

SUMMER
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The Loop

THE JOURNAL OF FLY CASTING PROFESSIONALS



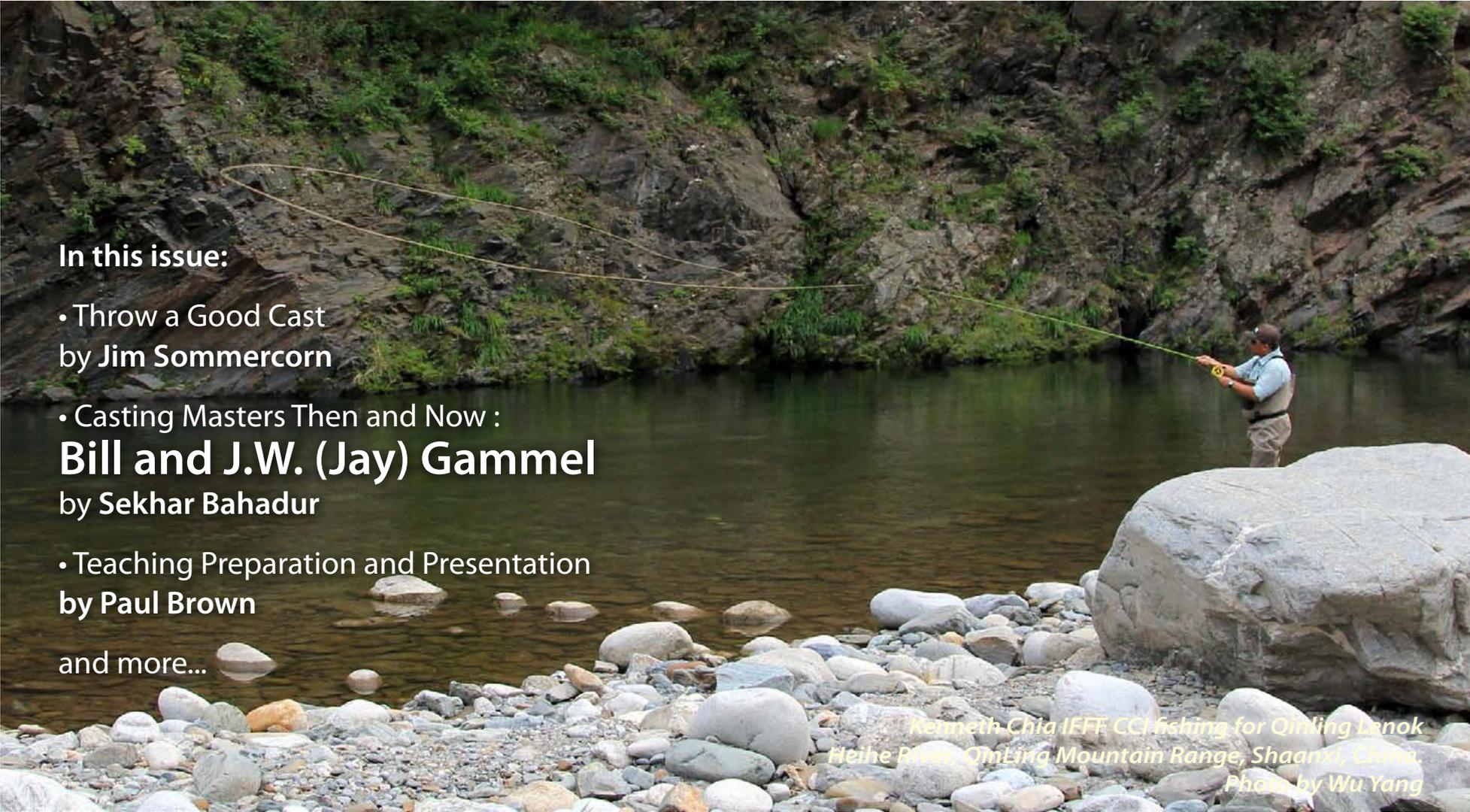
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*Kenneth Chia IFFF CCI fishing for Qinling Lenok
Heihe River, Qinling Mountain Range, Shaanxi, China.
Photo by Wu Yang*

EDITORIAL



Bye and Thanks Carl McNeil Welcome Peter Morse to the Loop Staff

The editors of The Loop would ask you to join us in wishing both a farewell and a welcome.

Goodbye and fair travels to our media editor, New Zealander Carl McNeil, as he leaves The Loop to attend to his rapidly growing business, family, and (we hope) fishing. Thanks for all you've done Carl to help this publication morph to the full-color, multi-platform publication it is today.

Now for the welcome. A big welcome to Aussie Peter Morse. Peter joins the staff as an associate editor, bringing his much appreciated writing, photography, editing and fly-fishing kills. For the uninitiated, Peter is known the world over as an excellent fish finder, instructor, writer and lover of all things aquatic. His writings and photography can be found in many fly fishing magazines and journals and he is a tireless ambassador of our sport.

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THROW A GOOD CAST

by Jim Sommercorn, Scottsdale, AZ.

New fly casters often believe casting is very difficult or that it requires an uncommon or special skill. This is particularly true of experienced conventional-tackle anglers who may have tried fly fishing and had limited success with the cast. Because this belief can impede learning, it can be helpful to dispel it at the outset of formal fly casting instruction.

Casting is Throwing

Merriam-Webster defines cast as “to cause to move or send forth by throwing.” So, in its simplest form, casting is just throwing something. Most people know how to throw something; it is not an uncommon skill. The various movements used to throw, for example a ball (short, long, overhand, sidearm, underhand, forward, backward), are used to make comparable casts. This is true whether casting a lure or a fly line. I believe anyone who can throw a ball or cast a lure knows and can do most of what is necessary to cast a fly.

Comparisons of throwing a ball, throwing a ball using a tool, casting a lure, and casting a fly line demonstrate how similar these activities are to each other and how the properties of a fly line require attention to **alignment, slack, and stop** in order to make fly casting as simple as throwing a ball or casting a lure.

The Process of Throwing

Comparisons between throwing and casting can help identify distinct elements within the process of throwing. The first of these is the **setup**. In order to throw a ball to a target, one must first position

oneself and the ball so that it can be thrown in the desired direction and to the desired distance. For example, a short overhand toss can be made by positioning the hand and ball near the ear and in line with the target (*Figure 1*).

The **motion of throwing** imparts both speed and direction to the ball. The ball moves as soon as your hand moves and it goes in the direction that you move your hand.

The **launch** allows the ball to continue movement on its own to the target. This is achieved by releasing the ball at a point in the throwing motion when it is moving toward the target and has achieved sufficient speed so that it can reach the target distance.



Figure 1. The setup for throwing a ball



Figure 2. Throwing a ball with a tool

Throw a Good Cast *continued ...*

Throwing a Ball with a Tool

If, when playing fetch with your dog, your arm gets tired before your dog gets tired, using a tool to throw the ball can restore the balance to your favor (**Figure 2**). The tool is an extension of your arm, which increases the distance the ball travels during the throw. The process of throwing a ball with a ball thrower is the same as throwing without one. The **setup** and the **throwing motion** are the same. The throwing motion moves the ball immediately, but its direction is determined by the direction taken by the end of the tool, which holds the ball, during the throwing motion. The ball continues in the direction it was going when it was released from the thrower (**the launch**).

