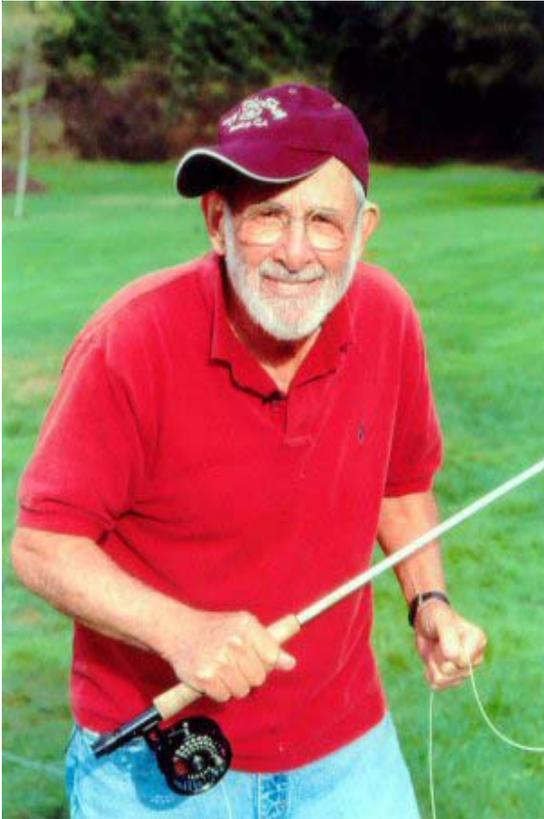
He starts with the classic mechanics of a flycast and proceeds through casting stroke, same plane, loop shapes, concave versus convex, push versus pull, etc.

These are all terms that are part of our program and our tests but Mel lays them out in a very sensible and understandable format.

Playing two roles - Joe Schmakapop is the very bad example of a flycaster - Mel corrects Joe's bad casting, explaining first and then correcting. Hopefully there isn't a caster out there who can top Joe's casting performance. Mel does it with style.

The fault recognition and correction is priceless. From improper power application to tailing or crossed loops to creep and drift, good timing, last cast syndrome, etc., seeing the fault and seeing it corrected hasn't been done before.





Visit Mel at www.melkrieger.com

For those of you preparing for your CI or more importantly, your MCI, this will give you a firm understanding of both terms and faults. For casting instructors, add it to your *bag of tricks*.

The DVD is set up so you can play it from start to finish or you can go to any chapter that you wish.

Also included are some bonus chapters.

Mel has included a section on speycasting with a single-handed rod.

He includes these speycasts:

- * forward spey or switch cast
- * single spey
- * snap-T
- * circle
- * double spey
- * snake roll

Learn how to include these casts in your teaching and you have a whole new, exciting series of casts to teach.

Mel is really enjoying showing the viewer these speycasts with a single-handed rod. Does he know something we don't?

Give it a try!

The DVD is a must have as well as a must see and the best that Mel has done.

Put one on your Christmas list.

Review by Denise Maxwell, Editor

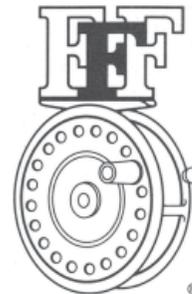
Copies of Mel's DVD are available from Barb at the FFF Headquarters.
Cost is \$29.95 plus shipping.

CONCLAVE 2007

42nd FFF Conclave

Where: Livingston, Montana

When: July 31-August 4, 2007



Roadmap for Certain Success

Class for the SEC Conclave, June 10, 2006.

Preparing for the FFF Casting Instructor Certification Test.

Introduction

- * Certification is a quality assurance approval.
- * Certification is not a casting merit badge.
- * Casting, not fly tying, is the essential skill in fly fishing.
- * Casting is also a teaching tool, the method of visual example.
- * FFF emphasis is on how well you can use casting to teach.

Guidance Assertion No.1

- * Your manner of casting must be easy to observe in order to be evaluated.
- * To succeed, you must commit yourself to preparation.
- * Casual interest will not satisfy.
- * It will show poorly at the test site.

