The loop

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2011 - #1 - Winter

THE LOOP

The Federation of Fly Fishers Journal for
Certified Casting Instructors
winter 2011

CONTRADISTINCTION OF TERMS FOR EXAM CANDIDATES

by Gary D. Eaton, MCI

Terminology continues to rattle many candidates and befuddle conversations among anglers from different parts of the world. Even with publishing of word lists, assimilation often slows or encounters resistance.

An FFF alphabetical word list, ***FLYFISHING GLOSSARY*** is available here, on the FFF website:
http://www.fedflyfishers.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4447

This is different from the Casting Instructor Certification Program's "definitions" committee. The committee has existed for a while and their formal list of definitions for test takers has yet to be published.

I also find value in seeing the casting definitions produced by Paul Arden and other editors on his website. This working- group includes several FFF Master Certified Instructors.

In taking FFF tests, I found considerable variation in how one examiner or another defined a term or interpreted written items. Much of this is regional. There is also some local jargon, peculiar to a specific type of equipment, or waterways dominated by a particularly large club, or developed by a few anglers.

Sometimes an author will publish a wrong perception or be prickly about their intended definition being changed by the larger group of general users of the term or technique. These camps can become quite problematic in on-line discussion groups and at other gatherings.

Some examiners may consider a Puddle Cast and a Pile Cast to be identical. Others think that one of them is the same as a Dump Cast but there is conflict within the literature, on websites, *and* among examiners.

In resolving this type of lexicographic confusion, some go to the earliest written source while some go to the most recent, or "biggest-name", publication. Many other terms are similarly beset. (Nuanced meanings of *preload, double haul, tracking, hinging, rod action, slack, and taper,* being representative.)

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The Pacific Northwest & West Coast is highly influenced by Golden Gate Casting Club and Long beach Casting Club based terminology. There is nothing wrong with that unless you have never fished outside of North Carolina, can barely understand Yankee, and have never even seen a two-handed rod. Likewise, a shooting head aficionado may expect that your use of the term "turnover" includes nothing about rotation of the rod, or reversal of lake layers as temperatures change. They intend "delayed turnover" to mean a specific movement of the shooting head. They do not mean "delayed rotation" as in casting to prevent tailing loops. The confusion runs to being perceived as "unsophisticated" to being labeled as "unprepared".

So, be careful whose terminology you subscribe to. I suggest the following hints for candidates:

- Ask "What do you mean?" if you are unsure.

- Preface potential points of confusion with qualifying statements like, "I view that term as . . ."

- Have practice tests with people from different parts of the country.

- Interrogate successful and unsuccessful candidates about areas of confusion.

- Read the FFF newsletter for instructors, *The LOOP*, to see if there are terms you need to nail-down.

- Get as broad-based of instruction as you can.

- Read the recommended sources from articles like this one.

Conclave 2011

August 30 - September 3, 2011

West Yellowstone, Montana

BOG Meeting - Tuesday, August 30, 2011

TEACHING LOOP DYNAMICS TO BEGINNERS

by SOON S. LEE

In teaching loop dynamics we are all thankful to have references such as the Gammels' dissertation "Essentials of Fly casting", Lovoll and Borger's video analysis "The Rod & The Cast", and Richards and Perkin's casting analyzer studies. These accounts afford us background information for mutual understanding of the topic. But much more studies need to be done. At the same time wider and freer discussions should be encouraged before prevailing wisdom is etched in stone.

One preliminary lament I have is that we are often encumbered by poor economy of words in discussing fly casting. The term "loop with parallel legs" has superseded "parallel loop" presumably because the latter does not give us a clue as to what the loop is parallel to. "Perfect loop" seems too presumptuous and arrogant for humble folks. "Tight loop" has the implication of narrowness. "Good loop" begs the question what is better. Yet "loop with parallel legs" is always a mouthful orally and cumbersome written.

A loop of fly line has two legs. In this article I am humbly using the term "true loop" to indicate a loop with straight upper leg (as a contrast to a loop without straight upper leg). How this is preferable to "loop with parallel legs" apart from being a smaller morsel is open to debate. I may start off by observing that it is possible to manufacture a domed loop with parallel legs. Often, lovely wedge-pointed loops with straight upper legs stay wedge-shaped especially with short line carry, and their legs never become parallel. Anyhow to be persnickety, shock waves on the lower leg are hardly paralleled by the upper leg. Lest I be reminded that legs need not be one above the other, I hesitate to use the terms "fly leg" and "rod leg" because they require another level of explanation for the un-initiated. Besides, doing so is unnecessarily fussy. It is like my telling the professor of medicine that the upper esophagus would not be so if the patient is standing on his head (the patient's head of course). And should I suggest that there be a pharyngeal esophagus and a gastric esophagus, the professor will surely want my head.

It is worthwhile here to list the main varieties of loops that we see. Firstly the classic "tight loop", with straight upper leg hugging closely a somewhat parallel lower leg, in essence a narrow true loop. Then there is the "wide loop" with straight upper leg separated by a greater distance from its somewhat parallel lower leg, an abbreviation for wide true loop. The "tailing loop" has the upper leg crossing the lower. The "non-loop" is just fly line cartwheeling off the rod tip, scribing a dome with no discernable lower leg. Finally there is the hybrid, this quasi wide loop, pseudo non-loop, with barely appreciable length of straight upper leg and a yawning wide front

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end, rolling over the rod tip with a short lower leg. This is an "open loop", demonstrated by some students as a wide loop, by others as a non-loop. In a sense the students cannot be faulted. There is a brief attempt at SLPhence the short length of straight upper leg. There is an exaggerated convex tip path developing the wide front end. The existence of a lower leg is only redeemed because of forward impetus supplied by the brief SLP at the start of the casting stroke.

Coming to the topic proper, I fear that our approach to loop dynamics is convoluted. Teaching loop dynamics to the beginner has become very confusing. The use of SLP (straight line path of the rod tip) is fair enough, but the need to refer to RSPs (multiple rod straight positions), and maximum counterflex, and the moment loop is formed, with the attendant need for penciled diagrams and composite graphics, is an unwelcome complexity to the instructor. In my considered opinion, current definitions of "casting stroke" and "stop" are road blocks toward easier comprehension of the subject.

CASTING STROKE

In current usage, "casting stroke" begins at the start and ends when the rod comes to a stop, this stop variously said to end at RSP or maximum counterflex (only illustrating my complaint in the previous paragraph). We will visit "stop" again later.

I hope there is universal agreement that, thanks to the Gammels, casting stroke with straight line path of the rod tip (SLP) is a principal objective in fly casting. SLP produces true loop. The alternatives are concave tip path producing tailing loop and convex tip path producing non-loop/open loop. These latter loops may of course be employed in fishing situations, such as the tailing loop to present fly first, the non-loop for an under-powered curve cast, the open loop to lob a heavy fly. It is fair to say however that for distance, accuracy, utilitarian purpose and general aesthetics, the true loop is what we want our students to learn to throw.

The Gammels' "Essentials of Fly Casting" was a timely and worthy publication. The Gammels enumerate four essentials, namely elimination of slack, proper power application, appropriately sized casting stroke (they emphasize casting arc), and pause. These essentials promote the tenet of SLP. SLP results in the straight upper leg of a true loop. The Gammels attribute SLP as the reason for the production of tight loop. But SLP is also the reason for the straight upper leg of wide true loop. Can we not equally say that SLP is the reason for wide true loop?

If we accept SLP to be the *raison d'etre* for tight loop, then by default convex tip path must be the reason for wide loop. The beginner who moves the fly rod with wrist action only with no rod loading (convex tip path) will not get a loop (hence non-loop). He is waving his rod, not casting. Only SLP can produce straight upper leg. Once the beginner learns to apply sufficient force to load the rod then he gets a loop of some sort. He subconsciously adapts his casting stroke with stealthy lengths of SLP to throw open loop. Eventually to achieve greater distance he lengthens SLP further until he eventually throws wide true loop. But this change in his casting stroke develops slowly over time and may not be realized by the student. Queried at instructor examination, he cites by rote that convex tip path is the reason for his wide loop, but is unable to explain its straight upper leg.

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SLP is a highly regarded tenet in instructor education. Demonstration and explanation of loop control by the instructor candidate revolve around this maxim. We want the student to comprehend that a true loop has SLP, a tailing loop has concave tip path, a non-loop/open loop has convex tip path. But then we confound him by professing that SLP is actually just an abstract concept; that pure SLP does not exist in reality. All casting strokes end with convex tip path so that the line may overtake rod tip, otherwise the line would crash into the rod. Pure SLP through the entire casting stroke cannot throw a line. This brings up another consideration. Can pure concave tip path throw tailing loop?

The root of all this perplexity is the current definition of casting stroke. We should remember that somewhere between the start and the end of casting stroke, fly line is launched. Line launch is a seminal event, the importance of which has sadly not been appreciated. The point of line launch is more relevant in teaching loop dynamics than deciding when exactly loop is formed on a line graph. Line launch divides casting stroke into casting stroke before line launch (CS-BL) and casting stroke after line launch (CS-AL).

CS-BL can have different tip paths. SLP results in true loop, concave tip path results in tailing loop, and convex tip path results in non-loop/open loop. Unless we play havoc with the rod, CS-AL cannot alter the course of the launched line. CS-AL always has convex tip path. It serves a separate function (more later). We need new monikers for these unfriendly terms CS-BL and CS-AL.