Casting a Lure

When the tool used to throw something is a fishing rod, the process is called casting. With conventional tackle, the lure (or other weight) is not held by the tip of the rod (as the ball is held by the cup of the ball thrower), but it is generally allowed to hang just a few inches off the rod tip. The **setup** for casting a lure is the same as for throwing a ball with or without a tool. Positioning the rod tip and the lure opposite the intended direction of the cast is sufficient setup. The subsequent

throwing motion (casting stroke) moves the lure immediately and, because the lure is very close to the rod tip, it lines up with and follows the path of the rod tip during the casting stroke—that is, the lure self-aligns with the direction of the cast.



Figure 3. Slack in the line limits the ability of the casting stroke to move the fly line. Movement of the rod simply removed slack and did not cause the line to be “sent forth.”

Throw a Good Cast *continued ...*

Thus, the casting stroke is sufficient to provide both speed and direction to the lure. The cast is **launched** by releasing the line, which allows the lure to continue in the direction it was going when released. Although not essential to the launch, releasing the line is often done immediately after stopping the rod when the tip is moving toward the target. The stop-release provides for a more accurate cast.

Fly Line Casting

Unlike conventional tackle, which casts a concentrated weight near the rod tip, fly tackle casts a fly line, which is a flexible and distributed weight. These properties of the fly line can limit the effectiveness of the casting stroke to impart both speed and direction to the fly line and the fly—limitations that are not experienced with conventional tackle.

Because a fly line is flexible, it can be either slack (loose) or tight. Movement of the rod will not move a slack line until the slack has been taken up and the line tightens. Thus, slack in the line will limit the ability of the rod movement “to cause to move or send forth” the line (Figure 3).

Removing slack from the line prior to the cast (that is, as part of the setup) will assure that moving the rod will immediately move the line being cast just like a lure moves with the movement of

a rod. A line can be slack both when it is on a surface and when it is in the air—thus the need to pause for example between back cast and forward cast to let the line straighten. When it has straightened, the line is tight and can be moved by the rod. Eliminating slack is essential to assuring that the movement of the rod moves the fly



Figure 4. Aligning the fly line with the intended direction of the cast delivers the line and along the target line

Throw a Good Cast *continued ...*

line, which is one of the functions of the throwing motion or casting stroke. Removing slack is an essential part of the **setup** of a fly cast. Another function of the casting stroke is to direct the cast. In order for the casting stroke to move the line and fly in the desired direction, the fly line (and in most cases, the leader and fly) must be aligned with the intended direction of the cast before it is made. Because a fly line is a distributed weight, the casting weight of fly tackle is not concentrated near the tip of the rod as it is with conventional fishing tackle. Much of the casting weight can be some distance from the rod tip. If the fly line is aligned with the intended direction of the cast, then the entire line will move in that direction and the line momentum generated during the casting stroke will continue moving the line and fly along the target line (Figure 4). On the other hand, if the fly line is not aligned with the intended direction of the cast, then the line will not move in the intended direction and the momentum of line (particularly the distal portion of the line) will carry the end of the line and fly off the target line (Figure 5). The longer the line being cast and the more it is out of alignment with the intended direction of the cast, the less likely it will deliver the fly to the target.

Aligning the fly line with the intended direction of the cast is an essential part of the **setup** of a fly cast so that the casting stroke delivers the fly accurately.



Figure 5. Poor alignment with the intended direction of the cast will not deliver the line and fly along the target line

Throw a Good Cast *continued ...*

So, in contrast to the setup of a conventional-tackle cast, where positioning the rod tip and lure in line with and opposite of the target is sufficient setup, the **setup for a fly cast** must not only position the rod, it must also position the line behind the rod tip in line with the direction of the intended cast and remove slack from the line (these are elements of a so-called “good back cast”). If set up properly, the fly line moves when the rod moves, and it follows the path of the rod tip during the casting stroke. That is, it casts like a lure.

During the casting stroke, the fly line is pulled by the rod to get it up to speed. As long as the rod is pulling the line, the line will trail the rod. The fly cast is **launched** by stopping the rod at point in the casting stroke when the rod tip is moving toward the target and the fly line has achieved sufficient speed to deliver the fly to the target distance. The stop allows the moving line to progressively turn over from behind the rod to ahead of the rod. Once the line starts to turn over, the line can be released from the line hand, allowing additional available line to be shot into the cast to achieve more distance. This stop/release is similar to the stop/release launch of a conventional cast—the difference being that releasing line is essential to launching a conventional cast, while stopping the rod is essential to launching a fly cast.

At its core, the process of casting is the process of throwing, which I believe is something that most people understand. Although a fly line is not a concentrated weight, it can be made to behave like one by taking care in the setup to remove slack and to align it with the intended direction of the cast. **Thus, the major difference between fly casting and throwing a ball or casting a lure is in the setup, not in the**

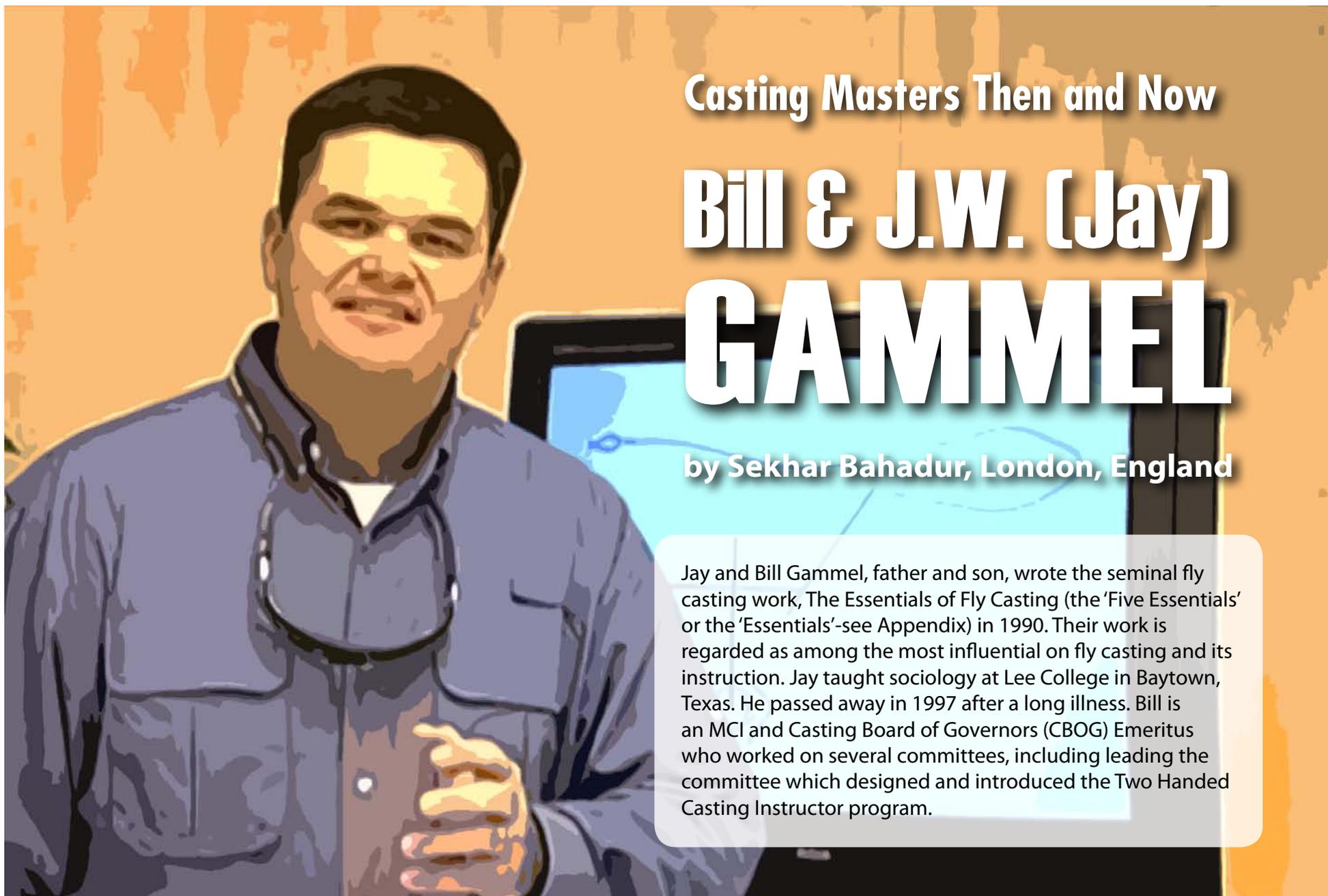
throw or cast itself. The importance of the stop to launching a fly cast differs from launching a ball or lure, but the difference with casting a lure begins to fade in that a stop/release is common to conventional and fly casting.