FFF Tests candidates for Casting Instructor in four dimensions:

- * A written test with 36 questions
- * A performance exam
- * Teaching ability
- * Attitude

The Written Test

Essential to success on the test is digesting the materials from the FFF Website. Most important two are:

The Essentials of Flycasting by Jay and Bill Gammel

Observations on Teaching Fly Casting by Mel Krieger

First step is visit the website and order the booklets, today. Absorb all of the other information available from the FFF such as:

Bruce Richards What to Expect

Dave Engerbretson The Education of a Fly Casting Instructor

Other FFF Items

Recent Observations on the Masters' Tests Held in W. Yellowstone, MT.

This item notes deficiencies among Master's Candidates, but the observations apply to any candidate

Testing Process

- * Written test is the qualifier.
- * 30 correct answers pass.
- * 29 correct answers fail.
- * Five categories: casting mechanics, casting problems, fly lines, other tackle, fishing.
- * No trick questions. Some require selection of best answer.
- * Look to website for examples.

The Limits of Experience

- * Your experience as a fly fisher is not an indicator of your ability to teach.
- * Candidates who perform well on the written test prepared for it.
- * Youthful candidates frequently find the written test easy.
- * Inevitable conclusion is that 30-years experience will not get you through the qualifier.

Performance Test has two sections

Section one, the casting demonstrations provoke the most candidate anxiety.

- * Candidate attitude is extremely important.
- * Testers expect easy compliance without struggling.
- * Complete accuracy, control, and distance demonstrations with relaxed confidence and good form.
- * Fly line should turnover cleanly, hold good loops, be visible to testers.

Guidance Assertion No. 2

- * Special note on form.
- * If visibility of your casting and fly line means you have deviate from your customary fishing line and casting, then so be it.
- * If the testers cannot see you cast, they will not credit you.

Section two, the teaching skills assessment, is the most important section of the test.

Testers expect you to respond as a teacher would to their inquiries posed in the voice of novice casters.

- * Answers should be engaging, succinct ones.
- * When asked to demonstrate, include visual content that is instantly convincing.
- * Be prepared to amplify when requested.
- * Believe your own testimony.

Certain Disasters

- * Windy answers
- * Quotations or paraphrases from Joan Wulff, Lefty Kreh, Mel Krieger
- * Adolescent dither
- * Scholarly babble
- * Baloney and hokum
- * Hip, cute, or timely chatter from Sexy Loops

Guidance Assertion No. 3

Remember that for this part of the test, the testers have assumed the role of naïve students, so the level of technical complexity needs to be very low. Thus, a good answer about loading the rod does not contain any physics or mechanics.

The teaching situation questions are the most important ones. Candidates who do a good job on them can be forgiven other imperfections. In contrast, candidates whose responses to the teaching questions are vague raise grave suspicions in spite of good work on the practical casting sections.

The teaching questions are the last item in the inquiry, and therefore, come at you when you are likely to be fatigued.

Rule One remains intact: The candidate is always ready.

Preparation – Give Yourself the test several times

- * **Lay out a test course on which to practice the test, monthly.**
- * Tape measure for distances, marking pegs and rings for accuracy
- * As an alternate, mark a test course on a rope that is 85 feet long.
- * Memorize the 24 tasks and their requirements
Distances, amount of fly line, number of false casts
Which tasks are one- and which are two-handed

Practice the performance required

- * Practice makes permanent, so practice the right things.
- * Concentrate as much on quality as quantity.
- * Remember that if you can heave the line 75 feet or roll cast 50 but look like you are struggling, out of control, or in bad form, you are deficient.

Performance Test: Manners and Strategy

During the test, repeat the directions in a confident manner to the tester.

Example: *When asked to show changing speed while false casting with good loop control, tell the test giver what you are going to do:* I am going to show you loop control while false casting 6 times, two slow, two medium, two fast. And I will label them for you.

Example: *When asked to make the 75-foot cast, tell the testers that you are going to take a couple of practice casts, first, to straighten the line. Then, I am going to cast, now. If you miss, say so; then, I'll do that one over.*

Multiple Demonstrations

Be prepared to show several approaches for some casting elements.

Example: Casting with strong wind from your rod side

Approaches: Cross body

Backcast for forward presentation

Cast with other hand

Only one is necessary to pass. Testers can ask for others. If they don't, ask them if they'd like to see another one.

Guidance Assertion No. 4

The testers have some latitude. If they give you the wrong task instructions, do it their way.