Casting stroke as currently defined is a compound stroke, a sequence of CS-BL followed by CS-AL. We should not burden this term with two separate functions. We have always characterized casting stroke with a single function, e.g. to have SLP, or to have concave tip path. We refer to a casting stroke's length and its arc. Casting stroke sets up the line for launching. All these considerations fall in the domain of CS-BL. The term "casting stroke" should represent only CS-BL.

SUGGESTED DEFINITION: "Casting stroke" begins at the start and ends when line launches.

"STOP":

I regret the allocation of the term "stop" to strictly mean "a time sequence beginning when angular rotation and rod hand speed peak, and ending when the rod reaches RSP (reflects rod in first virtual rod straight position after unloading of line, definition preferred by Richards), or maximum counterflex (more closely related to RSP-2, second virtual rod straight position, definition preferred by Lovoll & Borger)". It is acknowledged that the act of stopping the rod is not one instant of time but a "sequence". I agree that "stop" is a phase. I only differ with the idea that "stop" merely represents the moments when the rod comes to a halt. "Stop" is more important than that.

"Stop the rod" is a traditional exhortation in fly casting. But it can discombobulate some. We would be better served if we prompt the caster instead to "let the line go" (just as we prompt the baseball pitcher to let the ball go at the end of his forward delivery rather than stopping his arm). Of course the two directives have the same intent, i.e., to launch line, but somehow the term "stop" has been usurped to idly define the distance between two points on a graph. Instead of its significance as an active verb it now is a sterile noun.

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We stop the rod by rod angular rotation to deviate the rod tip from SLP, letting the line overtake the rod tip. In contrast to the baseball throw however, the fly line launches but remains "tethered" to the rod tip. A brisk/short "stop" with quick angular rod deceleration results in a narrow loop. A gradual/lengthy "stop" with continued angular rod rotation and eventual deceleration results in a wider loop. For a 170 degree cast, there may be continued rod angular acceleration for quite a bit before deceleration brings rod to a halt with rod near horizontal.

Apart from determining loop size, how the rod is stopped affects loop shape too. For example, a thrust along the rod axis at "stop" reduces rod bend and promotes a pointy loop apex. Scribing a vertical line with the rod tip at "stop" creates a boxy front end.
We should recognize that "stop" is the process by which we launch fly line, not just a physical state of cessation of motion. How we stop the rod affects loop size and shape. "Stop" represents CS-AL.

SUGGESTED DEFINITION: "Stop" begins at line launch and ends when the rod bends maximally as it comes to halt.

There is this notion of a "stopless" cast. The distance expert with a 170 degree cast brings his rod to rest at a location far removed from point of line launch. This remoteness, let's say five feet, from line launch provides fodder for the claim that line is launched without the benefit of "stop". I would ask what threshold distance for remoteness qualifies for this recognition: Four feet? Three feet? All this is moot if we define "stop" for what it is meant to be, to let the line go. The instant line launches, the process of "stop" has begun.

POST-"STOP"
The entire cast can be conveniently divided into three parts for the purpose of discussion: casting stroke from start to line launch, "stop" from line launch to when the rod halts, and post-"stop" thereafter. At "stop" the rod at its maximum bend records the instant of time when the loop is at its widest (equivalent to maximum counterflex). After "stop", vibration of the rod tip governs profile of the lower leg. Rod tip undergoes rebound and damping. The rod tip thereafter drops slightly. This drop appears to correlate with a renewed loading on the rod tip from the weight of the lengthened loop in front. It is at this juncture that major shock waves appear, always a significant distance away from the apex of the loop.

REVIEW

We should now re-visit the lessons we put our students through earlier. We teach that SLP is the reason for tight loop. Actually SLP only promotes straight upper leg, nothing else. Ironically it is the "inconsequential" miniscule convex tip path of the rod tip after line launch that is the reason for the narrow loop size. To be accurate we can say SLP is needed for tight loop but we cannot say SLP is the total reason for tight loop. For tight loop we have been emphasizing casting stroke without giving recognition to the role played by "stop".

In the next lesson we teach that wide loop is produced by convex tip path. This convex tip path is actually the path traveled by the rod tip in a lengthy "stop". Convex tip path before line launch will not produce straight upper leg. At best with surreptitious inclusion of SLP early in the casting stroke open loop may be achieved. Wide loop with straight upper leg requires significant SLP in the casting stroke. For wide loop we have been emphasizing the "stop" without giving recognition to the role played by casting stroke.

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Now that we define casting stroke as ending with line launch we find that SLP exists after all. It is not a phantom idea. Concave tip path for tailing loop is equally not a myth.

It is true that video data show rod tip path to exhibit a mild convex tip path prior to line launch even though the loop eventually produced has straight upper leg. Perhaps this is another reason to say that pure SLP does not exist. I believe that in practice we all learn to accelerate the rod a certain way to produce straight upper leg in front of us, something which we can verify visually. If there is a convex lean it is because as casters we eventually learn to compensate for the effect of gravity on the line when we cast. Indeed on video fly line behind the rod tip becomes straight through "stop". Gravity continues to play a role so that the line following eventually trails below SLP.

To summarize loop dynamics with our new definitions for "casting stroke" (defined as beginning at the start and ending with line launch) and "stop" (defined as beginning with line launch and ending when the rod bends maximally as it comes to a halt):

- A tight loop has casting stroke with SLP for its straight upper leg, and a brisk "stop" with minimal convex tip path for its narrow loop size.
- A wide loop has casting stroke with significant SLP for its straight upper leg, and a lengthy "stop" with large convex tip path for its wide loop size.
- An open loop has casting stroke with brief SLP for its short straight upper leg, and a very lengthy "stop" with convex tip path for its widely open loop size.
- A tailing loop has casting stroke with concave tip path for its tailing upper leg, and a "stop" with convex tip path.
- A non-loop has convex tip path throughout the stroke, with no loop launched, only fly line cartwheeling off rod tip.
- Rod tip path may be SLP, or concave, or convex in casting stroke.
- Rod tip path is always convex in "stop".
- SLP is not a phantom tenet. It exists in, and is a principal objective of, casting stroke.

TEACHING LOOP DYNAMICS

Teaching loop dynamics should be a less daunting task. Dividing the loop into three components, upper leg, body (size and shape) and lower leg, we can lay out a simple set of instructions on teaching loop dynamics to the beginner.

UPPER LEG: The casting stroke governs profile of the upper leg. SLP produces a straight upper leg. If the student fails to produce such, prod him to pay attention to the essentials. In harmony with the Gammels' list of essentials I have a mnemonic for my students. Roughly in the order of sequence in a cast,

- S: slack, avoidance of;
- P: power/force, proper application of;
- S: "stop", to launch line;
- P: pause/drift;

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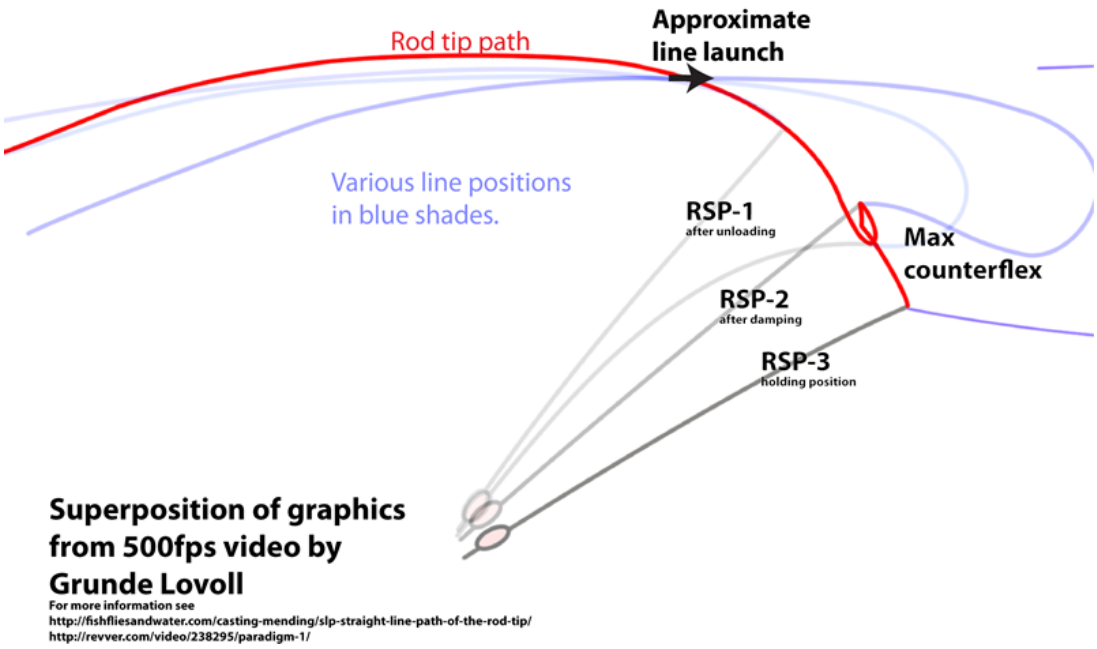
- S: stroke, arc and length supportive of line carry;
- P: position back-loop and fore-loop in line, at 180 degree separation;
- S: SLP, a tenet to observe by for true loop.