A simple demonstration of casting as throwing and the influence of **slack, alignment, and stop** on the effectiveness of a fly cast can set the stage for more effective formal fly casting instruction. Students may progress more quickly if they know that fly casting is not as complicated as it may seem and that there is no special or unusual skill that makes it work.



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subject of this article will be presented
as a workshop at the IFFF Fly Fishing
Fair in Livingston, MT in August.



Casting Masters Then and Now

Bill & J.W. (Jay) GAMMEL

by Sekhar Bahadur, London, England

Jay and Bill Gammel, father and son, wrote the seminal fly casting work, *The Essentials of Fly Casting* (the 'Five Essentials' or the 'Essentials'-see Appendix) in 1990. Their work is regarded as among the most influential on fly casting and its instruction. Jay taught sociology at Lee College in Baytown, Texas. He passed away in 1997 after a long illness. Bill is an MCI and Casting Board of Governors (CBOG) Emeritus who worked on several committees, including leading the committee which designed and introduced the Two Handed Casting Instructor program.



Bill and J.W. (Jay) Gammel *continued ...*

Bill twice won the IFFF's Colliander Cup for casting excellence. He teaches biology at Lee College in Baytown, from which he received one of his degrees.

In 2014 the International Federation of Fly Fishers CBOG established the Jay Gammel Award for Fly Casting Instruction which recognizes lasting contributions to the teaching of fly casting instruction through written publications, instructional course materials, or electronic media.

Master Casting Instructor Sekhar Bahadur interviewed Bill Gammel.

SB: *Bill could you tell us a bit about your father?*

BG: Dad was an athlete in high school and college. He went to college to play baseball for Southern Methodist University and walked on the football team. Most American football players at major college programs are recruited by the coaching staff and offered scholarships to attend. (Walk-ons, the few unrecruited members of the student body who try out for and are actually selected to play for the teams, are generally considered highly motivated overachievers who have overcome long odds against them.)

Dad hurt his shoulder playing football and effectively ruined his baseball career. He and his wife moved back to Baytown and he finished college at the University of Houston where he also earned his Master's degree. Right out of college he turned to golf and was very close to a scratch golfer. After my brother Cliff was born, Dad took up bow fishing, because it could be done at night after mom and Cliff were in bed. This led to a brief conventional tackle fishing period and then on to fly fishing.

Appendix

Bill and Jay Gammel's Five Essentials of Fly Casting:

- 1. There must be a Pause between each stroke, which varies in duration with the amount of line outside the rod tip.**
- 2. Slack line should be kept to an absolute minimum.**
- 3. In order to form the most efficient, least air resistant loops, and to direct the energy of the cast to a specific target, the caster must move the rod tip in a Straight Line.**
- 4. The size of the casting Arc must vary with the length of line past the rod tip.**
- 5. Power must be applied in the proper amount at the proper place in the stroke.**

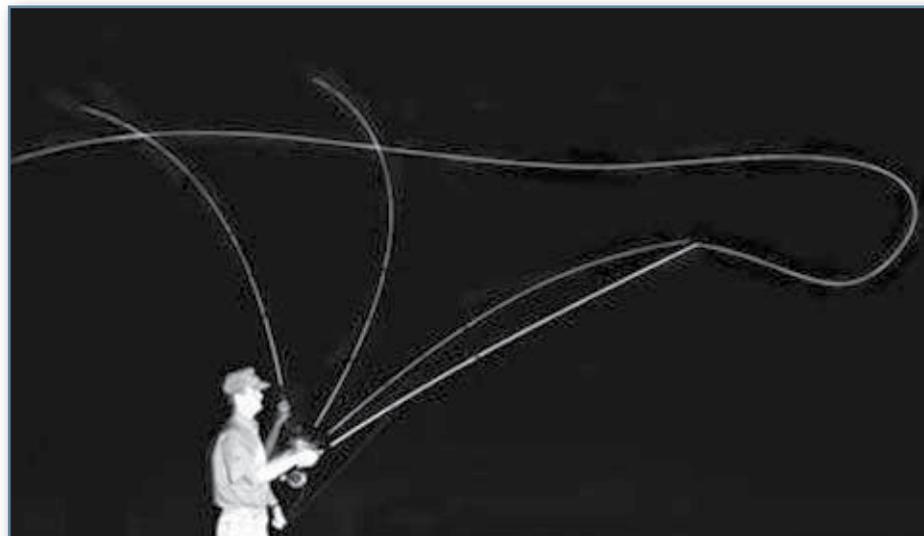
Bill and J.W. (Jay) Gammel *continued ...*

It was Dad's ability to watch the great ballplayers and break down what they were doing that helped him learn fly casting. He was constantly reading. An FFF member's wife was the local librarian, and perhaps because of that the Baytown library has an extensive fly fishing and casting section. Dad read them all twice.

What he loved most was spending time with his family. He was a great dad, waiting for us to get out of school with the boat ready. We hunted and fished together a great deal. Family vacations were a group decision. He decided that we were going back to the Madison River and Yellowstone Park for the 18th year and he let my mom decide when she wanted to go. Her options were late June or early July. Today, my mom spends late June and early July with my family on the Madison River.

