

2024 “Teach the Teachers” – Instruction Notes

A. Introduction –

1. RRF Fly Casting Instruction is based on FFI and GGACC terminology and instruction techniques
 - a. FFI Casting Instructor Certification Program
 - b. FFI Casting Skills Program
 - c. Fly Casting Skills Development (FCSD) Program – Fly Fishers International (NEW)
 1. Foundation Level
 2. Bronze Level
 3. Silver Level
 4. Gold Level
 - d. GGACC – Casting Skill Levels
 1. Level 1 - Beginning Fly Casting
 2. Level 2 – Novice Fly Casting
 3. Level 3 – Intermediate Fly Casting
 4. Level 4 – Advanced Fly Casting

B. Instruction Notes – Foundation Level and Level 1 – Beginning Fly Casting

Whenever possible, begin your instruction with how to assemble the fly rod and string-up the fly line. Cover the components of a fly rod (rod tip, guides, handle, reel seat, etc.) and components of the fly line (backing, fly line, tag section, leader). These are important Foundation Level skills.

1. Grips – 3 types**

- a. Pointer finger on top
 1. Pros and Cons
- b. Thumb on top
 1. Pros and Cons
- c. “V” grip
 1. Pros and Cons

** Purposely stay away from making a firm recommendation.

2. Stances – (for right-handed casters, opposite for left-handers)

- a. Right foot forward – Closed stance
 1. Accuracy
- b. Left foot slightly forward – Open stance
 1. Standard
- c. Left foot significantly forward – Wide Open stance
 1. Body turn
 2. Could create a tendency to move rod path off-line, creating casting problems

** Suggest the standard stance for beginning instruction

3. **Path of Rod Tip** – stress a straight path/plane for most efficient transfer of power

- a. The fly line **always** follows the **rod tip**
- b. A curved **rod tip** path results in a curved cast

Introduce the “Pancakes, Bacon, Eggs” teaching tool to illustrate how the flyline always follows the rod tip.

4. **Loop Control – Fly casting is about learning to control the loop size while casting a fly line.**

- a. When the **rod tip** is accelerated, it causes the fly rod to bend (**load**). The position of the **rod tip** at the **apex of the arc** (the furthest point away from the caster) during the acceleration stroke forms the “top” of the loop. Where the **rod tip** is abruptly stopped sets the “bottom” of the loop. The **rod tip** must **continue to accelerate** until it makes the abrupt stop.
 1. A **tight “J” loop** is formed when there is **less distance** between the apex of the **rod tip** (during acceleration) and the abrupt stopping point of the **rod tip**.
 2. An **open “C” loop** is formed when there is **more distance** between the apex of the **rod tip** (during acceleration) and the abrupt stopping point of the **rod tip**.
 3. Fly casters should learn to throw both tight (more efficient) loops and open (more circular) loops as both will be required in fishing situations.

5. **PAT – Pause, Arc, Tilt.** (When throwing loops of equal size while false casting)

Pause – the length of time the caster hesitates to allow the fly line to unroll before beginning the next casting stroke.

1. Shorter cast – less pause required to allow the loop to unroll.
2. Longer cast – more pause required to allow the loop to unroll.

Arc of Casting Stroke – the distance the **rod tip** travels to create the cast

1. Arc size is determined by amount of fly line that is being cast and is measured using the clock face.
 - Shorter cast, less line – smaller casting arc, less pause required
 - Longer cast, more line – bigger casting arc, more pause required
- b. Using the clock face
 1. Stress that the **12:00 position denotes the mid-point of the arc path** for whatever length of line is being cast.
 2. The **rod tip stop** should be equal on either side of the 12:00 (arc mid-point) position (10:00 – 2:00; 10:30 – 1:30; and so on) for a level cast. This assures equal loop size for both the forward and back cast. Acceleration should also be the same, forward and backward.

Tilt of Casting Plane – adjusting the trajectory of the casting arc

- a. Moving the start and stop points of your rod tip will move the mid-point of the casting arc
 1. Downward trajectory when hovering the fly over a target (accuracy). Midpoint shifts slightly forward.
 2. Upward trajectory when launching the fly higher (for added distance). Midpoint shifts slightly rearward.

** Care should be taken to stress that the **position of the rod tip** is what is referred to when instructing. Say **“rod tip” (rather than “rod”)** to avoid confusion.