Be Objective about Problems

Give yourself the test many times

- *Using video is the most effective method for recognizing problems.*
- *If you see that your problems are not easy to resolve, hire a professional casting instructor to critique you and do so early.*
- *Do not rely on friends or your mother to be objective. They will not tell you the truth.*
- *You will not be lucky.*

Style and Substance

Mel Krieger was distinguishing between permitted variations and essential content to allow for regional and personal variation in casting form.

Casting is closer to swinging a golf club than Kabuki.

Style, alas, has become confused with signature. Beginners need prescription not latitude.

FFF is "style neutral."

The Value of Prep School Classes

Don't confuse demonstrations and classes

- * *Available from J. Wulff, L. L. Bean, Tom White in Florida, and others.*
- * *Weak candidates do not become strong ones by paying tuition.*
- * *Weak candidates improve because of an alliance with a good teacher.*
- * *Casting improvement comes with proper practice, by the millimeter and over time.*
- * *Changing muscle memory patterns is slow work.*
- * *Hands on teaching is very valuable.*

(continued on page 16)

Selecting Tackle

Take advantage of the requirements

- * Conform to the limitations on line weight and leader length
- * Yarn fly should be visible but not very air resistant.
- * Use as much rod as the rules allow: 9 foot 7 weight
- * Avoid light and soft rods even if you like to fish with them
- * Do not take the test with a bamboo rod
- * Line should load the rod substantially and roll cast beautifully
- * Buy a spare "perfect" line and save it for the test.

More Disasters

- * **Do not borrow a fly rod to take the test**
- * We have seen the stunt fail nearly every time. Looks bad, not good.
- * The rod and line that you use for the test should be your intimate companion.
- * If you break a rod during the test, use your spare. The tester would allow you to restring it with the line you brought to test with.
- * Carry extra on-spec leaders and yarn.
- * Practice making on the spot repairs.
- * Carry your reading glasses to make the repairs.

Other Things to Have

Comfort Items are frequently useful

- * Bottled water
- * Towel for wiping face and hands
- * Candy bar

Attitude is Important

A candidate's attitude shows without testing it.

The confident, relaxed candidate with professional demeanor puts the testers at ease just as that attitude in a teacher is welcomed by the student.

Dress like you are going to teach the class

- * Model your appearance on that of golf pro not a Florida Keys hippy guide.
- * Crisp, neat, well turned out, like Land's End, not baggy, sweaty, faded.
- * Fishing shirts, golf shirts, trousers plain or pleated.
- * No sandals or worse sandals and socks
- * Baseball caps are good, but only if clean. Extra good for caps to advertise tackle.
- * Only Lefty wears the blue hat
- * Women always dress properly.

Sunglasses are an issue

- Essential component of the cargo effect and have very high cool factor
- Drastically reduce contact between candidate and testers
- Deadly during response to teaching questions
- Avoid wearing them.
- Let them hang or remove them.

Connect with the testers

- Greet them, just as you would students.
- Say your name clearly, and indicate your interest. I have been looking forward to this test for a year. It's good to be here; I've been practicing for 5 months. It's a pleasure to work with you; I remember your name from the FFF website.
- Establish yourself as a rewarding prospect. Get them on your side.

Guidance Assertion No. 5

If establishing a connection with others, especially others who are superior, is a difficult task, defer your test preparation.

- Work on public speaking with Toastmasters
 - Work on audience contact with acting classes
- Casting instructors have to at least don the persona of an extrovert to be effective with their students.

Whom will you teach?

- Your first student is you.
- Fly fishing clubs always need free instruction.
- Fly tackle shops require success.
- Fly tackle shops are leery of anything with the FFF label.
- Fishing guides probably will not like you initially.
- Fishing guides are pragmatic.
- Fishing guides quickly recognize the utility of quick repair and improved casting. They may refer prospects.

Conclusion

- * FFF certification is not required to teach flycasting.
- * No one is entitled to an FFF Casting Instructor Certification.
- * Preparation, practice, and confidence result in success.
- * Do not take the test for the sake of the experience.
- * Take the test to pass it.
- * Have specific teaching goals.
- * Bring your confident tone and manner with you for the sake of your students. It will rub off on them.

