THCI Test Preparation – Part 2

THCI Lesson Plans, Cast Descriptions, Faults, Corrections

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FFF Casting Board of Governors
I’ve used a number of images throughout this document copied from books, articles, and from various websites. Most of the line drawings are by Greg Pearson and used with permission. Most of the photos are my own.

The document was put together as a training and educational tool for my own use while preparing for the FFF THCI exam.

It is not intended for commercial use; rather it was merely my attempt to organize my thoughts and teaching progression in preparation for the THCI exam.

In that spirit, it may be of value to others preparing for the THCI exam.
Two-Hand Classes

Lesson Plans for various Two-Hand Classes:

a) 2 Hour Lesson
b) Half-day School
c) One-day School
d) Two-day School

Note: The lesson plans are ambitious and dependent upon the student progressing smoothly through the sequence. This doesn't always happen!

Experience shows that the class schedule almost always need to be modified to fit each group of students’ skill advancement, as well as local weather and river conditions.
The goal of this 2 hour class is to introduce a student to the Two-Hand rod and a couple of fundamental Spey casts that can be used immediately for fishing.

The class focuses on the Double Spey and Snap T/C casts, their essential elements, common errors, and their correction.

At the end of the class, the student may be able to fish with a Spey rod using the Double Spey and Snap T/C casts.
2-Hour Class Schedule

0900-0910  Equipment Set up / Safety  Grass-Beach
0910-0920  Overhead Cast  Grass-Beach
0920-0940  Roll Cast and Switch Cast  River Left
0940-1020  Snap T / Snap C Cast  River Left
1020-1045  Double Spey  River Right  (if possible)
1045-1100  Wrap Up & Final Questions
1100  Adjourn
Half-Day School - Goals

The Half Day Class spends more time on casting fundamentals and practice than the 2-Hour Class.

Emphasis is placed on the Switch Cast, Double Spey, and the Snap T/C, including use of the off-hand.

Single Spey is introduced and related back to the Switch Cast. Snake Roll may also be introduced, time permitting.

At the end of the class, the student should be able to fish using the Double Spey and Snap T/C casts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0900-0915</td>
<td>Equipment Set up and Overhead Cast</td>
<td>Grass or Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0930-0945</td>
<td>Roll Cast / Switch Cast</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0945-1030</td>
<td>Switch Cast / Single Spey Cast</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1030-1100</td>
<td>Snap T / Snap C Cast</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1100-1115</td>
<td><strong>Break &amp; Discussion</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1115-1200</td>
<td>Double Spey</td>
<td>River Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200-1230</td>
<td>Snake Roll</td>
<td>River Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1230-1245</td>
<td>Snap T – off shoulder</td>
<td>River Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1245-1300</td>
<td>Wrap Up &amp; Final Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300</td>
<td><strong>Adjourn</strong></td>
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The Full Day School presents the full spectrum of Two-Hand casts.

My 1\textsuperscript{st} goal is for students to master the Switch, Double Spey, and Snap T/C casts, so they can fish any combination of river side and wind direction. Emphasis is placed on the Switch cast, and time permitting, the Single Spey cast.

My 2\textsuperscript{nd} goal is to teach the major Two-Hand casts in a way that emphasizes casting fundamentals, common errors, and their corrections. This way, students will be able to enjoy two-hand fishing, yet recognize and correct the mistakes that inevitably creep into Two-Hand casting.
# Full Day School Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0900-0915</td>
<td>Equipment Set up</td>
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<tr>
<td>0915-0930</td>
<td>Overhead Cast</td>
<td>Grass or Beach</td>
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<tr>
<td>0930-0945</td>
<td>Roll Cast</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0945-1030</td>
<td>Switch Cast</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1030-1045</td>
<td>Break &amp; Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1045-1115</td>
<td>Single Spey Cast</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1115-Noon</td>
<td>Snap T / Snap C Cast</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon-1245</td>
<td>Lunch &amp; Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1245-1345</td>
<td>Double Spey</td>
<td>River Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1345-1415</td>
<td>Snake Roll</td>
<td>River Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1415-1445</td>
<td>Snap T / Snap C Cast – off shoulder</td>
<td>River Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1445-1500</td>
<td>Break &amp; Discussion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1500-1545</td>
<td>Double Spey – off shoulder</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1545-1600</td>
<td>Snake Roll – off shoulder</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600-1630</td>
<td>Wrap Up &amp; Final Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>1630</td>
<td>Fishing Techniques</td>
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Two-Day Spey School - Goals

The 2-Day School is a fun, but rigorous class, that presents the full spectrum of Spey casts and provides significant time for practice and refinement.