BODY (SIZE/SHAPE): The "stop" governs loop size and shape. If the student's loop size/shape control is poor, help him modify his "stop".
LOWER LEG: The rod after it comes to a halt governs profile of lower leg. With prominent shock waves the student should look into the reasons for excessive rod tip vibration.

Appendix: Ally Gowan's superposition of Lovoll's graphics (from Gordy's master study group site):



Appendix II: The point of line launch is actually difficult to ascertain in the laboratory. For tight loop with quick rod angular deceleration one may locate a point when rod tip acutely deviates from SLP. For open loop where SLP blends into convex tip path this point of launch may not be easily identified. Actually in the field the caster knows quite well when line launches: when he deviates rod tip from SLP, the rod tip suddenly lightens up.

The Casting Coach

by Louis Bruno

Living in the frozen north country of upstate New York it has become a ritual of mine to look forward to receiving the fly fishing catalogs and attending fly fishing shows to see what new things the fly fishing industry has cranked out for the upcoming year. I am never surprised to see that what is new is improved designs of what was old. New technology and materials implemented in what fly fishermen have used for years (rods, reels, fly lines, waders, and apparel).

Sure that may seem a bit obvious but I question how much changes improve one's ability to fish. The catalogs often leave the less flashy yet most important aspect of teaching to a small section of instructional books and DVDs authored by fly fishing pros who have documented their knowledge and experiences for our benefit.

As a licensed New York fishing guide and Federation of Fly Fishers casting instructor, I have seen the efforts of the retailers played out. I often observe well dress anglers with what appears to be new equipment having difficulty with their casts. New gear does not necessarily produce a better caster. I decided to create a fly casting trainer that could benefit every fly fisher.

As an instructor I am familiar with trainers currently available for us to utilize, and there are some effective trainers for an instructor to avail themselves. Knowing this I believe the trainer I developed is not only unique but also more thorough in improving casting ability.

Some criteria I decided on for the trainer included, an inexpensive price, easy to use and store, and of course functional (otherwise why bother). Most important I wanted the trainer to incorporate several teaching methods (Auditory, Kinesthetic, Visual, and Cognitive). For the most part I wanted everything. Not an easy thing to produce. So, I went to work and came up with my first mock up.

My task was becoming a bit too daunting for one person to achieve, so I asked my friend and now business partner, Cole, to lend a hand. Jointly we brainstormed without changing any of the criteria and successfully created a finished product, The Casting Coach.

First allow me to explain how The Casting Coach satisfies our design criteria, then I'll review how The Casting Coach satisfies the several teaching methods.

It will be inexpensive, especially when compared to the price of other fly fishing equipment. .

It will be easy to use; there are just the two components. Each Casting Coach comes with two small parts, the "Wrist Component" and "Hand Component". Both parts are easy to put on and adjust. In minutes each part is correctly adjusted for the individual rod and wearer, the user can begin to utilize The Casting Coach.

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It will be functional; by utilizing the four teaching methods the user learns to improve their casting in the way that works most efficiently for them individually.

1. Auditory (Hearing) – The Casting Coach has to exert enough force to separate the two parts. When done correctly you will hear a distinct sound on the back cast. The sound you hear is the separation of the Velcro.

2. Kinesthetic (Feeling) – When performed correctly the user should be training their muscles during the repetitive casting stroke, especially at the end of the back cast and forward cast. The user must exert enough force to separate the two parts at the conclusion of the back cast, and the user must exert enough force to join the two parts at the conclusion of the forward cast. By doing this The Casting Coach helps the user with their timing and manipulating the "power snap" portion of the cast.

3. Visual – The Casting Coach is used in conjunction with the fly line enabling the user to see the results and get immediate feedback.

4. Cognitive – The Casting Coach helps the caster to understand certain critical concepts of the forward and back cast, that being timing, and applying force.

Let's look at each part.

The Wrist Component – This piece has the longer straps, the foam pad and the "D" rings attached.

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Wearing the wrist component:

1. Position the Wrist Component with the larger end of the foam pad towards the elbow or away from the hand.

The taller end goes away from the hand.

2. Lay the forearm on the foam pad, extending the hand past the smaller end of the foam pad. Make sure when the forearm is lying on the foam pad that the thumb is pointing "UP" or in the opposite direction of the foam pad.
3. There are two adjusting straps, lay each strap over the forearm and thru a matching "D" ring. Pull each strap to ensure the Wrist Component fits snug against the forearm.

The Rod Component

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Attaching the Rod Component:

1. Place the Rod Component around the handle of the fly rod, making sure that the Velcro is on the outside and positioned opposite the fly reel. There is a cut out on the Rod Component to allow clearance for the reel.

2. Wrap the Rod Component around the fly rod handle then attach the mating Velcro to ensure a snug fit.

   After both parts are in place the user holds their fly rod as they normal would and simply begins the casting stroke. The user at the conclusion of the back stroke (the back cast stop) must exert enough force to separate the two parts. When the user does this they will hear the Velcro separate quickly. The noise should that of a quick separation rather than a tearing apart.

   At the conclusion of the forward stroke (forward stop) the user must exert enough force to compress the wrist component and rod component, effectively making sure that the mating Velcro parts are attached.

   So, within one stroke the user will perform the back cast separating the two parts, hear the Velcro noise, complete the forward cast joining the two parts, preparing for another completed cycle…stroke after stroke the two parts doing the same thing…separate than compress. If this is done with a complete rod and real outdoors, the line can be observed as well.

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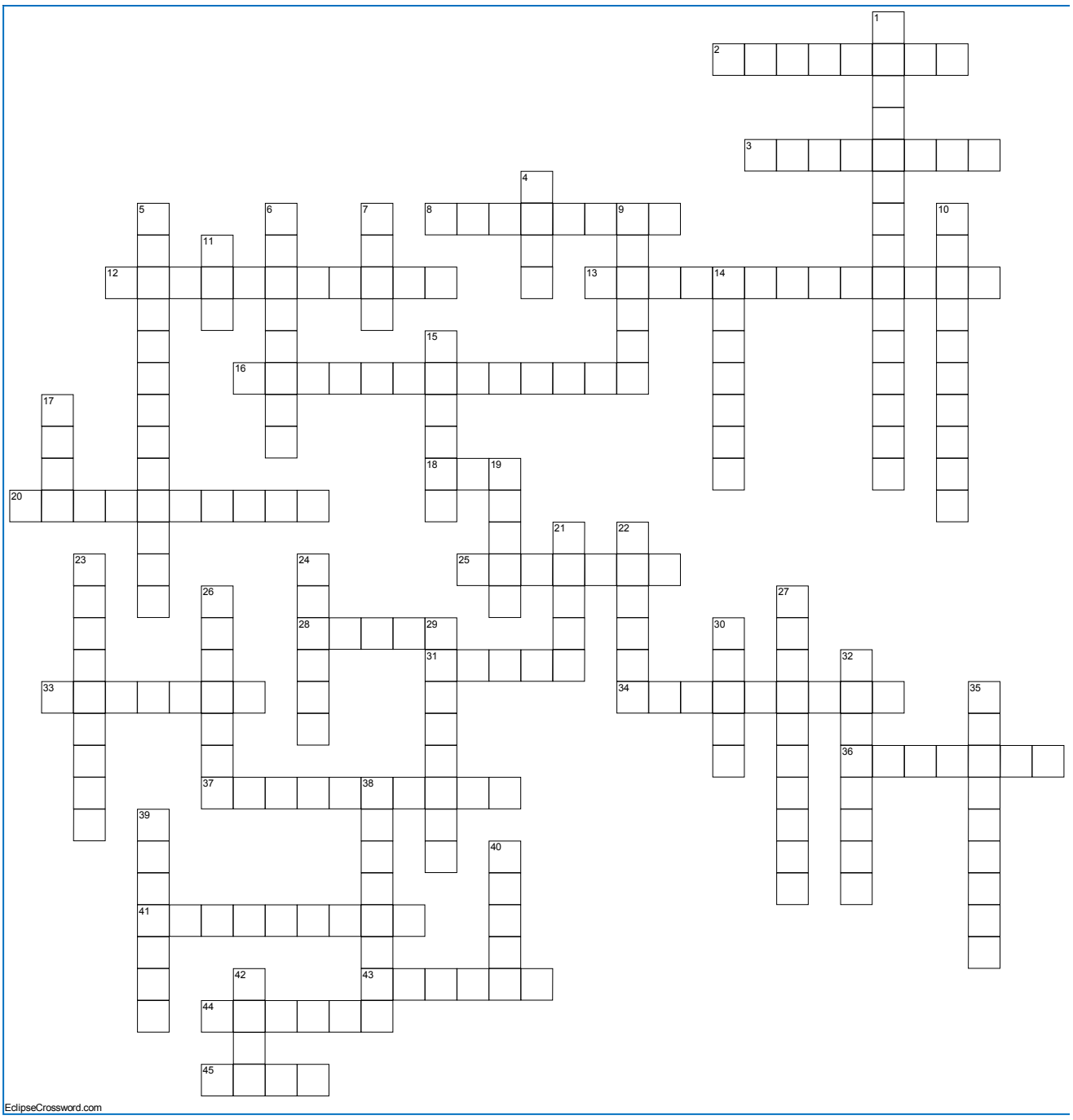
Here is a picture of how the two parts when used during use will look.