Using the practice cones on the grass (illustrating the start, middle and stop points of the Casting Arc). Start with short line and demonstrate the “flicking” motion required to throw the flyline toward the target cones at each side. Emphasize keeping the line on a plane parallel to the ground. This is an opportunity to talk about PAT and to introduce “Climbing the Wall”. Also emphasize that the amount of the pause is directly dependent on the amount of flyline being cast.

C. Diagnosing Casting Problems

1. Six-Step Method - Cause and Cure

- a. Top down - Analyze from the top down to identify the **cause** of the problem
 1. What is the fly line doing?
 2. What is the fly rod (rod tip) doing?
 3. What is the caster doing to cause this?
- b. Bottom up – Determine **cure** and apply.
 1. What can the fly caster do with the rod tip in order to make the fly line do what is desired?

D. Roll Cast - (approximately 35-feet of fly line)

With elbow comfortably at casters side to begin (elbow will move upward) –

1. Slowly bring rod tip to 12:30 position, angling rod tip away from body so that the fly line drapes (forming “D-loop”) and is not hitting the caster. Stop at 12:30.
2. When fly line stops moving (providing an anchor), accelerate the rod tip forward and abruptly stop the rod tip at 10:00, (which will throw the fly line forward).
3. Lower rod tip to the water. **VERY IMPORTANT!** All rod tips should be on the water at the completion of the cast.

The instructor can count out the steps, making sure that everyone is performing each step correctly. **“1”...“2”...“3”...**

Off-Shoulder Roll Cast –

Rotate casting hand so palm faces forward. This will position the rod tip over the casters opposite shoulder. With palm facing forward, complete the following.

1. Slowly bring rod tip to 12:30 position, angling rod tip across the body so that the fly line drapes (forming “D-loop”) and is not hitting the caster. Stop at 12:30.
2. When fly line stops moving (providing an anchor), accelerate the rod tip forward and abruptly stop the rod tip at 10:00, (which will throw the fly line forward).
3. Lower rod tip to the water. **VERY IMPORTANT!** All rod tips should be on the water at the completion of the cast.

The instructor can count out the steps, making sure that everyone is performing each step correctly. **“1”...“2”...“3”...**

E. PULD – Pick Up Lay Down Cast – (approximately 35-feet of fly line)

Beginning with straight line and rod tip on the water –

1. Lift, then accelerate rod tip to an abrupt stop at the 2:00 position...throwing the fly line behind.
2. Pause (for 35-feet of line approx. 2 seconds)
3. Accelerate rod tip forward to an abrupt stop at 10:00...throwing fly line forward.
4. Lower rod tip to water.

The instructor can count out the steps, making sure that everyone is performing each step correctly. **"1" (back)..."PAUSE" ..."2" (forward)..."3" (rod tip down to water)...**

Using the Casting Noodles – To assist with stopping the rod in the right place. Instructor stands behind student and holds the noodle at the stop positions. When the rod hits the noodle, the student feels the stopping point. Same with the forward cast...and once the student stops, the forward noodle is removed to allow the rod tip to drop to the water.

F. False Casting – What is it used for? – (approximately 35-feet of fly line) To change directions, lengthen (or shorten) the casting distance, establish accuracy, dry a dry fly while fishing.

Beginning with straight line and rod tip on the water –

1. Accelerate rod tip to an abrupt stop at the 2:00 position...throwing the fly line behind.
2. Pause (for 35-feet of line approx. 2 seconds)
3. Accelerate rod tip forward to an abrupt stop at 10:00...throwing fly line forward.
4. Pause (for 35-feet of line approx. 2 seconds)
5. Accelerate rod tip to an abrupt stop at the 2:00 position...throwing the fly line behind.
6. Pause (for 35-feet of line approx. 2 seconds)
7. Accelerate rod tip forward to an abrupt stop at 10:00...throwing fly line forward.
8. Lower rod tip to water.

This is a good time to reiterate how the length of the line determines how long a caster must pause before executing the next part of the casting stroke. The Casting Arc will also change depending on the length of the line. **Also, note the proper point where the acceleration must begin to keep the fly line on a level trajectory.**

G. Review other Casting Materials (in handout) Advanced techniques.

1. Tools for teaching the Single Haul and Double Haul

Caster must be able to false cast on a flat plane before attempting to haul.

- a. Cones
- b. Practice sidearm (in front) so everything can be easily observed
- c. Timing – haul begins after the rod tip passes the 12:00 position
- d. Let the line fall on the grass between hauls, collect your thoughts
- e. When comfortable, keep the fly line airborne while hauling

H. Questions and Observations