SB: *How did he get started in fly casting?*

BG: His fishing began with a bow in his hand. After mistakenly shooting an 8-pound largemouth bass, he began fishing with conventional tackle. His brother-in-law heard he was fishing a lot, so he introduced Dad to fly fishing. In true Dad form, he quickly became obsessed with fly casting and was casting in the yard every moment he was not fishing. My uncle lived in Dalhart, Texas which is just a few hours from Red River, New Mexico and southern Colorado. Dad fished his way north from there to Glacier Park in Montana, settling on the Madison River as his favorite spot. When it was not summer, he spent a lot of time fly fishing the Galveston Bay complex. He was one of, if not the first, to fly fish the upper Texas Coast.



SB: *My condolences on his passing. I know he courageously battled illness for several years. Could you tell us the story of his last cast please?*

BG: Dad had a rare form of cancer that ruined the efficiency of his lungs. He went to M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and basically checked in as a guinea pig. There was no cure for what he had and the average was two years to live. Dad turned his two years into a little more than nine. One of the things that kept him alive was a steroid called Prednisone. You are not supposed to take this stuff for more than six weeks. Dad took huge doses for nine years. This sapped the calcium from his bones and made them very brittle. In the summer of 1996, we believe he broke his back in five spots. This was the source of a great deal of pain, especially while fly casting.

Bill and J.W. (Jay) Gammel *continued ...*

In the fall of 1996, he was sent home from the hospital and told to get his will in order if it was not already updated. He asked to go out and cast. He asked for a chair, so I jumped up and got the lawn chair from the garage and he walked out the front door using a walker and wearing a full body plastic brace.

I placed the chair in his spot and he sat down. Instinctively, he stripped off the whole line and began to cast. As the line lengthened he began to haul. At the first haul he grimaced in pain and let the cast fall. He rested a minute and said, 'I can't do anymore of that.' He cast a few pick-up-and- lay-down casts and then shot one with no haul. It draped over the neighbor's fence. He stripped in and did it again. The fence was around 95 feet away and he threw the line over the fence. He handed me the rod and struggled to his feet. As he turned to his walker he asked me to reel the line in for him because he was done.



The next day he entered the hospital for the last time and died on January 5, 1997, two days after his 60th birthday.

SB: *How did the Essentials come about?*

BG: Judy Lehmborg was the Vice President of Learning for the FFF and they had a booklet series going and needed a casting pamphlet for beginners. She approached us in 1988 when I was 18. It took us about two years to write 24 pages. We developed the Essentials for

the booklet. My Dad and I had several years previously started a deep and through study of fly casting and had worked some of this out, but not in the form it actually took in the booklet. We traveled with our video camera to FFF events and worked very hard to separate substance from style in order to figure out what good casts fundamentally had in common. I was very good at mimicking casters like Lefty Kreh, Joan and Lee Wulff, Jim Green, Mel Krieger, Chris Korich and Steve Rajeff, and we had hours of videotape of many of them, especially Chris and Steve, casting and teaching.

SB: *What technology was available to you?*

BG: Just a home video camera, and a VCR with a remote - thank God, we had just gotten a TV with a remote too!

SB: *How did the Essentials become a cornerstone of our casting program?*

BG: I don't know exactly. This may sound boastful but I don't mean it to be. Jim Green [a founding CBOG Member, Fenwick rod designer, and World Casting Champion at age 17] told me at a Conclave in Livingston, Montana that we had written in 24 pages what everyone else had tried to write in 300. If that was the sentiment in the room then they probably believed that it was as good a summary as anyone would write. The casting program never truly adopted it as far as I know.



Bill and J.W. (Jay) Gammel *continued ...*

It really just became part of the fabric of casting instruction of the IFFF because over time so many people began to speak of the Essentials.

SB: *What led to your generous decision to donate the rights to the IFFF?*

BG: Dad and I never felt as though the Essentials were ours. We just happened to be the ones that collected them into one spot and weeded out all of the things that were stylistic and not essential. We never thought about it being generous. In hindsight, it could not have worked better for me. I was an 18 year old kid from Texas who was a very good caster. However, no one knew me and there was no reason they should read what I had to say. The FFF had a promotional vehicle that was not otherwise available to me. So I have benefited greatly, if you want to be well known among a couple of hundred people who care.

SB: *Starting with what isn't essential, what did you decide fell into the style category?*

BG: Some of them include: Grip, Stance, Casting Arm position, Use of Wrist, Drift, and Hauling.

SB: *The full text of the Essentials mentions stroke length as a practical substitute to use with students in place of the Arc width Essential. Could one argue stroke length itself is also essential to cast beyond certain distances or above a certain speed?*

BG: Technically yes, but it depends on how strong the caster is. I would say it was a matter of style to choose to use a longer stroke on

a longer or faster cast, and would be hesitant to say it was essential. With that said, most casters do widen the arc by lengthening the stroke.

SB: *The original Essentials start with Pause and Slack and then go onto Straight Line Path of the rod tip, Arc and Power. Why did you choose this order?*

BG: Frankly there was no real reason behind the original order. We didn't really know at the time how the Essentials fit together. It wasn't until I started teaching using the Essentials and trying to apply them to every situation that I came to understand how they work together.

SB: *In your 2002 video, 'Teaching Yourself to Fly Cast - Learning the Essentials', why did you change the order of the Essentials?*

BG: I taught the Essentials to thousands of students over more than a dozen years before shooting the DVD. I came to understand that the Straight Line Path of the rod tip is the overall Essential and it is presented first in the video, followed by Arc, Timing (Pause), Power and Slack. The first Essential is that the caster should avoid tracking errors in the horizontal plane (assuming the rod is vertical). The next four Essentials work together to make the rod tip path straight in the rod, or vertical plane as well. Dad and I talked a lot about the Essentials being linked and how 'you can't mess one up without messing up the other' (Straight Line Path was always 'the other').

In other words a Straight Line Path with no up and down movement is a result of the other four Essentials, and a Straight Line Path with no right or left movement is an essential direct action by the caster.



Bill and J.W. (Jay) Gammel *continued ...*

SB: *The 180-Degree Rule is not mentioned in the original Essentials, but is covered in depth in your video. Would you make it part of the Straight Line Path Essential if you were writing today?*

[The 180-Degree Rule suggests that the rod tip path during the casting stroke should be an extension in the opposite direction of the fly line's position when the casting stroke begins.]

BG: Yes, the 180-Degree Rule is really good teaching terminology and I use it often. I would use it in the description of the Straight Line Path Essential if I were rewriting it.

SB: *In your article 'Making Adjustments on the Fly...' in the Summer 2010 Loop, you made changes to what determines the appropriate Arc width and Pause length, which Dr. Gordy Hill called 'an epiphany' in his online MCI study group. Can you please give us some background?*

BG: I generalized by saying that instead of just depending on line length, Arc and Pause, depend on the bend in the rod and the time it takes the line to straighten, respectively. This covers line length and also other factors such as speed, the effect of wind on the rod, and different equipment or anything else requiring an adjustment in arc and/or pause length. Rod bend and the time the line takes to straighten are really the fundamental points.

SB: *Although it is mentioned in the full text of the Essentials as part of Power, should Stop be the 6th Essential?*

BG: There is no doubt that the caster needs to stop or slow down - you can accelerate all day and never form a loop. We started with a longer list of Essentials and whittled it down to six.