Cole Pflegl and Lou Bruno own and operate the Adirondack FlyFishing School. The Adirondack Fly Fishing School operates out of The Crossroads Adirondack Store in Chestertown, New York. Lou Bruno and Cole Pflegl also operate The Casting Coach guide service in upstate New York. They can be reached via their site WWW.TheCastingCoach.com

Crossword – Spring 2011 By *Pete Greenan*

Flyfishing - *continued on page 16*



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Fly Fishing

Across

2. casting nabob
3. tarpon species lat.
8. Maine river system
12. common casting problem
13. stroke section
16. Colo. river
18. parent org.

20. cast for downwind
25. Home of the Chattahoochee
28. insect stage
31. cast for corners
33. L'arc-en-Ciel
34. Gar type
36. Tenn. river

41. Chesapeake's beautiful swimmer
43. flexible lever
44. Instructor Floyd
45. Greenlee of the BOD

Down

1. arc
4. US rod maker
5. nymphing technique
6. annual meeting
7. an essential
9. travel distance
10. type of bass
11. good tip travel, abbr.
14. a finished hatcher
15. casting champion
17. common slamon.
19. artificial with fur and feathers
21. line guru Richards
22. FFF Chairman of old
23. toothy tropical
24. NY Casting School
26. ugly spey cast
27. stroke section
29. important performance task
30. pushing back
32. largest council
35. rowing dory for rivers
38. southwestern trout stream
39. CICP record keeper
40. adult aquatic
42. portly father of flyfishing

Notice to All Instructors !!

Attention all members! Barbara has been busy updating the Instructor's List on the FFF web site.

She is asking all instructors to look at their listing and send any changes/updates to her at:
Barbara Wuebber <fffoffice@fedflyfishers.org>

Check out your listing at: http://www.fedflyfishers.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4465

There is now a 'field' for Teaching Languages in the database and on the web site. If you teach in more than one language, please let her know which languages and she will add it to your listing. This helps when she gets requrests for testing in other languages.

We have also had requests for Instructors who can Sign Language. So far, we have two people on this list. Any others?

Please help us out. The FFF web site is supposed to help both instructors and students wanting to learn.

By keeping our database as up to date as possible, we can do just that. **Thanks.** Denise

Casting Board of Governor Awards

** The deadline for nominations is April 1, 2011

It is that time of year again! Time to make those nominations for awards. Did you know you could nominate someone?

Are you aware that the Casting Board of Governors has four different awards to present to individuals each year? It wasn't until recently that we had the opportunity to recognize individuals who have contributed to the success of our Certified Casting Instructors Program. So here is your chance to do so.

Nominations do not have to come from the CBOG for some of the awards. Although our Board is very diverse and come from all parts of the US and Canada (and now the world), we don't know everybody, so if you think someone should be recognized, the criteria for nomination and eligibility for these awards are outlined below and on the web site.

Our organization is on a volunteer basis and the success of the Casting Program is mainly due to the support and dedication of our members who believe in what we do. Sometimes alll we can do is thank them for a job well done. Now we can give them an award in appreciation for outstanding service.

The awards are as follows:

1. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN FLY CASTING INSTRUCTION AWARD
An award given by the Board of Governors (BOG) of the FFF Casting Instructor Program in recognition of those who have made significant contributions to the art of flycasting instruction.

2. MEL KRIEGER FLY CASTING INSTRUCTOR'S AWARD
An award given by the Board of Governors (BOG) of the FFF Casting Instructor Program in recognition of those who have made significant contributions to the FFF Casting Instructor Certification Program, have dedicated themselves to flycasting instruction and have shared their knowledge with others.

3. GOVERNOR'S MENTORING AWARD (new in 2010)
Awarded in recognition of continued support for the casting certification program in areas of administration, committee involvement or program implementation. Individual must be nominated, in writing by a CBOG or MCI

4. GOVERNOR'S PIN (new in 2010)
Awarded to a member or members for continued support of the program through mentoring, teaching and inspiring students. Individual must be nominated, in writing by a CBOG or MCI

Check out the details for nomination at: http://www.fedflyfishers.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4990

The nice thing about the two new awards - the Mentoring Award and the Governor's Pins is that more than one recipient can receive the award each year.

So put your thinking hats on and see if there is someone who deserves some recognition.

PEARLS....

From a Master Study Group

Hosted by Gordy Hill

Pearl #1 - ......Casting Instructor Exams

This discussion came about as a result of the poor pass/fail ratio during testing at the Conclave in West Yellowstone last August.

From Rex Walker - The perception some people have of the CI program confuses me. Too many of the people that want to take the exam seem to ignore the “Instructor” part.
The first question I ask anyone that asks for help preparing for the CI exam is “have you been teaching”? Unfortunately, the most common response is no.
Teaching experience is key to preparing for the CI exam. I just don’t understand why someone that does not like to teach would want to be certified as an “instructor”.

* * *

From Gordie -
I’m glad you brought that up. Some candidates have the mistaken idea that the performance exams are strictly “casting tests”. WRONG !
These are tests with emphasis on TEACHING. If you cannot teach, you will not pass. Period.
On the Master’s exam, the examiners can and often do request the candidate who has successfully demonstrated a cast or series of casts, to finish by teaching them.
After all, we are trying to turn out good **INSTRUCTORS** as the main objective of the CICP program.
Candidates should remember that they may pass every other task on the casting portion of that test but will fail to pass the test unless they pass **each and every one of Tasks # 18 - 24**. These are the Explain and Demonstrate teaching tasks under INSTRUCTING ABILITY.
The EXPLANATION must accurately match the DEMONSTRATION in a manner which would be easily understood by students.
As Masters, it is important for us to make this very clear to any CI candidates we are coaching.

* * *

From Guy Manning - Guy hosts a well respected Casting Instructors Workshop :
Rex wrote: “The perception some people have of the CI program confuses me. Too many of the people that want to take the exam seem to ignore the “Instructor” part.

The first question I ask anyone that asks for help preparing for the CI exam is “have you been teaching”? Unfortunately, the most common response is no.
Teaching experience is key to preparing for the CI exam. I just don’t understand why someone that does not like to teach would want to be certified as an “instructor”. “

What I see is that the CCI has become viewed as a gateway pass to the industry. About half of the people who take my Casting Instructors Workshop are looking to become guides or enter the industry at one level or another. This could be teaching classes at some private water they frequent, or using the CI as a pass into working for a shop. Others are in the workshop because they are already employed, but find they can improve

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their situation if they are certified. Some shops pay more for certifications but don't necessarily require the certified people to actually teach. I think these people don't want to spend their off time teaching when they would much rather be fishing, or at home with the family.

Many of the fly shops will take a CI Certificate as an acknowledgment of a basic level of skill and knowledge and assume that person will be a good candidate for employment. Plus having CI's on staff boosts the shops reputation. Years ago, back in the 90's, at one shop I know, everyone was told they had to become certified. Some of these same people have the certificate but have not taught a lesson in over a decade, if ever.

My estimation is that 1 out of 5 come to the workshop with the casting skills needed and one out of 10 with the teaching skills needed. They all leave with a much greater understanding of the cast itself and a higher ability to diagnose and solve casting problems. They are also infused with teaching and learning techniques and theory.

Of those who do, they usually go on to pass the test. I had one person who was probably the poorest caster in any of my classes, up until this past spring. He took the test 3 times over a 2 year period. I saw him at his second attempt and his casting was beautiful. But he failed because of lack of teaching skill. He worked on that by creating his own teaching opportunities and went on to pass the third time around.

By the end of the second day they all know what their own casting faults are and how to solve them, as well as an honest estimate of what they need to do to prepare further for the test. Most never take the time to do so.

So ultimately I see people who are not serious enough to follow through and improve. Having said that most of these same people have little or no exposure to someone who can mentor them over time and that is probably the biggest reason they don't pursue harder.

One last thing. I tell all of the people I work with that they need to have at least 3 different ways to explain any of the tasks in the test. I tell them to sit down and write out answers to any questions they think might be asked. I then tell them to put those answers away and come back in two or three weeks and do it again with a different set of words. Then repeat again in a few weeks. The act of writing helps implant the phrases in their brain. This helps them to be more verbally proficient during the test and gives them options in the way they present an idea.

Also: Use the Six Step Method when discussing any of the questions regarding casting faults. It guarantees to the examiner that you understand what is happening and how to fix it.

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From Dan Storaska -

My 2 cents on the topic of teaching experience required for the CI. I remember several years ago when I scheduled my CI examination with Floyd Franke as the examiner several weeks before the testing date, he requested that I bring my lesson plan for casting instruction for review. I was taken by surprise as I had not prepared any such documentation (nor could I find any reference to it in the CI prep material at the time which added to my anxiety!). I don't believe that this is a requirement, but I think that this was his way of analyzing how the candidate approached the teaching elements of the CI examination.

Most of my instructional experience at the time involved volunteer work 'teaching' friends, neighbors, members of my fishing club and interested students at local schools and cub scout packs, but I had not followed any sort of 'script'. I am fortunate in that my wife is an educator. In preparation for the exam, I sat down with her and put together a lesson plan based upon my earlier 'classes'.

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It was terrific preparation for the teaching aspect of the exam and actually, Floyd was very interested in the lesson plan and we spent quite a bit of time discussing it. I think that might be a very good addition to the current CI (and perhaps even MCI) examination.