Guidance Assertion No. 6

- * You are entitled to ignore any of the ideas, assertions, comments.
- * By doing so you may not jeopardize success.
- * If you are fully prepared, you will enjoy the test.
- * The test should be a learning experience
- * The single most frequent reason for failure is lack of orderly and substantial preparation.
- * Start today, and succeed with the test a year from now.

This is available as a Powerpoint presentation and permission is given for our members to use it providing that credit is given to the FFF SEC. Our thanks to David Diaz for sharing this with us. It will be available on the web site or contact the editors.

From The Editors

We're excited about this issue of the Loop and hope that you enjoy it. We are trying to get a good mix of articles for each issue and provide articles that are entertaining, helpful and enjoyed by all.

For those of you who missed the Conclave, it was a great time for everyone. Besides being extremely hot (over 100 degrees every day), there was lots to do and as usual, not enough time to do it.

From workshops to give or take, testing, casting games, etc., the days were full and then you would find everyone out on the field casting or trying new rods or techniques. Lots of opportunities to socialize with new and old friends and acquaintances. Please try and come next year - you won't be sorry!

Camping was fun again and I'm better organized (I have my own tent) but I have to bring something to provide shade for next year. It was far too hot! (Denise here).

Included in this issue is an article called 'Road Map to Success' that is available as a Powerpoint presentation. David Diaz has kindly provided us with this great presentation that was prepared for the FFF SEC and used in a workshop setting for Casting Candidates.

We have permission for our Casting Members to use this presentation as long as we give credit to the SEC for providing it. Who can refuse such a great offer?

We hope to have this presentation up on the web site in the near future so stay tuned.

Our lead article is one that needed to be written. We are finding that a lot of Master Casting Instructor candidates are not prepared for the test. Some are isolated and don't have people to help prepare but some just don't know the scope of the test. Since testing is often done at shows, etc. where both the time of the tester and the space is limited, taking the test to find out what it is all about should be discouraged. Testers don't have the time to help or make many suggestions in this situation.

Jim Valle has provided us with some good options and suggestions for preparing for this odyssey.

Our Casting Program members are a talented and knowledgeable group! Included in this issue is a book review for Al Buhr's new book (see page 7) and a DVD review for Mel Krieger's 'Flycasting Faults & Fixes' (see page 12.) Both of these offerings are excellent releases. If you are making your Christmas wish list, be sure to include one or both on it.

The FFF Headquarters in Bozeman has 50 of Mel's DVDs to sell with proceeds going to the Casting Program. Retail is \$29.95 plus shipping. Contact Barb to order.

Space is running out so time to wish all of you a Happy Holiday season and the best for the New Year.

Talk to you soon.

Denise & Liz

THE LOOP STAFF

Editors: Denise Maxwell & Liz Watson

goldnwst@telus.net, 604-945-9002

lizz58@aol.com, 305-849-1672

Program Coordinator:

castingcert@fedflyfishers.org, 406-585-7592

Chair, Board of Governors: Tom Jindra

tomjindra@cox.net, 504-392-7511

Fly Illustrations: Jason Borger

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

We welcome your submissions via e-mail or disk. Please attach a short (1-3 sentences) instructor biographical statement, including your location and Certification level. Please be aware that the back issues of the Loop are posted on the Program's web site. Any illustrations should be in TIFF or JPEG format.

The Loop reserves the right to decline any submission for any reason, and to edit any submission. Submissions may be to the editors or the National Office:

FFF Casting Instructor Certification Program

215 E Lewis

Livingston, MT 59047

Fax: (406)-585-7596

E-mail: castingcert@fedflyfishers.org

Controlling the Top Hand

By Al Buhr

Two-handed casting utilizes the leverage of the upper and lower hand grips to generate the energy in the cast.

The upper and lower hands have balanced roles. Each hand (and arm) relies on the other and work together to orchestrate the cast.

The upper hand guides the rod path and assists in rod loading. The lower hand's role mirrors the upper hand. It pulls to develop rod loading and assists with directing the rod path.

The two hands and arms work together applying an even effort to direct the rod through the various line positions on a smooth track.

The arms working together will pull the rod shaft smooth and straight, not tilting the rod shaft in an arc. This loads or flexes the lower portion of the rod.

During these rod movements, the hands will also oppose each other. The lower hand levers against the upper hand in a progressive manner. This develops leverage to maneuver line positions and/or to accelerate the rod's tip speed.