Stop was actually the sixth Essential but my Dad and I decided it was just power applied in the opposite direction to the cast in order to form a loop and it therefore should be part of Power.

SB: *You made reference earlier to a change you would make if you were writing today. Given how your thinking has advanced over more than a quarter of a century, would you consider producing an updated version of the Essentials?*

BG: Yes I see them differently than they were originally written but I don't have any plans to rewrite them. That little booklet has taught a lot of people how to cast. Many have tried to pick it apart and have not had much success. I don't think I could improve it without Dad.

SB: *Turning to you now, if we may: I understand you found creative ways to use your fishing skills in your studies!*

BG: I developed a fishing method that would be useful as a lake management tool. I have a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Management from Texas A & M University. My specialization was warm water ecology. At A & M that means you study largemouth bass management. The standardized method of collecting fish is with an electro fishing boat. It is expensive and you can't get a heavy boat into many private lakes in Texas. So when I got to the Southwest Texas State's Master's Program and found out my major professor was a semi-pro bass fisherman, I did what anybody would do. I proposed developing a standardized fishing method that would result in statistically sound data without the electro fishing rig. It worked great for the largemouth bass with basically a 1:1 ratio between conventional fishing and electro fishing data. I found bluegill on the other hand for some reason did not require as much real fishing data!

Bill and J.W. (Jay) Gammel *continued ...*

Needless to say I turned an 18-month master's program into just shy of three years. I wanted to be thorough.

I learned a lot; most notably, don't ever push off a metal fence post while the electro fishing rig is on. It won't end well.

SB: *How did you become the Federation's first Certified Casting Instructor?*

BG: In 1992 at Conclave, Mel Krieger started to demonstrate the new instructor assessment tasks to a fairly large group and then he called me up and asked me to do them. I guess I must have done OK because he made me the first CI on the spot!

SB: *I understand you folks had some epic cast-offs at Annual Conclaves. What were some of your favorite memories?*

BG: Yes we have had some great casting contests. Usually at about midnight at the Holiday Inn in Mountain Home, Arkansas. The Southern Council conclave was the site of many great casting sessions.

At the IFFF event in Idaho Falls, Bruce Richards, Tom White, Rick Hartman, Paul Arden and I stood on the lawn of the hotel and cast. This turned into one of the most epic cast-offs I have ever seen. We cast distance, under tables, through windows, and capped it off with Rick and me putting a fly on the roof of a four story hotel that was only 50-60 feet in front of us (that's straight up). It was one awesome display by all of them and probably a good deal of luck on my part. Paul threw a cast through a second story balcony door and across a lady's room and she was standing on the porch making smart mouth



comments at us. Then Rick wins by putting the fly through the door, across the room, and into the sink. We were there laughing, joking and making all kinds of noise, all with 100 feet of line out and not six people stopped to watch. We could not even draw a crowd at the Conclave.

This was different years ago when Dad and I would travel to West Yellowstone to the FFF Conclave. Twenty-five years ago Steve Rajeff, Dad and I stepped out the door of a West Yellowstone Conclave so Steve could show us the new Loomis IMX fly rods, and the three of us had a crowd of close to 100 people standing there watching Steve Rajeff, a kid, and an old man throw 100+ foot casts for an hour. There was no instruction, just casting.

Bill and J.W. (Jay) Gammel *continued ...*

Twenty years later Tim Rajeff, Katherine Hart and I were casting at the conclave in Livingston, Montana. We were 100 to 105 feet from a fence and we were trying to throw a fly through the gap between the fence and the building it was adjacent to. This gap was about three inches wide. We cast and cast and every time we thought someone had gotten it through we would run up to the post to look. Two grown men running around making fools of themselves while repeatedly casting 105 feet and no one stopped to watch. I finally won this world championship of casting when Tim made the mistake of answering his phone. While his back was turned I threw a cast high into the wind and let the wind blow the loop into the building. The line fell along the side of the building and perfectly straight about five feet past the post in that little gap. Tim could not believe it and Katherine and I never told him.

SB: *What advice do you have for casting instructors?*

BG:

- Never quit seeking the cutting edge of learning.
- Never be scared to blow up someone's stroke and start over. Even yours. I would start over at the basics and rebuild my stroke from scratch every spring.
- Listen to the quiet ones. The ones running their mouths are probably not nearly as good as you.

SB: *Have you ever had a casting student you just couldn't help? What would you recommend an instructor in that situation do?*



BG: Well, I probably helped them a bit, but yes, I have had students that I was never able to help reach their goal. It was always with the student who wanted to reach a distance goal. I have never had a student that I could not teach to fish at a reasonable fishing distance.

SB: *Do you have much time to fish, teach, speak or demo casting at shows?*

BG: I am fishing more now that my kids are older. We have been taking a trip to Montana every summer. We fish Arkansas a couple of times a year. My kids play baseball and that kills a lot of spring fishing. I would do more of all of it if given the opportunity. However, when I stopped traveling to stay home with the kids, my teaching also fell off. I still don't want to travel a lot, but would do more than I have.

Bill and J.W. (Jay) Gammel *continued ...*



SB: Are there any noteworthy casters in the next generation of Gammels?

BG: No, they won't practice. They are OK with being good enough. If they would cast as much as they play baseball they would be great.

SB: Do you do much two-handed casting?

BG: No. I am very proud to have been a part of the Two-Handed Casting Program, but it is not my thing. I have used two handed rods in helping wounded warriors with arm weakness. This was great to help them to overhead cast. They were able to cast all day on a guided fishing trip.

SB: Are you working on any casting or fishing related publications that we should look out for?

BG: My new book 'A Sportsman's Pursuit' is a collection of short stories that end in a Christian message. It is basically a book of lessons learned in the outdoors from a lifetime of hunting and fishing. I am also working on a YouTube page aimed at reaching the young digital media crowd. My college students don't have DVD players. If I want to teach that generation about fishing, casting, or Christ, it is going to have to be online.



About **Sekhar Bahadur Sekhar** is an MCI and a casting coach for the British Fly Casting Club. He and his wife have two grown daughters.

They divide their time between London and Greenwich, Connecticut.

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THOUGHTS ON TEACHING PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION

by Paul Brown, Northern England.

Most casting instructors I know work with written study notes - they've diagrammed casts and they've accumulated a trove of useful teaching aids, the sum of which likely results in a comprehensive resource kit. After reading CBOG Rick William's article on providing handouts to casting students, I decided to make use of my own notes and diagrams by turning them into laminated handouts for my students.

This started me thinking about the quality of an instructor's teaching resource kit and how an instructor might prepare for any teaching

scenario - after all, professionals in all walks of life increase their chances of success by preparing materials and equipment before an event takes place.

Remember the alliterative adage on prepping: Proper prior preparation prevents poor presentation. (Ok, so that's the polite version).

The following has worked for me and may be useful as a starting point for creating your own approach. I split my preparation to cover three areas: Pre-session, during the session and post-session.