This wasn't just a 'one and done' aspect of the examination. I am very happy I was 'forced' to put it together. I have used and continued to modify the plan since the examination and it is a great tool to keep me on track. I review it before most lessons I give and I continue to make modifications thereafter based upon things I've learned from the class. I usually give an outline version of it to my students as a syllabus when they arrive for a lesson or I print several copies for a larger class to hand out. It becomes a great reference for them as they understand the material to be covered and instructors expectations.

From Tom Scheer -

I was one of the candidates who didn't want to teach before satisfying myself via certification that I could do so effectively. Bruce addresses my concern with his comment regarding submitting ones students to poor instruction en route to ones own certification.

He rescued me by offering his remarkable assistance on my first attempt at certification. After the first few tasks, he offered to help me if I wished, as the test was not going well. What followed was one of the best learning experiences I have ever had, followed by other equally valuable sessions with him. This help required driving several hours each way but was the obvious and only option open to me. I wanted certification.

In my own defense, I was encouraged to test that first time by a CI who had been certified for quite a while. He was honestly very surprised when I failed.. Instances such as this are the reason discussions of re certification are appropriately ongoing.

In my own defense, I was encouraged to test that first time by a CI who had been certified for quite a while. He was honestly very surprised when I failed.. Instances such as this are the reason discussions of re-certification are appropriately ongoing.

From Mike Heritage -

Interesting discussion. The fact is that the CI test is built around instructing ability. I think it is vital that prospective instructors get as much practice actually instructing as possible. I was completely open with my guinea pigs. I did not charge them and told them they were helping me more than I was probably helping them. I still don't charge those that were brave enough to help me out. I have been lucky enough to help, and am helping, people who want to become instructors (my preparation for my MCI) and I always insist they do some practical instruction. The test would be extremely difficult to pass without actual instructing experience. The theory of instructing is vastly different from real hands on instructing.

From Ed Chamberlain (Col. U.S. Army, Ret.) :

I feel compelled to jump in here. I agree, in part, with Harry Boyd, we should look at our instructional methodology and preparation of candidates. Having said that I'll compare the successes with Army Ranger School, which has a similar first time success rate as MCI candidates.

There is a level of instruction that is a given;however, and this is a big caveat, there is a huge factor in desire and basic ability within the candidate. Not everyone who tries is cut out to be a Ranger, nor is everyone cut out to be a qualified instructor or Master, or does the level of preparation required. Please don't misunderstand....I am in no way comparing the requirements. Being a Ranger is in no way similar to being a Master. I simply use the analogy to make the point that there are established Standards and minimums. These are demanding and it takes a significant individual effort, (as well as a little luck and things going right during the exam) to pass.

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We need to guard against "standards creep" in making things more difficult because we remember how tough it was in the "Old" days, but we likewise need to recognize, particularly at the Master level, that those qualified reflect the standards of the Organization (FFF) and are the source of perpetuating standards.

The recognition that one gets an established level of expertise with an Instructor or Master is valuable and what the original vision of the Board was. I applaud Bruce, Dusty, et al, for making the exam STANDARD and we need to work to ensure the standards of both testing and demonstrated performance are universal. That is our current challenge, and one that your study group and others like it are addressing...Standardization of the whole shooting match. Once we have established that, we eliminate, or almost so, the variables of who the tester is and put the onus more directly upon the candidate.

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From Gary Eaton - Responding to a few in this series -
Paul Arden carries a legendary Master test performance of flawlessness. Clearly, awing the examiners, Paul first told me that the CI would not qualify to teach in his school (if he had one) and that MCI would be the absolute minimum. This led to my understanding that MCI remained a certification rather than a standard. This is due to the variety of personalities, emphases, experiences and methods preferred by the examiners. This is the point where I looked for mentors.

No MCI's lived within 110 miles of me. No CI's either. A CI study group on-line seemed to deviate in the wrong direction from the quality of teaching that my clients expected. The Gordy Hill study group often covered topics my students were not yet prepared to tackle. I drove the miles to teach with the only two MCI's in my state over twenty times. I shadowed them at first, then they *asked* me to teach with them or for them. Our first students get our weaknesses and inexperience. My buddies say I should refund my first instruction fees!

Before attending conclaves, I researched the skill level of presenters before signing up for their classes.I contracted Tom White for four private lessons that helped me as much as anything. A full day with Jason Borger focused on the MCI exam enlightened my overcoming a few difficult presentations. Tony and Marilyn Vitale made themselves available for intense instruction prior to Jason. Paying full retail for excellent instruction equalled ten times the free training I enjoyed. Also, not just taking classes that looked interesting, and surveying previous attendees made a huge difference in the quality of my learning. I wish the FFF more rigorously filtered presentations. Being an MCI (or Governor) does not automatically make your casting class great. My daughter recently started training at a very well-known university. Instructors are evaluated on-line for all to see. This transparency, and a strong institutional instructor development program, clarify choices for students choosing between sections of a course.

Approaching my third year of testing, I see failing candidates mentored poorly by under-experienced people. Largely, the difference between good mentoring and mediocre leadership is comprised of two elements -
1) Teaching People to Fly Cast
    a) volume - teaching LOTS of people and
    b) variety- if I taught with only one of my mentors I would, and did, fail the exam. I needed the gusto of a cadre of *experienced* certified master instructors.

2) Communicating Personality -
Tom White is the ultimate model, for me. I also by-passed being taught by some great Masters in-lieu of standing at their elbow as they taught others. This included Lefty Kreh, Tim Rajeff, Chris King, Al Buhr, Peter Hayes, and *many* others. I learned as much of what *not* to do as I did enlightenments. Encouragingly, I enjoy following many of my colleagues develop fantastic skills from pretty raw beginnings. I hope to refine my delivery and encourage those who politely cringe at my poor presentations. True friends tell me when something is weak and let me work on it or offer to help me refine and improve.

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Below is my checklist for test readiness that I posted on the Southern Council Forums-
at http://forums.southerncouncilfff.org/showthread.php?t=277

From Rick Brown -
My first test in New Braunfels went like this:
I thought the written portion was ridiculously easy. But you must be fairly well read and the best book for that preparation would be Gary Borger’s, Presentation. If you only read one book, this would have to be it. After that, Joan Wulff’s Fly Casting Techniques, Mell Krieger’s, Essence. Sheila Hassan or Al Kyte’s books are equal for techniques. Sheila’s book is designed around the CCI test. There are plenty of other good ones, depending on how deep you want to go,

I took the practical portion of the test with a BOG. The entire test took probably 40 minutes. He wanted short answers and almost nothing but short answers. “A loaded rod is a bent rod” and nothing more. Even though I accomplished all the tasks, I failed because my back loops and my forward cast loops were not the same. (my back cast loops were far too open) I agree 100% with his decision not to pass me.

You do not have to take the written portion again or pay an additional fee if you re-test within a year. This time I tested with a Master and a BOG. The test took almost 2.5 hours. I told them that I would keep my mouth shut for the first 17 questions, but I would be happy to answer any questions that they had. Well, they hammered me on almost every question. They not only asked “how” they asked “why.” For the reach mend question they wanted me to do it slipping line and not slipping line and what was the practical difference. After I did the pile cast they asked if I could do it another way, I could and did a check haul which is a n easy mend but a little more impressive than wiggling your rod tip. These are just examples.

Saturday I took the test again at Mountain Home.

The second half, “Instructing Ability” was even more interesting. Not only did I answer the questions on the test, but they would say ‘’you did that fine” but here is a “bonus” or an “extra credit” question. They might want an oral answer or a demonstration of a different way to accomplish the task.

It was pretty obvious that things were going well for me. The answer to the last question about wind coming from the casting side is the normal off shoulder answer. But they were on a roll and wanted to see it done 4 more ways including left handed, back cast presentation, elliptical and Galway..

In all honesty, I knew the material and I really enjoyed the test. The Master and the BOG were congenial, helpful and fun to work with. I would do it again tomorrow.

So here is the advice:
BE PREPARED for multiple situations. Do not use canned answers. Have a positive attitude. Engage the Master in the process whenever possible. Do not complain about the weather; they already know it is windy, cold,hot, rainy etc. Rehearse your answers orally, talk yourself through the test. Lastly, DO NOT quote anyone.

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Pearl #2 - .....Lesson Plan quiz.....

1) Do you teach the roll cast as one of the very first tasks for your new fly casting students ?
2) Briefly, tell us why.
3) Do you teach the PICK-UP-&-LAY-DOWN to your new students ?
4) Briefly, support your decision.
5) Include a brief outline of your lesson plan for the tasks described by Robin.
If your answered NO to 1) and/or 3), then submit an alternative lesson plan outline for your "brand new"students. Include time (minutes) devoted to each event.
6) Add commentary on how you would actually teach the subjects in your outline. Try to be brief and to the point.

From Gary Davison...

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

Step 1 : Introduction:
I would begin by covering the equipment with the Student: The Rod, Line, Leader, yarn fly so they feel at ease and know that no hook is at the end of the line. Takes the fear out of the task. Touch on Safety and the importance of knowing the wind direction when fly casting.
Show them the basic handling of the equipment. How to string the rod, then pulling line off the reel, address the drag system on the reel. Show them how to move the rod back and forth in front of them to feed the line out the tip of the rod onto the ground in front of them in preparation to make the cast.
General rules watch others around you when casting. 10 min.