My 1st goal is for students to master the Switch, Double Spey, and Snap T/C casts, so they can fish any combination of river side and wind direction. Emphasis is placed on the Switch and Single Spey casts. The Snake Roll is taught in detail.

My 2nd goal is to teach the major Spey casts in a way that emphasizes casting fundamentals, common errors, and their corrections. This way, students will be able to enjoy two-hand fishing, yet recognize and correct the mistakes that inevitably creep into Spey casting.
Two-Day School - Day 1 (am)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0830-0900</td>
<td>Introduction to Spey Casting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>power point presentation on casts, equipment, fishing</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0900-0915</td>
<td>Equipment Set up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0915-0945</td>
<td>Overhead Cast</td>
<td>Grass or Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0945-1000</td>
<td>Roll Cast</td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-1030</td>
<td>Switch Cast <em>teach</em></td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1030-1050</td>
<td>Break &amp; Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1050-1130</td>
<td>Switch Cast <em>practice</em></td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1130- Noon</td>
<td>Single Spey Cast – Part 1 <em>teach</em></td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon-1300</td>
<td>Lunch &amp; Discussion</td>
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### Two-Day School – Day 1 (pm)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>River</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1300-1330</td>
<td>Double Spey <em>(teach)</em></td>
<td>River Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1330-1415</td>
<td>Double Spey <em>(practice)</em></td>
<td>River Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1415-1430</td>
<td><em>Break &amp; Discussion</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1430-1500</td>
<td>Snap T / Snap C Cast <em>(teach)</em></td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500-1600</td>
<td>Snap T / Snap C Cast <em>(practice)</em></td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600-1620</td>
<td><em>Break &amp; Discussion</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1620-1700</td>
<td>Double Spey – <em>off shoulder practice</em></td>
<td>River Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700</td>
<td><em>Adjourn for Drinks, Dinner, &amp; more Discussion</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two-Day School – Day 2

0900-1000  Snap T – review, off shoulder practice  River Left
1000-1100  Single Spey – Part 2  River Left
1100-1115  Break & Discussion
1115-1145  Snake Roll (teach)  River Right
1145-1230  Snake Roll (practice)  River Right
1230-1330  Lunch & Discussion
1330-1400  Snake Roll - off shoulder practice  River Left
1400-1430  Other casts; fishing with Spey rods
1430-1500  Wrap up; Final Q & A
1500  Adjourn
Two–Hand Casts:

Descriptions, Uses, Faults, Corrections

a) Overhead Cast
b) Roll Cast
c) Switch Cast
d) Single Spey
e) Double Spey
f) Snap T – Snap C
g) Snake Roll
h) Underhand Cast
Overhead Cast

Strong, powerful, and accurate distance cast where room is available for the back cast
Good exercise for Stop, use of bottom hand, and shooting line

How to:
Start with line organized (i.e., no slack)
Lift smoothly with steadily increasing power to Stop at 12 o’clock while rod is rising
Drift to 1-1:30 position,
Start forward stroke smoothly, accelerating to Stop at 10:30 position
Bottom hand powers rod into Stop after long forward stroke
Drift forward to lengthen stroke
Repeat as needed prior to final cast
Aim slightly higher and release running line after Stop to shoot line
Overhead Cast – Faults and Corrections

• Wide Loops Overall
  – Casting arc is too wide, and rod tip path is arced upward, like a rainbow.
  – **Correction:** Decrease angle on casting arc, but keep stroke length long to produce straight line path of rod tip and avoid shocking line and tailing loop

• Wide Loop in Back
  – Casting arc opens up in back – angle too wide; possible trunking.
  – **Correction:** Stop back cast near vertical, while rod is rising. Drift back to 1:00, but keep stroke length long to produce straight line path of rod tip and avoid shocking line and tailing loop
Overhead Cast – Faults and Corrections

• Tailing Loops
  – Upper leg of line falls below lower leg due to a dip in rod path.
  – **Correction:** Lengthen casting stroke and emphasize smoothness, achieving straight line path of rod tip

• End of Line Curves
  – Line curves to right or left at end of forward (or back) cast due to lateral rod movement.
  – **Correction:** Shorten line for a series of overhead cast exercises, check for rotational body or shoulder movement.
Roll Cast and “Flip-the-Tip”

• Primarily a line management cast
  – Rearrange line prior to Spey casting
    • e.g, Lift sunken tips or flies

• Useful for teaching fundamentals
  – Teaches proper Stop position
  – Engaging bottom hand in loading rod

• Flip-the-tip exercise
  – Use of bottom hand to form loop
  – Teaches proper Stop position
Roll Cast – How To

• How to
  – Drag fly and line slowly through water to casting side
  – Lift rod to key position, with rod canted out to 15-20 degrees
  – Let line fall behind shoulder to form D Loop