This working relationship between the upper and lower hands is similar to the shared relationship of the fingers and thumb of the rod hand in single-handed casting.

To clarify, in single-handed casting, the thumb and index finger support the top of the handle as the lower digit fingers draw the base of the handle into the palm. The digits of the hand work together to draw the line's path, while opposing another to develop leverage within the hand grip at the stops.

The fundamentals of rod mechanics are common in both single and two-handed casting. In turn, the causes of faults and their cures are also common.

In single-handed casting, the use of the rod hand is controlled to draw the desired line path. This parallels in two-handed, as the use of the upper and lower hands is controlled to draw a straight and smooth line path.

In the early learning stages of two-handed casting it is important to control the use of the top hand. The student's ingrained instincts of single-handed casting may disrupt the shared work of the hands.

A common error of beginning casters is the upper hand (often the single-handed rod hand) becomes dominant and drives the entire casting motion, while the lower hand is idle or limited.

This will cause the rod to tilt and the tip to track an arc, resulting in an open loop lacking energy. This is equivalent to wristing in single-handed casting.

In two-handed casting, when the upper hand is dominant and the lower hand is idle, a combination of faults may occur:

- o The rod pivoting from an idle or stationary lower hand will tilt on an axis, scribing an arc tip path, forming a wide open loop that lacks line speed.
- o The excess use of the upper hand can be accompanied with a punch as the upper arm is extended forward. Ranging from a mild punch, creating a round front loop to an excessive punch, that disrupts the forward cast.
- o The upper dominant hand in driving the rod may rotate at the wrist near the end of the stroke, tilting the direction of the stop downward and altering the front loop shape. Called "pushing over the top", this will create a round front loop with a slight tail.
- o Students with a dominant top hand style will tend to lead the initial rod movement by flexing the rod tip first, not the rod butt. This leading of the rod tip will bend the weakest section of the rod first. This will affect the ability to lift the line at the start of the cast, limit line

positioning during the cast, and reduce the rod loading.

- o When the upper dominant hand drives the cast with the lower hand idle, the lower hand becomes the fulcrum or pivot, an inefficient levering action. The most efficient lever action is when upper hand is the pivot point and the lower hand is the driver.
- o The dominant top hand driving the cast is less efficient and naturally requires a longer casting stroke. A natural long stroke style is more difficult to alter in a confined casting situation.
- o The trailing lower hand failing to develop leverage against the upper dominate hand requires the upper arm to exert the full thrust into the cast and it will become tired. The ideal ratio of applied work is 50/50, shared equally by both upper and lower arms.

In an ideal cast, the hands work together to draw a smooth line path and to develop rod loading.

In the forward cast, the further the hands draw forward, the longer the casting stroke becomes.

At the same time, the upper and lower hands are opposing each other in a progressive manner. This smoothly develops the leverage and line speed.

To clarify, the upper hand is a dynamic or driving pivot point. It guides the rod's intended path and applies energy or effort to develop a driving pivot, enhancing the rod loading.

The lower hand assists the upper hand in guiding the intended rod path, but leads the upper hand in developing the leverage. In this way, the rod butt advances and levers forward against the resistance of the line, loading the lower portion of the rod while drawing a straight-line path. The bending or loading of the butt develops greater rod loading and at a slower tempo, resulting in a stronger, smoother cast.

To remedy the excessive use of the top hand, use the Overhead cast as a casting exercise.

The Overhead is a simple cast that instills proper loop formation, timing, tracking, and smooth power application. All are elements of a good spey cast.

The Overhead cast, done away from water, eliminates the various effects caused by the surface tension. In this way, the complete focus can be on correcting the error and instilling good traits.

When the student masters the Overhead cast, return to the water and use a Switch cast as a follow-up exercise. During this exercise, limit the use of the upper hand, reducing its effort applied during the cast. Promote the use of the lower hand to pull the rod through the cast. The goal is to attain a 50/50 balance of shared work between the hands, regardless of casting style.

To reach the 50/50 ratio of shared work, have the student use a 30/70 ratio: 30% upper hand / 70% bottom hand. Their natural instincts of the dominant upper hand will counter, resulting in a desirable ratio of shared work between the hands.