Step 2: Demo the pick up and lay down cast for the students.
Explain why we use this cast to teach fly casting: Essentials.
Go through each step of the cast.
Make sure there is no slack in the line
Make sure they pick up or stage the line for back cast

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Make sure they make back cast back which is up and behind to Stop 1
Make sure they have enough pause after the back cast to let the line unfurl.
Make sure they make the forward cast with a SLP to a target located about head high in front of the caster to Stop 2.
Make sure they point the rod tip at the unfurling loop, and follow the loop and line to the ground or water with the rod tip.
Do it again.
Demo this cast about 3 times with the students watching and listening to your demo.
Have a very short debrief. 5 min.

Step 3: Have the students begin the casting task Pick Up & Lay Down, and work one on one through the group with your helpers.
When and if need get out in front of the group and demo the cast again to give them some visual feed back, plus verbalize the actions again to re-enforce all learning aspects your students may need.
When the session has been completed, stop and have a short recap and debrief with the students. 20 min.

Step 4: Then Demo the Roll Cast for the students.
Make sure no slack line
Make sure pull line in to position correctly to stage the line. Stop 1 position.
Make sure you have formed a sufficient D loop behind you.
Make sure you explain the principle of casting the line if right handed to the left of the line etc.
Make sure you make the forward cast to a target about head high in front of you the caster to Stop 2 position
Make sure your line extends over the ground or water to full turn over then falls to the ground or water.
Make sure you point your rod tip to the unfurling loop and follow the loop and line with your rod tip to the water.
Demo this cast about 3 times with the students watching and listening to your demo.
Have a very short debrief. 5 min.

Step 5: Have the students begin the casting task and work one on one through the group with your helpers.
Once the task has been learned stop recap with a short debrief. 15 min.

Step 6: Conclusion of of the lessons, thank your students for spending time with you and your helper's, & touch briefly on the FFF and the Local Fly Fishing Club or organization in the area that sponsored the event. Answer any question they may have about joining the organizations and provide sources for information to help them become better fly fishers. 5 min.

Hint: it is always good to have some on the side lines helping you keep on track with your lesson agenda. Time line for each section of the lesson need to be adhered to.

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From Dan Davala.....

1.) Do you teach the roll cast as one of the very first tasks for your new fly casting students? NO
2.) Briefly, tell us why. There is not always water present. (I teach in a wide variety of venues, one of which is a city rooftop)
3.) Do you teach the PICK-UP-&-LAY-DOWN to your new students? Yes
4.) Briefly, support your decision.

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The pick-up & lay-down introduces the very important concept of making a back cast.

5) Include a brief outline of your lesson plan for the tasks described by Robin.

5 Minutes - Introduce the basic principles of the fly cast. Explain/Demonstrate the Pick-Up & Lay-Down cast.
20 Minutes - Students practice Pick-Up & Lay-Down cast.
5 Minutes - Introduce the term "Loop" and the concept of the variable "Casting Arc"
25 Minutes - Students practice making wide loops and narrow loops on command by adjusting their "Casting Arc"
5 Minutes - Brief summary of concepts learned and recommended strategies for practicing

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

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

20 Minutes - Spread the group out, distribute rods (already strung and rigged with a yarn fly), ensure each rod has approx. 20' of line outside the rod tip.
Allow students to attempt basic pick-up & lay-down casts as demonstrated. At this point I am unconcerned with the results. I expect to see big loops, poor stops, lack of pause, and way too much power. This is all O.K., we will address it in part two. During this 20 minute session, I make my way around to each student, find *SOMETHING* to compliment, and suggest a few improvements.

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

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

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

(Continued on page 26)

From Michael Heritage....

1) Do you teach the roll cast as one of the very first tasks for your new fly casting students? No
2) Briefly, tell us why. For me, the essence of fly casting is loop formation and keeping a line in the air. I generally bring the roll cast in later and nearly always as a way for them to remove slack line below the rod tip so their pick up is taut.
3) Do you teach the PICK-UP-&-LAY-DOWN to your new students? Not as a first task.
4) Briefly, support your decision. I have a better method, for absolute beginners.
5) Include a brief outline of your lesson plan for the tasks described by Robin. 10 students for one hour is spreading yourself a bit thinly and is, arguably, not fair on the students, so #1 would be to try and involve another instructor, if possible.
#2 a brief discussion on safety.
#3 I would demo and describe the casts.
#4 while the group was close together, I might get them to pantomime the stroke for a couple of minutes.
#5 get them casting and gradually put the better ones with the slower ones until I had two or three manageable groups.
#6 move between each group, encouraging them to help each other.
#7 Thank them for attending. Tell them they were the best group you have ever had the pleasure of teaching but would they mind booking as individuals or pairs next time 'cos I'm getting too old for all this running around.
If your answered NO to 1) and/or 3) then submit an alternative lesson plan outline for your "brand new"students.
This is difficult for me as I tend to teach one to one or two to one. The student(s) may or may not know what they want from the lesson. The reply I hear most often to my question 'what do you want to get out of the lesson' is I just want to cast better. I can't make any judgement until I have actually seen them cast. I don't allocate any specific time to each event. I have had two students for two hours and at the end of the time one is double hauling and shooting line to sixty feet while the other is still struggling to master the pick up and lay down.
Include time (minutes) devoted to each event.
6) Add commentary on how you would actually teach the subjects in your outline. Try to be brief and to the point.
Gordy, I can't be brief. I first have to explain a couple of things. My teaching to beginners is based on two things. One is a 'no fault concept' (Mark Surtees will have to explain that one, it's his idea) and the other is a method Lee Cummings first introduced to a group of us a couple of years ago. Lee's method is so jaw droppingly simple we were left almost speechless after he had demo'ed it to us. With this method we can have an absolute beginner false casting 25' to 35' of line in less than fifteen minutes. All this with fantastic loops and good timing. I actually teach the pick up and lay down to give their arms a rest. I teach the roll cast to remove the slack they may have created during the pick up and lay down.

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From Ted Warren.....

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

Here's the outline I've been using. I look forward to improving it and learning how to be a better teacher.

(Continued on page 27)
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Beginner Fly Casting Outline

Introduction - 5min

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

The Pick-up and Lay Down Cast - 15 min

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

False Casting - 8 min

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

Stripping and Shooting Line - 10 min

Why Strip?

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

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Nymphing - 7 min

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

Roll Cast - 10 min

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

Landing the Fish! - 5 min

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

This is a lot of fun and a good way to finish up the class.

Pearl #3 - CI Test Question 21......

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Question from Tim Lawson regarding this task

INSTRUCTING ABILITY :

21. Explain and demonstrate the casting stroke as it relates to changes in distance.

Comments: (communication effectiveness, movement analysis, changes in stroke, error recognition, teaching fundamentals, loop size, casting angle, analogies, student involvement, line, rod, body, stroke length to line length.)

Pass _______ Fail _______

Answer from Mike Heritage...

First I used the mantra, short line short stroke long line long stroke. I then put two markers along the tape about six feet apart and side cast with rsp co-insiding with the markers. I then pulled another five feet of line off the reel and showed the new position of rsp on the tape and how I had to increase my casting arc because the extra weight of the line plus the slightly more power I had to apply the rod loaded deeper which meant I had to increase my casting arc to maintain straight line path and keep my loops tight.

(continued on page 29)
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From Robin Brown...

Here is what I understand regarding the two terms, stroke length and rod arc:
One mimics the other. If you have a longer stroke length, then you also have a wider rod arc to maintain the straight line path of the rod tip. So, long cast, long stroke length and wider casting arc; short cast, short stroke length and shorter casting arc. My question here is are there exceptions to the above?
I believe the arc also depends on the rod action. So with a slow-action rod one would use a longer arc. With a fast rod, one would use a more narrow arc.
The definition of rod arc as I understand it is "the angle of change at the rod butt between the back and forward casts and vice versa". I think of stroke length as "the distance your hand moves the rod butt".

From Mark Surtees...

In the simplest possible terms:-
Rod Arc or Angle or Casting Arc or Angle is the angle through which the rod rotates during a Casting Stroke.
Casting Stroke Length is the distance over which the rod has translated (moved without a change in angle) during a Casting Stroke.
Increasing Casting Angle allows you to apply more force for longer.
Increasing Casting Stroke length has the effect of "flattening" the arc and increasing the length of the chord subtended by any given casting angle.
Increasing either of these will increase the distance travelled and/or velocity of the rod tip, either of which increases the amount of work you can do to the line and so increases the amount of line you can cast.

From Gordy....

We have two problems going on, here.
1. The level of testing between CI and MCI.
a. I'd have accepted the answer which Tim says he received as a basic understanding of the principles and the demonstration matching the simple explanation. OK on a CI exam, in my opinion.
b. On a Masters exam, I'd expect the answer to be much the same. Then I'd likely request a much more detailed explanation. Here, I'd be looking for in depth understanding beyond the expected level of a CI candidate. That would include things such as matching the rod load / rod bend to the casting arc along with a reasonable description of each.
2. Asking for definitions as we test :
We have pointed out that as yet we have no agreement, let alone consensus on specific definitions between the various glossary committees and those who offer their personal "definitions".
This is why we have been working to achieve better commonality of description as we try to come up with accepted definitions. It will make testing a lot smoother once we have done that.
As we discuss these things, I begin to see a "light at the end of the tunnel". Most of those discussing our basic definitions are proceeding pretty much along similar pathways. The detailed wording remains the stickler.