  – Deliver Forward Cast
    • *High target and trajectory*
    • *Long forward stroke*
    • *Use both hands to form loop*
Switch Cast

- Elegant, rhythmic, powerful cast
- No change of direction *(actually allows small changes, <30 degrees)*
- Can cast very long lines
- Precise timing that applies to Single Spey
- Great practice cast
  - *Timing and Engaging bottom hand*
  - *Finish of all Spey casts*
  - *Practice both on- and off-shoulder*

The correct path of the rod tip at the start of the backstroke (1) lifts and sweeps under the shoulder (2) with a slight acceleration as the rod curls up toward 1 o’clock (3).
Switch Cast – How To

- Start with line at dangle
- Face body down dangling line
- Lift rod to 10 o’clock, then sweep rod to side and straight upstream
- As sweep reaches shoulder, rod rises to Stop 1 at o’clock
- Forward cast starts as line tip touches water
  - (Keep rod tilted away from body 15-30 degrees)
Switch Cast – Faults and Corrections

• **Crashed Anchor**
  – *too abrupt addition of power or too short of a sweep*
  – *too much dip between lift and end of sweep*

• **Anchor skips out behind caster**
  – *too much power in the sweep; too much lift at end of sweep*

• **Too much line stick and forward cast fails**
  – *waiting too long to make forward cast – “splash and go”*
  – *Lifting lower hand (“trunking”) and dumping line onto water*
  – *Level line drop (lack of slight rise of rod during sweep)*

Single Spey

- Most efficient for small change of direction
  - 25-60 degree angle change
- Precise timing required
  - Can cast very long lines
- Use with upstream wind
  - Right hand up on River Left
  - Left hand up on River Right
  - upstream anchor placement

Elegant, rhythmic, powerful cast
Single Spey – How To

• Start with line at dangle
• Face target across river, rotate body downstream to face dangling line; upstream foot back
• Lift rod to 10 o’clock, then sweep rod to side and upstream
• As sweep passes target, rotate body upstream until shoulders and hips are square with target
• As sweep passes upstream and reaches shoulder, lift rod to 1 o’clock, finishing directly opposite target
  – Accelerate into back cast
• Forward cast starts as line tip touches water
Single Spey – Faults and Corrections

• Crashed Anchor or Bloody L
  – too abrupt addition of power or too short of a sweep
  – too much dip between lift and end of sweep

• Anchor skips out behind caster
  – too much power and/or too much lift at end of sweep

• Too much line stick and forward cast fails
  – waiting too long to make forward cast – “splash and go”
  – Lifting lower hand (“trunking”) and dumping line onto water

• Poor anchor placement; poor energy into back cast
  – Many varied causes
Double Spey

• Easiest of all the Spey casts to learn
  (along with the Snap T/C)
  – Timing is forgiving, as cast has distinct stages
  – Can be done very slowly
  – Use with Downstream Wind;
    • Builds loop on downstream side
  – Best for approximately 90 degree angle change
  – Good cast for sink tip lines and weighted flies
Double Spey – How To

• Start with line at dangle

• Face target across river, rotate body downriver to face dangling line

• Lift rod to 10 o’clock, then cross arms and bring rod tip in toward shore and down near water surface
  – (Anchor should land 45 degrees downstream a rod length away)

• Rod tip sweeps from upstream out around far bank, then as sweep passes downstream shoulder, rod rises to 1 o’clock, finishing directly opposite target
  – Accelerate into back cast

• Rod tip “circles up” forming D Loop opposite target

• Forward cast starts immediately
Double Spey – Faults and Corrections

• Anchor placement
  – Too far upstream, too far downstream, too close to body, too far
  – **Correction:** Practice lift and crossing arms to gain consistency in anchor placement

• Hooking
  – D Loop swings behind caster, and fly hits head on forward cast
  – **Correction:** Leave rod in key position at 15-20 degree off vertical. Deliver forward cast from there

• Failure to form D loop
  – Sweep dips toward water creating huge line stick and no D loop
  – **Correction:** Start sweep with rod tip near water; gradually raise to 1 o’clock key position for forward cast
Snap T and Snap C Casts

- A great cast with easy timing, and a powerful delivery
- Use with an upstream wind
- Alternative to Single Spey
- Good cast for sink tips and weighted flies
Snap T/C Cast – How To