Thoughts on teaching preparation and presentation *continued...*



1. Prior to the session

- Locate and book a suitable venue. Acquire permits and permissions if required
- Check weather forecasts. Inform students of venue address, zip code, start time and expected finish time. Confirm with students any items they need to bring with them such as kit, suitable clothing, food and drink and any equipment.
- Provide a map to the teaching site, such as Google or Bing maps

I prepare my notes for each session and store them on a weather-proof clipboard containing:

- Each student's personal details, contact number, fishing experience, any relevant health issues
- A written session plan based on each student's main aims and goals (but this must be flexible, dependent on student's ability on the day)
- Carry out a full check of my own equipment and ensure enough kit for students
- Tailor resource kit to the upcoming session
- Prepare name badges, if teaching a group of students
- Arrive at venue on time
- Complete a Risk Assessment of venue carried out on the day of the session



Thoughts on teaching preparation and presentation *continued...***2. During the session**

- Meet and greet, general introductions and outline of itinerary for the session
- Carry out a Health and Safety briefing (We have a duty of care for all our students)

I use the ***SWEEP*** acronym to help me remember the major points:

S -- SUITABLE CLOTHING

- Wear a hat and use eye protection – fly casting can be dangerous
- Wear appropriate clothing for the conditions
- Wading – recommend wearing a life vest and using a wading staff

W -- WEATHER

- Constantly monitor for any changes
- Extreme heat – Have plenty of drinks available
- Extreme cold – Wear lots of layers of clothing and thermal undergarments
- Flooding – Mark water level and monitor it.
- High winds – Use appropriate casting technique
- Cloud and mist – Be aware of route to safety

E -- ELECTRIC SHOCK

- Lightning – put rods down immediately, do not stand under trees and stay away from overhead power cables

E -- ENVIRONMENT

- Be aware of dangers such as slips, trips and falls, drowning
- Be aware of members of the public when back-casting
- Take all litter home

P -- PLANTS AND DISEASES

- Giant Hogweed - running sores, takes long time to heal.
- Always wash hands after being near water
- Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease) – Waterborne organism from rat's urine
- Report any flu like symptoms to a doctor if they occur after fishing

Once the safety briefing has been completed, I point out the location of the venue facilities, toilets etc., the actual teaching section of the session can begin.

Thoughts on teaching preparation and presentation *continued ...*

- Carry out check on suitability of any equipment brought by student
- Carry out lesson according to session plan
- Demonstrate correct equipment set-up
- Explain generalities of fly casting – Discuss rod action, rod strength, rod grips, styles of hand, stances, arm and body movements and efficiency, explaining the advantages and disadvantages
- Always remember to allow students self-discovery time
- Make it fun and stimulate questions

3. *Post-session*

- Give students general feedback
- Write a suggested practice regime based on individual progress during session
- Emphasize the importance of regular practice
- Give handout sheets covering main areas of session, reminders of why, where and when a cast would be used, plus stage-by-stage breakdowns of the casts, plus common faults and fixes
- Explain the possible topics that might be covered in any follow-up session
- Hand out list of materials for further study including book titles, DVDs and websites
- Hand out student feedback forms for comments on Instructor's performance
- Complete an Instructor Self-Evaluation form – how I think the session went, what I thought did well, and areas I can improve on for next time

Teaching/Resource Kit

My resource kit has been put together over many years and continues to be refined, to be practical it needs to be light enough to be transportable and comprehensive enough to cover a wide variety of teaching scenarios.

The mainstay of my kit includes:

- Teaching Aids • Safety Equipment • Spare safety glasses • Additional hats • A first-aid kit, knowing how to use the items in a first-aid kit is as important as having them, consider taking a training course or refresher course. • Sun block • Anti-bacterial hand gel • Bottled Water • Additional Equipment

Irrespective of age, experience or qualifications, I believe we are all perpetual students. I continue to be inspired by watching and analyzing the teaching methods of my fellow instructors, and with every student I teach, I'm constantly challenged to find new and simpler ways to teach.

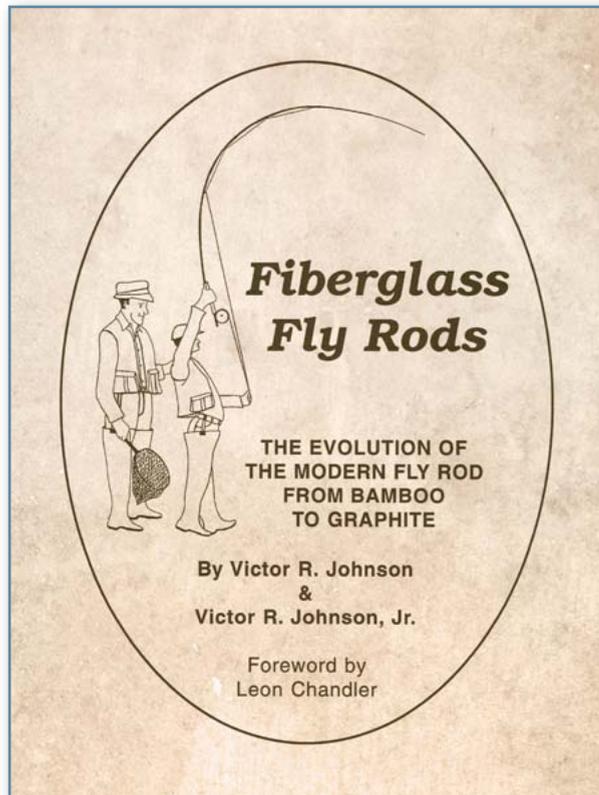


About the Author: Based in the North West of England, Paul has been fly fishing for over 40 years, catching his very first fish whilst on vacation in the wilds of Virginia, US. A qualified IFFF Master Casting Instructor, Paul is also a member of the UK's Game Angling Instructors' Association (GAIA) and holds the Advanced Professional Game Angling Instructors' qualification (APGAI) and is also a qualified GAIA Mentor and Assessor, plus an instructor with The British Fly Casting Club (BFCC).

BOOK REVIEW

FIBERGLASS FLY RODS: The Evolution of the Modern Fly Rod from Bamboo to Graphite

20th Anniversary Edition



Original Book with Leon Chandler Intro.

When we first got serious about fly casting, what we really got serious about was distance and speed. But our outlook changed over the decades. Maybe the change came from improvements in rod technology, maybe by changes in our physique, or maybe we simply learned to slow down.