Ground School

By Bill Keister

A few years ago I wrote, what I felt was very scholarly and yet understandable description of the simple physics that take place during a fly cast. While at a local fly show I had the opportunity to talk with Lefty Kreh. We talked about a lot of things, but during the conversation I mentioned that it might be valuable if a new fly casting student could gain a basic understanding of the physics that govern the fly cast. Lefty looked at me and said "They don't need to know about physics. I can teach anyone to cast in fifteen minutes. You just stretch a clothesline on the ground and tell them to cast along the line". That really hit me on multiple levels. The scholarly paper I wrote has never been read by anyone other than me.

A few years later when I was studying for my Masters Certification Test I came across Soon Lee's article entitled 'Teaching Beginners Fly-Casting – My Method' in the Spring/Summer 2006 issue of *The Loop*. I was struck by the simplicity of his process and in particular its reliance on self-discovery. This article is a must read if you have not done so already. It lays out Soon Lee's process which utilizes ground loops and starts with very short lines and progresses in steps to a reasonable fishing distance.

When I decided to start using Soon Lee's method for classes and clinics I inadvertently added the clothesline to the process. I think that the clothesline actually makes a very material contribution to the process.

I stretch the clothesline out on the ground. I have the student stand at the middle of, and facing the clothesline so that their rod tip extends about 12 to 18 inches over the clothesline. Starting with six feet of line outside the rod tip, I tell them to put the fly line down on top of the clothesline pointing in one direction. Next I tell them swing the rod, parallel to the ground, so that the fly line lands on top of the clothesline pointing in the opposite direction. I tell them to stop and evaluate each cast. Once they can put the fly line down on top of the clothesline consistently I have them lengthen the fly line by four of five feet. They are to continue the process until they have 30 feet of fly line outside the rod tip. Once they can do this I have them play around with making the line land above and below the clothesline. The process continues as Soon Lee describes in his article. We repeat the 5 to 30 foot process first with linked casts, then come off the ground to waist height and finally overhead. If at any time they lose their loop or timing they go back to the ground.

When I first started using this method I was totally dumbfounded. I could not believe the incredibly tight loops that beginners achieved in ten to fifteen minutes. It took me a while to reach a conclusion as to why the clothesline produced such immediate results. I think there are two reasons that make this process so successful.

Mechanically the process can only produce laser like loops. If the fly line is going to land on the clothesline the rod tip must end up on the clothesline. If cast starts with the fly line on the clothesline the rod tip is on the clothesline. If the student is standing with the rod tip 12 to 18 inches on the other side of the clothesline and the rod tip starts and ends on the clothesline the largest loop that can be formed is 12 to 18 inches. The really tight loops come in when you get distracted and a student gets out to 20 or 25 feet and you have not let them move the rod tip more than 18 inches over the clothesline.

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The second advantage and maybe the more important to the student, is that the clothesline provides visual reference points. I never really appreciated this until one day when I was working with a student who had a windshield wiper cast. We were working in my side yard. He started throwing really tight loops on the ground, but lost them each time we tried to come off the ground and move overhead. Then on one attempt it was perfect. I asked what he did differently and he told me he just used the ridge line of roof like the clothesline. He had visual reference points. Every good cast must begin and end with the rod tip in a certain point in space. Experienced casters know where these point are, inexperienced casters don't. When those points are defined by the intersection of the rod tip with the clothesline the guess work is eliminated.

The clothesline does even more. Managing the distance the rod tip is put on the other side of the clothesline determines the available casting arc which in turn controls several casting elements. Most students subconsciously realize that to make longer casts they must apply more power through the available casting arch. To power the entire arc and put the rod tip on the clothesline they must make abrupt stops. So they start using firm stops on their own. The additional power also tends to keep the rod tip close to the clothesline so they get a straight line path of the rod tip without thinking about it. The process also promotes a firm wrist. If they do not move closer to the clothesline breaking their wrist will bring the rod tip below the clothesline. Because the process starts off with the student waiting to see if the fly line is going to land on the clothesline most do not rush their next cast. And finally there is a real intangible and this is particularly true for poor casters who are struggling with the process. In ten minutes they see themselves making incredibly tight loops. They know that it can be done and by them. Now they just have to get it off the ground and into the air.

This method is not just for beginners. A large percentage of casting faults stem from not knowing where, in three dimensional space, the rod tip should be at the beginning and ending of a casting stroke. Many casters don't know how hard to stop the rod tip. They don't appreciate the need for a straight line path of the rod tip. All of these issues can be addressed with this process. Many times having the student cast along the clothesline allows them to correct their faults before anything has been said about the faults. Discussion comes after the fact when an explanation highlights what they were doing and how they were able to correct the faults with the ground loops.

The method is not a panacea however. Going from individual stokes to false casting on the ground is usually not too difficult although proper timing first comes in to play at this point. Coming off the ground, however, is a hurdle for many. At this point the caster loses their visual reference points and that in turn puts timing in jeopardy. I think what is needed next is an aid that provides that visual reference point in the vertical plane.

Although I am a great proponent of self-discovery there are a couple of things I address. One is a really awkward grip. I discuss the merits of extended index finger, V-grip and thumb on top and recommend thumb on top but tell them they can use whatever works for them. The other problem is failure to rotate the wrist. Normal overhead casts are made with wrist abduction and adduction (up and down). Because the student faces the clothesline and casts across their body this is a side arm cast. A side arm cast requires that the wrist be rotated 90 degrees, clockwise for right handed students and counter clockwise for left handed students. Left totally on their own, most novices will not rotate their wrist. Instead they use wrist extension and wrist flexion (side to side) for the casting motion. This has to be addressed before they start the process. I usually demonstrate how the hand is held for an overhead cast and a sidearm cast. I then tell the students that to preserve the relationship of their hand to the target they must twist their casting hand so that the palm faces up.

The beauty of this approach lies in its simplicity. The student is given one task and one task only, 'put the fly line down on top of the clothesline'. All of the elements of a good cast that the student acquires come as a result of the physical constraints provided by the process. While this is just another variation in the use of ground loops I think that the use of a clothesline is worthy of consideration.

New Fly Casting Forum in Balkans

FFF CI Djordje Andjelkovic in the middle with BOG examiners Raf Mascaro and Denise Maxwell

Our international members are busy. Djordje Andjelkovic, FFF CI, has started a new Fly Casting Forum for his area of the world.

The Balkan region (formerly Yugoslavia) includes Servia, Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Macedonia.

Check out the new forum. It is located at: www.FlyCastingNation.com

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We welcome your submissions via e-mail. When you submit an article(s), please attach a short (1-3 sentences) author/instructor biographical statement, including your location and Certification level on every article.
Also be aware that the back issues of the Loop are posted on the FFF web site. Any illustrations should be in JPEG format and submitted separately, if possible.
The Loop reserves the right to decline any submission for any reason, and to edit any submission.
Submissions may be sent to the editors or the National Office:

The Loop is a quarterly publication of the Casting Board of Governors for the FFF Casting Instructor Certification Program.

A Day on the River

by Aaron Reimer and Denise Maxwell

I met Aaron Reimer in the early 1990s when he walked into our fly shop in Vancouver, B.C. and wanted to learn to speycast. He was already an avid steelhead and salmon fisherman.

At that time, he lived in Ketchikan, Alaska and had flown down just to come to the shop. You may think of the expense, but Aaron works for Alaska Airlines and came on his time off. It is also not easy to get to Vancouver from Alaska, as you have to go through Seattle. He was determined to learn.

In 1995 Aaron moved from Ketchikan, Alaska to Kent, Washington, still working for Alaska Airlines. When he arrived, he placed an ad in the Seattle Times to get some speycasting students. He got five inquiries and 3 of them wanted to sell their SPEY rods.

Never one to turn down a challenge, Aaron asked them if they wanted to get together so that they could try to figure out what was wrong with their SPEY rods. The gentlemen took him up on the offer to help them and a tradition was started. They met at a lake near his home in Kent.

As it turns out, the problem wasn't the rods but the lines were wrong. The rods were 9140 Sages - all three of them but they were trying to cast with nine weight single-handed lines. Aaron saw this as an opportunity and realized that there had to be a better way to help people understand what speycasting was all about.

During the following weeks and months more people found out about the weekly gathering. With success, he felt he had to justify what he was doing. Not to go into details here, he decided that each participant would have an independent reason for being there and that together, they would benefit each other and the group's overall performance.

Photos by Aaron Reimer

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The gathering came to be known as The Day On The River (DOTR).

As the gathering grew, so did the number rods and lines that Aaron had available. Students could use these balanced rods during the formal classes and then the DOTR had the added resources of rods and lines for them to use or try new lines on their private rods.

The Instruction level grew and when Aaron and his wife, Sue, moved to the small town of Carnation, Washington, they purchased an historic building built in 1895 with the idea of opening a "Speyshop". The DOTR now had a formal home.

The growth of the internet provided more access to the flyfishing public and a better forum to work on the DOTR and other projects.

At about the same time, his Day job for Alaska Airlines introduced a new concept for informal training. The idea was that of the late Walter Gong's three paradigm teaching idea. In short it states that you have two participants who play three roles.

Aaron with some students

1. Role One: The Student whom the Instructor teaches.
2. Role Two: Shift to Instructor; the student will teach what he has learned.
3. Role Three: To the Instructor / Instructor who share what they both have learned with the others in the group.

