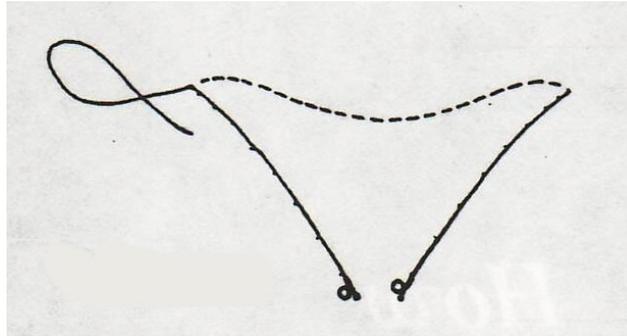


Tailing Loops & Wind knots

by Bruce Richards

Wind knots are a common problem for many casters, even experienced casters. Probably named 'wind knots' because someone noticed they happened more often on windy days, the wind, or lack of it, really doesn't have much to do with the problem.

To cast into the wind it is necessary to cast a little harder than in calm air. As I have discussed in previous articles, to make a good loop it is necessary for the rod tip to travel in a straight line all through the casting stroke. Although the rod butt travels in an arc, the rod tip can follow a straight path because the rod bends (see illustration). To maintain this straight-line tip path, the arc the rod travels must be matched to the power applied to the rod, as this determines how much it will bend. If too little power is applied for the arc of the rod, the tip will travel in an upward path and big loops will result. If too much power is applied for the arc, the tip will travel in a downward path and tailing loops and wind knots are the result.



So where does the wind fit in? Most casters know instinctively that they need to throw harder when casting into the wind. What many don't understand is the relationship between rod arc and power. If more power is applied to the rod arc that works in calm air, the result is usually an overloaded rod which causes the rod tip to travel in a downward path (the one that causes tailing loops). The wind itself doesn't make tailing loops and wind knots, but it often causes the caster to change their cast in a way that results in tails and knots.

The length of the casting stroke, the arc of the rod through the stroke, and the power applied are all directly related. The same techniques that result in long casts - a long smooth, powerful stroke - are the same techniques that allow you to cast into a strong wind. For both wind and distance you need to make a powerful cast, and it's very important to cast in a way that keeps the tip traveling in a straight line. Open the arc of the rod, apply more power - smoothly - and both distance and wind are handled much more easily.

There is one more common casting error that leads to tailing loops, it is called 'creep'. At the end of either cast, but especially the back cast, it is very important to leave the rod where it stopped, or even drift farther back. This sets up the next cast and helps to get a

long, smooth stroke. If the caster 'creeps' the rod forward while waiting for the line to straighten, the stroke for the next cast is shortened. Shortening the stroke without reducing the power applied will result in a downward tip path which leads to tailing loops. It is very important to make sure that you leave the rod where it stops (or even drift the rod farther back) while waiting for the line to straighten.