When teaching two-handed casting, anticipate the student's instinctive memory of single-handed casting.

As a safeguard, at the start of the casting session use an exercise that will encourage the use of the bottom hand. This will help the student to discover and experience the leverage developed by the lower hand.

A simple exercise can control the use of the upper hand at the first stages of learning and will guide the student from this pitfall.

Later, as the basic cast develops, introduce the use of the upper hand to balance and enhance the shared work between the hands.

This is a method of controlled information to the student to fast track them in understanding the basic cast.

Al Buhr is a member of the Casting Board of Governors as well as the Chairman of the THCI (Two Handed Casting Instructor) Committee.

Mel Krieger Receives an Award

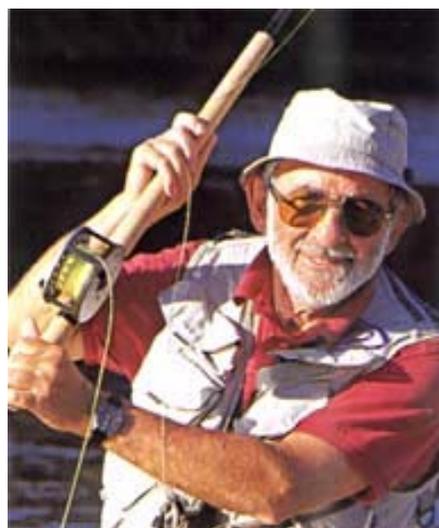
by Tom Jindra

Mel Krieger has been inducted into the *Order of the Lapis Lazuli*, the highest honor that can be bestowed by the Federation of Fly Fishers. The award was given at FFF's national conclave in August. Krieger joins an exclusive circle of flyfishing greats including Lee Wulff and Joan Wulff.

Known throughout the world for his casting skills and fishing exploits, Krieger was honored for his contributions to the Federation's Casting Instructor Certification Program. Widely regarded as the program's founding father, Krieger conceived and promoted the concept to its adoption by FFF in 1992. Even today, Krieger remains passionately involved in the program — as a governor, as a committee member, as an examiner, as a teacher. He has been a leading advocate of the FFF Guide Association as well.

Despite his reputation as one of the sport's leading experts, Krieger is best understood as an accomplished student who is not content to accumulate knowledge for his own benefit. Rather, he learns so he can share with others. And so he has become not just a teacher of students, but a teacher of teachers. And it is in this persona that Krieger has made a "prominent and extraordinary" contribution to the Federation of Fly Fishers.

In concrete terms, the Casting Instructor Certification Program is widely considered the most successful program in FFF history. Instructors in the program constitute roughly 10 percent of FFF membership, and their allegiance is unlike that of any other member category. These instructors are not simply FFF members. When given the opportunity, they have become dedicated workers within FFF,



Mel Krieger

prominently supporting activities wherever they occur. They are also heralds of our organization, spreading word of FFF throughout the world and recruiting new Federators wherever they go.

Why is there so much enthusiasm for this program? People aspire to become FFF instructors because of Mel Krieger's vision. Some outside the program may still misunderstand, but Mel's vision was never about individual honors for great casters. His goal was to create skilled instructors, to form a community of people who were willing to share their talents so that others could more easily participate in our sport.

And for those who wished to become better instructors, Mel offered tools and shared his considerable knowledge.

Thanks to Tom Jindra for providing us with this concise summary of the award that was bestowed on Mel Krieger. Truly an award that was earned and we wish Mel many more years of involvement in our Casting Program.

Congratulations New Instructors

Master Instructors

Matt Wilhelm

Molly Semenik

Glyn Freeman

Gary Champion

Bill Heard

Two Hand Instructors

Dan McCrimmon

Rick Williams

Steve Buckner

Casting and Tackle - More Fishing Less Fussing - (continued from page 11)

an arc which is positively destructive to a proper delivery of the fly. It appears more as though he were trying to thrash the water than cast a fly.

If an attempt is made to 'shoot' several feet of line the rod won't straighten up in time to allow the line to pass through guides and tip top unhindered, and when it does come back, rebounds, throwing a rolling half loop in the line which may or may not follow through-out the lines' length. It it should, the fly may drop considerably to the left of where it was aimed, if casting from an angle on the right side. If the loop should not follow through, there will be an upstream loop in the line or leader, with the fly short of its objective.