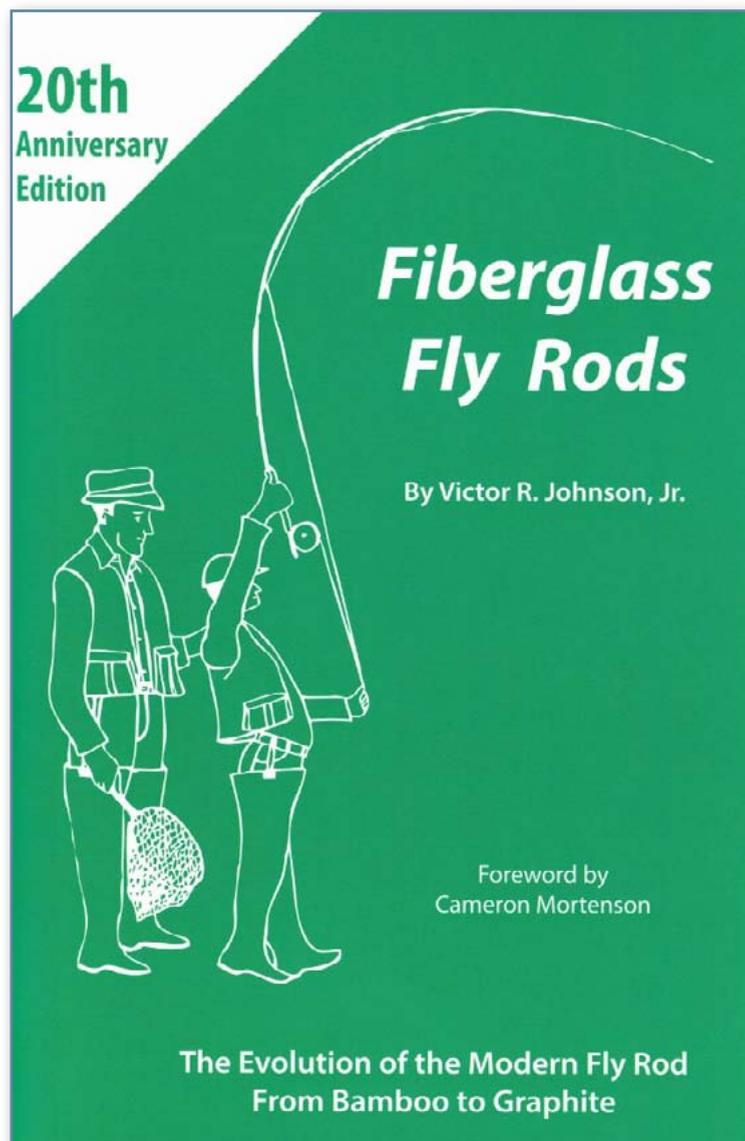
Whichever, we've come to enjoy slower rods and rods with more 'feel' to them. That enjoyment extends to casting both new and old fiberglass fly rods. If you're an instructor and you haven't made time to play with glass, run, don't walk, as they say.

Glass rods aren't for everyone, nor have they ever been. Still, every well-rounded fly caster and instructor should try them.

So where do you start? You might look to Vic Johnson Jr's new book, *Fiberglass Fly Rods: The Evolution of the Modern Fly Rod from Bamboo to Graphite, 20th Anniversary Edition* c. 2016, Victor R. Johnson Jr, EP Press, Vallejo CA, US, 106 pp, ISBN 0-9740531-2-0. \$30.

We say new book, but this is really a comprehensive, updated edition of a book Johnson and his father, Victor R. Johnson Sr, wrote in 1996 - *Fiberglass Fly Rods*.

Johnson Jr wrote: "I expected the use of fiberglass rods would drift away over time. Boy was I wrong . . . as we now know, fiberglass fly rods have had an amazing resurgence in popularity."

Fiberglass Fly Rods *continued...*

Why? Johnson's view is this: "... for many types of fishing, fiberglass is simply more effective and fun to use than graphite."

Read Johnson Jr and Sr's original publication for a detailed history of fiberglass rods. The 20th Anniversary piggybacks on the original history, and fills us in on the newer advancements in glass.

Johnson has divided his book into seven chapters, which include glass fibers and their usage in America; resins; mandrels and blank making; current fiberglass rod makers, both in American and abroad; major rod and component manufacturers; and a price guide for vintage fiberglass rods.

Grab a copy of Johnson's newest work. Armed with a headful of history and hankering to slow down your cast, there's no reason not to take the first fiberglass rod you find and give it a workout. We think you'll be surprised at how much fun it is.

For a more detailed historical context, read the Johnsons' original *Fiberglass Fly Rods*, available from Vic Johnson in CD format. \$20. Also of interest to fly casters and fly fishers would be other of Vic Johnson's books:

- America's Fly Lines, Fenwick,
- America's Fishing Waders, and
- Eight Points of Light

Each is available through EPS Press, 707-644-4788; or contact the author directly at vrjvallejo@gmail.com

NOW YOU ARE A CERTIFIED INSTRUCTOR

By Bob Clay, Albany, Georgia

Finally, after months of study and practice, you passed your IFFF Certified Instructor's examination. Now it's time to focus on becoming a better (more effective and efficient) casting instructor.

Since no formal teaching manual comes with the new CI badge, you will have to develop your own. It'll include a plan of action, teaching scenarios and your 'kit'—those tools of the trade that help you teach. Since you'll be adding new info and strategies as you learn them, it's a good idea to keep your teaching manual flexible. As you evolve, so should your manual.

Below are suggestions, which will help new instructors, build their own teacher's manual.

A slide show can be a good place to start, something like *Bill and Jay Gammel's The Five Essentials of Casting*. As you progress, you may want to add slides on various parts of the cast and you could provide a listing of the new definitions and a visual description of what loops should look like.

Your manual should include a "kit" of various tools necessary for teaching casting.

A typical kit includes: a 100 ft. contractor's tape, small soccer field cones, the outline for the day's presentation, sun glasses, hats, sun protection, insect protection, tippet and yarn.



100 ft. contractor's tape, small soccer field cones.

Ask if anyone has an issue that may require medicine they are carrying and to tell you privately where the meds are and how to administer them in case of an emergency.

Your personal appearance and demeanor is very important. Dress appropriately for the class. Clothing should display leadership, control and direction. Grooming and hygiene are extremely important to send important and positive subliminal messages.

Your general plan has now been developed. To teach a specific event, you need to start asking some very simple questions: who, what, where - and you are the how. Who are the students? Are they beginners or intermediate? Do they want to know more about casting for saltwater or freshwater? Are they preparing for a trip to Alaska or the Bahamas? What is the venue?



Now You Are A Certified Instructor *continued...*

A casting clinic with several students or is it one on one? The date and time must be narrowed down as specifically as possible.

A most important issue is *where* this event is to take place. On the water is perhaps the most difficult in many respects. Guides must be very proficient in teaching quickly and efficiently, as it is important to get the students line in the water. (There is a great article in the Fall 2015 The Loop by Pete Greenan, "Teaching on the Water.")

Teaching casting clinics becomes easier and more interesting with more facilities. The more space the more casting lanes you can establish. The more facilities the better, i.e., restrooms, drinking water, electricity, and these days—Wi-Fi. Rarely will you have everything you need, but knowing what you have will aid you in planning the event.

When all the questions are answered, you can develop the course outline for the class(es). The outline is a detailed plan of the course between you and your students. As a general rule, you will want to split the allotted time between actual casting and discussion. Casting can be very physically taxing on students, as they will be using many muscle groups that have not normally been used to this extent. Below is typical course outline for a one-day casting clinic.

Notice the audio/visual sections. Today's students are much more visual than "us" older folks. They are accustomed to learning with more and more AV aids.

Ask what a student hopes to gain from your class or lessons. You will need to understand what each student has set for his goals. It helps to find that out early if a student has wildly irrational expectations.

FLORIDA BIG BEND FLYFISHERS, INC.