This lead to the realization that the student is at the top of the hierarchy and that instructors are there because of them - instead of - in spite of them. Now when a new DOTR participant became a regular (now there were attendees who were coming weekly), it was with their help that more people could be helped who wanted to learn speycasting in particular and flycasting in general.

Over time DOTR became a weekly event that is held 49 weeks a year – weather permitting. Aaron's wife wants three Saturdays a year.

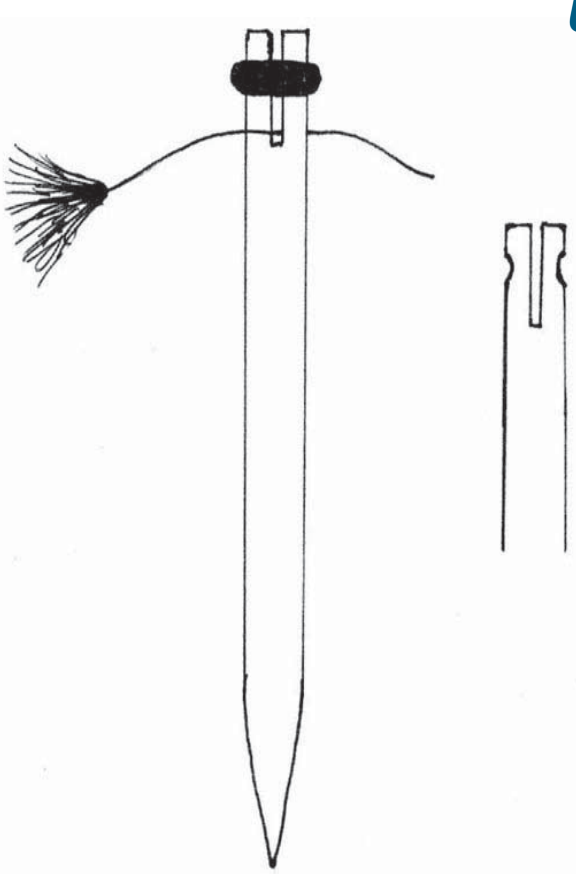
To add to the educational program, DOTR has brought in Guest Instructors to give a change of perspective and interchange of ideas on flyfishing. As well, equipment manufactures are invited to show their products and bring in their reps to show how their rods, reel, and lines vary.

Throughout the years, Aaron has built the instruction around those guidelines set fourth by the FFF. Along the way, he has taken his THCI and his CI. He is now on the road to the MCI.

Aaron can be found at River Run Anglers in Carnation, WA which is just east of Seattle.

Roll Cast Anchor

by Bob Smith



Roll-Cast Anchor

A Tool for Instructors

Bob Smith, CC I, Ventura, CA

When water is not available and you have to teach on the lawn, here is a simple tool to anchor the yarn fly when demonstrating or teaching the Roll Cast. It is cheap, easy to make, easy to use, works extremely well, and since it's about the size of a ball-point pen.... it fits in your pocket.

Just position the tippet, with the yarn fly, into the Anchor's slot as illustrated. Secure the tippet with the o-ring and push the Anchor into the ground. Because the yarn fly is anchored, it cannot fully complete a Roll Cast but the student will be able to see, and make, the fly line roll out beautifully. A distance of about 25' seems to work well.

Wooden dowel - 3/8" X 5"
O-Ring - 5/16" ID
Cut a tippet slot, about 1/2 to 5/8 inches with a thin coping saw blade
Cut a notch or groove to seat the O-Ring
Taper the dowel, paint it a bright color... and stick it in the ground.

Caution: Don't drop the O-ring in the grass or you may never find it.

Invitation

to

F.F.F Instructor Meeting

from **26. August** until **28. August 2011**
in **Deutschlandsberg / Austria**

Schedule:

Friday, 26. August

- Start - 5:00 p.m.
- Welcome Evening - 7:00 p.m.
- Gastronomic Specialities
- Wine Tasting

Saturday, 27. August

- Fishing on a scenic moutain stream
- Evening at a traditional wine tavern
- #5 Shootout

Sunday, 28. August

- Fishing and/or Casting Clinic
- Whatever makes fun
- End - 5:00 p.m.

Acceptances and Advices until EWF 2011 !

Bernd Wiesbauer and Wolfgang Heußerer looking forward to your visit !

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From The Editor

I don't know about your winter but I can't wait for the better weather. Too much snow (yes-Vancouver gets snow) and cold. Not much longer to go - already the crocuses are out and the cherry blossoms are on the way. Enough of the weather!

Cherry blossoms bring back memories of Japan. Some of our international events there coincided with cherry blossom time - beautiful!
The recent events of the devastating earthquake and resulting nuclear events are hard to imagine. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of our members there as well as the whole country of Japan.

Bill HIgashi is our BOG in Japan and he is okay. The internet is a wonderful communication tool.

This time of year also signals the time to make your nominations for our CICP awards. Please check the awards out on the web site, see who has already received them and see if you are ready to nominate someone. The Mentoring Award is a winner. Al Crise was our first recipient, Kirk Eberhard our second - do you know someone who qualifies? We can award more than one... Also the Governor's Pin is small and neat - check out the pic in the article. C'mon - get nominating! There is a deadline on April 1, 2011 so time is short.

A lot of time has been spent lately on the FFF Euro-Clave that is happening in Kolding, Denmark on March 25-27, 2011. We are hosting the first FFF European Conclave and hope to make it an annual event. We have organized an international certification event and workshops alongside the Fly Festival that is hosted and organized by FFF-Denmark every two years. Check out the Euro-Clave web site at http://euro-conclave.fffd.dk/ . We have a good offering of workshops.

Bulkley River steelhead flies...

Mark your calendar with the dates of the next FFF Conclave. The BOG meeting will be on Tuesday, August 30, 2011. See you in West Yellowstone, MT. (Oops - I need some new tent poles - the tornado last year broke mine!)

Spring is here and I think the Loop needs a spring cleaning as well. I am asking for readers to submit some new designs for the Loop logo as well as some artwork to insert in small places, such as the fly on page 3.
I can't promise you fame and fortune but I know there are some talented people out there and you will get your name in the Loop.
Already Djordje from the new Balkan Fly Fishing Forum has submitted a new Loop logo which may work.
If you doodle with designs, send them to me.

Wishing you a busy spring and don't forget to get our there and if you can't go fishing yet, practice your casting.

Talk to you soon.
Denise

CONGRATULATIONS

New Casting Instructors

Duncan O'Connell - Australia
Kouji Yano - Japan
Eamonn Conway – Ireland
Masahiro Iwatsuki – Japan
Brett Edwards – Thornton, CO
Gary Collings – Oakhurst, CA
Dalton Terrell – Arlington, VA
Derald Lahti – Modesto, CA
Giuseppe DeAngelis – Hazlet, NJ
J Mark Wilde – St Albans, VT
Chris O'Byrne – Mulberry, FL
Andrew Manley – Fairfax, VA
Raul Navarrette – Colusa, CA
Carlos Villaggi – Argentina
James Sommercorn – Scottsdale, AZ
Trent Jones – Arlington, VA

Paul Gallo – New York, NY (correction – last publication said Phil Gallo)

New Master Casting Instructors

Todd Somsel – Issaquah, WA
John Field – Weston, CT

New Two-Handed Casting Instructors

Jim Ansite – Park City, UT

Upcoming Events for 2010 - 2011

Danish Fly Festival/ Euro Conclave Kolding, Denmark	Mar. 26-27, 2011	International testing event
EWF Germany Fürstenfeldbruck, Germany Uwe Kaptein	April 8-9, 2011 Instructor FULL Master FULL	For more information, contact: Uwe Kaptein
Cressy, **Tasmania** Peter Hayes	Apr 15, 2011 Instructor (2)	For more information contact: hayes@flyfishtasmanis.com.au
St Louis, MO Gary Eaton	Apr 16, 2011 Instructor (4)	For more information contact: Gary Eaton
CI Prep Workshop for CI Ellensburg, WA Carl Zarelli / Don Simonson	Apr 30, 2011	For more information on Fly Fishing Fair http://www.washingtoncouncilfff.org/
GCC Conclave San Antonio, TX Jay Clark	May 6, 2011 Instructor FULL	For more information on Conclave http://www.gulfcoastfff.org/ Questions - Contact Jay Clark
CI Prep Workshop Sonoma, CA Guy Manning	May 21 - 22, 2011	To sign up and for more information, contact Guy Manning
Scotland 2011 Aberdeen, Scotland	May 13-15, 2011 Instructor Master Two-Handed	International Testing Event. For more information on the testing, contact Denise Maxwell
Maastricht, **Netherlands** William van der Vorst	May 14-15, 2011 Instructor (5)	To sign up and for more information, contact William van der Vorst
Malaysia 2011 Kuala Lumpur Denise Maxwell	June 1-5, 2011 Instructor Master Two-Handed	International Testing Event
Helen, Georgia **SEC Conclave - l** **Fly Fishing Festiva**	June 3 - 4, 2011 Instructor FULL Master (1)	For more information, contact Eric Cook. http://www.fffsec.org/z_festival11.html

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

Danish Fly Festival 2011

FFF Euro - Conclave

Kolding Denmark
March 26-27, 2011

FLUEFISKERMESSE

KFUM Hallerne i Kolding - Peter Toftsvej 21
Lørdag den 26. og søndag den 27. marts 2011
Begge dage kl. 10.00-17.00

www.flyfestival.dk

Arrangør: Federation of Fly Fishers Denmark