With the other rod of fast action, recovery is so fast that the rod is always waiting for the line to straighten, and it stands straight without reflex while the line shoots through its guides. If a trout is raised, a very slight twitch of the tip sets the hook almost instantly. Provided the rod with this extra power is held at the position of 'F', there is very little danger of breaking fine gut. It should be raised to this position or straight up, instantly after setting the hook in a fish.....

A person can be outfitted with rod, reel and line, which will cast about as well as any mentioned in the 8, 8 1/2 and 9-foot class, for \$17 or \$18.

The first consideration is to get a rod with the action required, then balance reel and line to it. A \$10 rod with proper dry fly action is preferable to a \$50 rod of poor action.

If you have an outfit that works well, and have mastered the handling and shooting of the line as laid out so far, we can proceed to doing a job of Dry Fly Fishing.

This excerpt was taken from the book by Paul Young called 'Making and Using the Fly and Leader', published in 1935.

Thanks to John VanDalen for suggesting it and providing a copy.

Hopefully we won't run into any copyright problems in reprinting it.

Coming Events for 2007

<i>Shallow Water Fishing Expo</i> <i>Atlanta, GA</i>	<i>Jan 2007</i> <i>Contact: David Diaz</i>	<i>Not taking reservations yet.</i> <i>TBA.</i>
<i>The Fly Fishing Show</i> <i>Denver, CO</i>	<i>Jan 5 - 7, 2007</i> <i>Denver Merchandise Mart</i>	<i>Not taking reservations yet.</i> <i>TBA.</i> <i>Contact: Dan Wright</i>
<i>ISE Show</i> <i>San Mateo, CA</i>	<i>Jan 11 - 14, 2007</i> <i>San Mateo County Expo Center</i>	<i>Not taking reservations yet.</i> <i>TBA.</i>
<i>The Fly Fishing Show</i> <i>Schaumburg, IL</i>	<i>Jan 13 - 14, 2007</i> <i>Schaumburg Convention Center</i>	<i>Not taking reservations yet.</i> <i>TBA.</i>
<i>ISE Show</i> <i>Sacramento, CA</i>	<i>Jan 18 -21, 2007</i> <i>Cal Expo</i>	<i>Not taking reservations yet.</i> <i>TBA.</i>
<i>The Fly Fishing Show</i> <i>Marlboro, MA</i>	<i>Jan 19 -21, 2007</i> <i>Royal Plaza Trade Center</i>	<i>Instructor & Master</i> <i>Contact: Rod McGarry</i>
<i>ISE Show</i> <i>Denver, CO</i>	<i>Jan 25 - 28, 2007</i> <i>Colorado Convention Center</i>	<i>Instructor & Master</i> <i>Contact: Dan Wright</i>
<i>The Fly Fishing Show</i> <i>Somerset, NJ</i>	<i>Jan 27, 2007</i> <i>Garden State Exhibit Center</i>	<i>Instructor & Master</i> <i>Contact: Jim Valle</i>
<i>Western Canada Fly Fishing Expo</i> <i>Calgary, Alberta CANADA</i>	<i>Feb 3 - 5, 2007</i> <i>Max Bell Centre</i>	<i>Instructor</i> <i>Contact: Dan McCrimmon</i>
<i>The Fly Fishing Show</i> <i>Charlotte, NC</i>	<i>Feb 2 - 4, 2007</i> <i>Charlotte Merchandise Mart</i>	<i>Not taking reservations yet.</i> <i>TBA.</i>
<i>Florida Sportsmans Show</i> <i>Ft. Myers, FL</i>	<i>Feb 3 - 4, 2007</i> <i>Lee County Civic Center</i>	<i>Instructor & Master</i> <i>Contact: Dusty Sprague</i>
<i>The Fly Fishing Show</i> <i>Bellevue, WA</i>	<i>Feb 9 - 11, 2007</i> <i>Meydenbauer Center</i>	<i>Instructor & Master</i> <i>Contact: Don Simonson</i>

For additional testing opportunities, please check out the FFF Web site.

Please note the deadlines for registration.

Testing at these sites always depends on having people to give the test.

If you are a tester and will be attending any of these shows, please volunteer your time to help.

Good luck!