Fly Fishing Clinic



Saturday, April 16, 2016

Cornerstone Presbyterian Church

2904 Kerry Forest Parkway (Across from Walmart on Thomasville Road)

INSTRUCTORS: Jim Penrod, MCI; Lee Avirett, CCI; Tom Logan, CCI; Bob Clay, CCI; Dan Crocker, CCI; and Dave Rowlands

- 9:00 AM Introductions, discussion of program
- 9:15 AM Classroom presentation Power Point--Five Essential Elements of Casting
- 10:00 AM Fly Casting - Part One--Basic loops; controlling size and types of loops
- 10:45 AM Fly Casting - Part Two--Casting styles: Joan to Lefty---Lee Avirett, CCI
- 11:30 AM Fly Casting - Part Three--Demonstration of shooting line, false casting---Bob Clay, CCI
- 12:30 PM LUNCH
- 1:00 PM Change of direction casts---Jim Penrod, MCI
- 2:00 PM Classroom--Fly selection; how to choose and fish flies---Tom Logan, CCI
- 2:30 PM Roll Casting; traditional and dynamic
- 3:00 PM Distance Casting---Dave Rowlands
- 4:00 PM Q & A



**FREE TO FBBF MEMBERS
JOIN FOR ONLY \$50
MORE INFO?
CALL BOB @ 850-556-8986**

Providing the students with materials about their class to keep is important. A booklet with the course outline and back-up materials including any Power Point presentations presented that day is simple and easy to do. Finally, include a "Certificate of Completion" for the class (below).

Now You Are A Certified Instructor *continued...*



Sometimes, no matter how much time and effort goes into planning and preparing, things just do not work out. It may rain or other conditions dictate you change plans. This is where a “Plan B” is recommended. This is where your innovation certainly comes to the rescue. Having an indoor back-up facility is preferred.

The ideal indoor facility will have tables and chairs, electricity, a television, and Wi-Fi. You need to have the tools to present a program on a presentation projector or a least a TV. Researching YouTube videos on fly-casting topics will provide material for these situations.

The Orvis Fly Fishing Channel, On the Fly Productions, Tight Lines Fly Fishing, and April Vokey's channel are all very good places to start. Many of the icons have video presentations such as Lefty Kreh, Joan Wulff, and Mel Krieger. Soon Lee has wonderful presentations on loops. You can put a whole program together using these videos.

Between your *PowerPoint* presentations, videos and DVDs you can put a good program together. There are gadgets like the tiny practice rods using a yarn line to demonstrate loops and straight line rod path. Simple swimming pool “noodles” are great to show such issues as rod loading. Use your imagination.



Bob Clay is an IFFF certified fly casting instructor who lives in Albany, Georgia. Bob grew up fishing in the streams and rivers of West Virginia. He is a retired newspaper production executive and has fished all over North America from Alaska to Labrador; saltwater species in the US and Central America. Contact him at : bkclay@bkclay.com

Coming this Fall in The Loop:



China's emergence into world culture is exemplified by their intense and rapidly growing interest in fly fishing.

Read Kenneth Chia's charming article on the Chinese reservations about fly-fishing, and their quick found love of the sport. Chia is China's first - and only - IFFF certified instructor.

Casting Masters Then and Now - An Interview with Bruce Richards



Bruce Richards is no stranger to most of us in the fly-fishing world. Associate editor Bruce Morrison interviews Bruce Richards for our Icons of The Sport/Casting Masters Then and Now series. Hint: Bruce tells us he's working on a 'major' update to his seminal work, *Modern Fly Lines*. A great read, this.

How People Learn Fine-Motor-Skills Like Fly Casting

Casting instructors are known for their polarized opinions on teaching. To date, most of the offerings are based on observation and anecdotal evidence. In this issue, certified Instructor and Lee University professor Guy Deloach and a team of MCIs study how students best learn fine motor skills like fly casting. Some very interesting findings. Prepare to be intrigued.

NEW REGISTERED INSTRUCTORS AND TEST EVENTS

Newly Certified Instructors listed according to test date.

First Name	Last Name	City	State/Region	Certification	Country	Citest Date
Richard	Gorlei	Durban	Kwa Zulu-Natal	CI	South Africa	11/27/15
Carl	Zmola	Bethesda	MD	CI	United States	01/29/16
Doug	Florence	Ludlow	VT	CI	United States	03/05/16
Jim	Wigington	Redding	CA	MCI	United States	03/11/16
Jonathan	Connelly	Oregon City	OR	THCI	United States	03/11/16
Ray	McKeeman	Newtown Abbey	ANT	MCI	United Kingdom	04/03/16
Bjorn	Gunnarsson	Reykjavik	Hufouborgarsvaeoi	CI	Iceland	04/08/16
Marco	Flury	Bern	BE	CI	Switzerland	04/08/16
Sekhar	Bahadur	London	KEC	MCI	United Kingdom	04/08/16
Jesse	Robbins	Bainbridge Island	WA	CI	United States	04/10/16
Schuyler	Marshall	Del Valle	TX	CI	United States	04/28/16
Thomas	Cammarata	Seatte	WA	CI	United States	04/29/16
Samuel	Grenier	Vernon	BC	CI	Canada	04/29/16
August	Julian	Bainbridge Island	WA	CI	United States	04/29/16
Jeff	Hogan	Woodland	CA	CI	United States	04/29/16
Marek	Puczynski	Opole	Opolskie	CI	Poland	06/08/16
Riley	Berman	Ketchum	ID	CI	United States	06/08/16
Przemysław	Kawecki	Namysłów	OP	THCI	Poland	06/10/16
Tomas	Lundqvist	Valbo	Gästrikland	CI	Sweden	06/11/16
Piotr	Talma	Wroclaw	DS	THCI	Poland	06/11/16
Carl	Evenson	Bellevue	ID	CI	United States	06/15/16

For incoming test date and other CICP events information, please visit:
<http://fedflyfishers.org/Casting/BecomeCertified/CalendarofEventsTestingDates/tabid/616/Default.aspx>

The Editorial Team



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



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



Paul Brown, MCI, NW England, is a GAIA mentor and assessor, an APGAI member, and an instructor with The British Fly Casting Club (BFCC). Paul has 30 years media experience, much of it with some of the best ad agencies and design companies in England. He is an associate editor of *The Loop*.



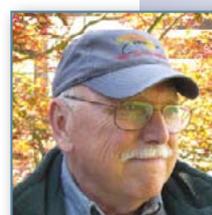
Peter Morse MCI is a professional Australian fly fisherman of many years who fishes in all waters for all species without prejudice. He is the author of countless magazine stories and 3 books, as well being a television presenter and script writer.



David Lambert, MCI, Florida, USA, is a journalist and editor who works in both print and digital media. He is managing editor of *The Loop*.



Bruce Richards, MCI, Montana, USA, designed many great lines for Scientific Anglers and wrote the seminal work, *Modern Fly Lines*. He is a former chair of CBOG and was instrumental in the development of the Casting Instructors' Certification Program (CICP). He is an associate editor of *The Loop*.



Bruce Morrison Bruce Morrison of Vancouver Island, BC, is a veteran casting instructor and a retired professor of anthropology. He has both authored and edited books. Bruce is an associate editor of *The Loop*.



Bintoro Tedjosiswoyo is a CI & THCI who lives in Melbourne, Australia. Bintoro is a commercial graphic designer and illustrator, he is *The Loop's* graphic design editor and illustrator.

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