• Stage 1
  – Start with line at dangle
  – Face target across river, rotate body downriver to face dangling line
  – Lift rod to 9 o’clock, then sweep rod upstream rising to about 11 o’clock height
  – Sweep only to about the target (90 degrees), then bring rod back to starting point. Scribe a large reverse “C” with this move
    • (“horseshoe” shape; see illustrations ‘a’ and ‘b’, next page)
Snap C – 1st Stage

a) Lift and circle under line

b) Then accelerate back to starting point
Snap T/C – How To

• **Stage 2** *(identical to Stage 2 of Double Spey)*
  – Rod tip sweeps from upstream out around far bank, then as sweep passes downstream shoulder, lift rod to 1 o’clock, finishing directly opposite target
  – *Accelerate into back cast*

• **Stage 3**
  – Rod tip “circles up” forming D Loop opposite target
  – Forward cast starts immediately
Snap T/C Cast – Faults and Corrections

• Anchor placement
  – Too far upstream; bloody L
  – **Correction**: Finish Stage 1 by drawing rod tip back downstream into starting position. This draws anchor into correct placement

• Losing the anchor
  – **Correction**: Slow down Stage 2 sweep; make sure rod tip passes below upstream shoulder before lifting; don’t lift too high at end of sweep.

• No load at forward cast
  – **Correction**: Need to pause longer at end of sweep to allow D Loop to form properly before forward cast is initiated
Snake Roll

- Developed By Simon Gawesworth from sequential roll casts.
- Beautiful, elegant, and quick
- Best for 90 degree direction change
- Alternative to Double Spey
- Can position anchor placement forward of caster when back cast space is limited

Fig. 2
Snake Roll – How To

• Start with line at dangle

• Stand with left foot forward, but with body mostly facing downstream

• Lift rod to 9 o’clock, then slowly draw the rod through a circle, starting back toward the rear bank, then accelerating forward toward the target bank (drawing to right)

• The fastest and most powerful part of the cast occurs as the rod turns back, cuts the bottom off the circle and sweeps into the D Loop formation (Fig 3 above)

• End rod movement at 1 o’clock key position, and deliver forward cast as line touches water with rod canted off at 30 degree angle from vertical.
Snake Roll – Faults and Corrections

• Anchor skips out behind caster
  – Usually caused by too much speed and power on the lift to the key position
  – **Correction**: Back off power in last portion of cast and slow tempo slightly as caster moves into key position

• Fly or line hits rod in the middle of the set up
  – Usually caused by too slow of a pace during the middle portion of the cast.
  – **Correction**: Speed up middle portion of cast

• Very open loop on forward cast
  – Several possible causes: casting from top hand, too low of a stop position, delivering forward cast from too vertical of a position
  – **Correction**: Engage bottom hand at stop; use higher stop position; deliver forward cast with tip canted off to side 15 degrees or more.
Underhand Cast

- Developed by Sweden’s Goran Anderson
- A fast, efficient, and powerful cast, that works very well with shooting heads (24-46’)
- Anchor is the leader, rather than the line, and leaders are long (15-20’)
- Forward cast stops high (11 o’clock) and cast is delivered by bottom hand
Underhand Cast – How To

- Start on left bank with line at dangle
- Face target and torque body to face dangle
- Do an abbreviated shotgun lift, then sweep to the side using body rotation
- Rod is held at 45 degree angle off vertical in sweep
- Steer the line with the bottom hand *(stirring a big soup pot!)*
- Circle up to key position and deliver forward cast
Underhand Cast –
Faults and Corrections

• Anchor skips out behind caster
  – Usually caused by too much speed and power on the lift to the key position
  – **Correction**: Back off power in last portion of cast and slow tempo slightly as caster moves into key position

• Open loop on forward cast
  – Several possible causes: casting from top hand, too low of a stop position, delivering forward cast from too vertical of a position
  – **Correction**: Engage bottom hand at stop; use higher stop position; deliver forward cast with tip canted off to side 15 degrees or more.
D-Loops and V-Loops

**D Loop Rod Path**

Path of rod tip as seen from side...

...produces this D loop

**V Loop Rod Path**

Path of rod tip as seen from side...

...produces this D loop
## AFTMA Spey Line Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line Type</th>
<th>Shooting Head</th>
<th>Short Belly</th>
<th>Medium Belly</th>
<th>Long Belly</th>
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<tr>
<td>Line Style</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Length</td>
<td>30’ – 40’</td>
<td>50’ – 60’</td>
<td>60’ – 70’</td>
<td>&gt; 70’</td>
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<td>Weight Point</td>
<td>40’</td>
<td>55’</td>
<td>65’</td>
<td>80’</td>
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Weights of various head lengths:  
*Proposed AFTMA Spey Line Ratings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line Weight</th>
<th>Sh. Head (in grains)</th>
<th>Short (in grains)</th>
<th>Medium (in grains)</th>
<th>Long (in grains)</th>
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<td>6</td>
<td>250</td>
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