

105TH ACA NATIONAL CASTING CHAMPIONSHIPS OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

Welcome the newest ACA Member Club: Catskills Mountains Casting Club, at the Castskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, Livingston Manor, NY

105TH NATIONALS OAKLAND, CA

The West Coasts clubs have been streamlining Nationals Tournament week and continuing to do so this year! Come compete in the Nationals hosted by the Oakland Casting Club (p.2)

LOSS OF TWO BELOVED GGACC & OCC MEMBERS

Let us not forget the accomplishments of these men, nor the friendships, experiences and tournaments we've shared with them. Two more gentle men we have never known. (p.4)

THE KENTUCKY STATE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Blue Grass Sportsmen's League near Lexington, KY puts on the "Mini Nationals" in one weekend! They are also holding an ICSF Accuracy Clinic on Friday! See schedule here or online at <http://www.bgslinc.com/> (p.5)

DRY FLY ACCURACY BY CHRIS KORICH

This reprint from an article first published in the Creel in the late '70s is great for beginners and is also a good reminder for some more experienced casters. (p.6)

GREAT CASTING TOURNAMENTS: KALAMAZOO 1906

**BY
DR. TODD E.A. LARSON**

This event was a "Who's Who" of casting and the formation of NASAC. As author Dr. Todd Larson writes, "The great International Fly and Bait Casting Tournament held in August, 1906 in Kalamazoo, Michigan was just such a dramatic affair. Held in the sweltering heat, it offered up some amazing scores as well as some great surprises, and had an important legacy for the history of the sport." This is Todd's first Creel contribution and it's a keeper. (p.8)

OAKLAND CASTING CLUB OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA HOSTS THE 2013 NATIONALS!



Oakland is the fifth busiest port city on our coasts. This very ethnically diverse city of approximately 400,000 residents, known for political activism was also once the home of author Jack London. Oakland is keen on environmental stewardship and is home to the nation's first National Wildlife Refuge, Lake Merrit.

The climate of this region is similar to that of the Mediterranean. Oakland only has 100 cloudy days a year. Across the East Bay, San Francisco beckons visitors to the Wharf, China Town, Nob Hill, cable cars, museums and other attractions. To the North, Napa's wine country awaits.

If you want to dine out in Oakland, Ramapo Valley Road has about a dozen good restaurants. Personally, I'll head to Trader Vics in nearby Emeryville on the water to cool off.

OAKLAND CASTING CLUB has over 100 members and

rapidly growing. The club has public programs for casting and fly tying instruction.. Members can enjoy freshwater and saltwater fishing outings and casting tournaments.

The current OCC president is Bruce Bowles, vice president is John Schuller and Tournament Director is Henry Mittel.- OCC Pools- McCrea Memorial Park 4469 Carson St., Oakland, Ca

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT CAPTAIN- Rene Gillibert

Host Hotel: Coral Reef Inn & Suites 400 Park St., Alameda, CA 1-(800)-533-2330 Mention ACA/OCC for group rate!

REGISTRATION: Registration will hopefully be open either at the Host Hotel or Accuracy Ponds on Wednesday July 31st-TBA

OPENING CEREMONIES: The Opening Ceremony will on Wednesday between 5-6pm.

DISTANCE FIELD: TBA

INFORMAL DISTANCE PRACTICE: Monday- Wednesday July 31st- 8:00 am till 4:00 pm.at local parks. (Opening Ceremony at 5:00pm)

ACCURACY POOL: OCC Pools- McCrea Memorial Park 4469 Carson St., Oakland, Ca

ACCURACY PRACTICE: Casting pool will be open .Wednesday July 31st.- 8:00am until 4:00 p.m.(Opening Ceremony at 5:00pm)

LUNCHES- Will be sold at Distance field and Acc. pond.

EVENT AWARDS: They will be presented before lunch at the Distance Field on Friday and the Accuracy Ponds on Saturday.

ACA AWARDS BANQUET- Tickets will be on sale shortly with a choice of entrees. The banquet will be starting with a no host bar at 5:30, dinner at 6:30 pm followed by awards.

105th American Casting Association National Tournament

Tournament Host: The Oakland Casting Club
Oakland, California

2013 - Schedule of Events

<u>Wednesday</u> <u>July 31st</u>	8 AM - 4 PM 8 AM - 4 PM 5 PM - 6 PM	Practice Day for Accuracy Events @ Oakland Casting Ponds Informal Practice for Distance Events @ local parks Opening Ceremonies
<u>Thursday</u> <u>August 1st</u>	8:30 AM followed by: Noon	5/8 oz. 2-Hand Spin Distance @ Distance field 1-Hand Fly Distance, 2-Hand Fly Distance, 5/8 oz. 2-Hand Revolving Distance Lunch
<u>Friday</u> <u>August 2nd</u>	8:30 AM followed by followed by Noon 3:00 PM	1/4 oz. Spin Distance @ Distance field Angler's Fly Distance Distance Awards Presentation Lunch Annual Business Meeting @ TBD
<u>Saturday</u> <u>August 3rd</u>	8:30 AM followed by followed by followed by followed by Noon	Dry Fly Accuracy @ Oakland Casting Ponds Trout Fly Accuracy, Cast-offs for Dry Fly and Trout Fly 1/4 oz. Plug Accuracy, 3/8 oz. Plug Accuracy Cast-offs for 1/4 oz. and 3/8 oz. Plug Accuracy Awards Presentation Lunch
<u>Sunday</u> <u>August 4th</u>	8:30 AM followed by followed by Noon 5:30 PM 6:30 PM	Bass Bug Accuracy @ Oakland Casting Ponds 5/8 oz. Plug Accuracy @ Oakland Casting Ponds 5/8 oz. Plug Team Event @ Oakland Casting Ponds Lunch No Host Bar @ TBD Dinner, Awards Banquet @ TBD

Loss of Two Beloved Oakland and Golden Gate Members



Photo by George McCabe

Tom Gong

Tom died on December 15th after complications from an autoimmune disease that destroyed his kidneys. After a four month long fight. At the time of his death, he was still serving as president of the Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club. He is survived by his beloved wife Elaine Gong. Tom will be remembered for his easy going, fun personality, his volunteerism and fair adjudication of the rules.

Over the years, Tom served as president of ACA,, Oakland Casting Club and lastly, GGACC. He is responsible for helping start many new casters. He held the Senior Men Angler's Fly Distance record, until it was broken by Cajun Bill, who Tom was coaching and used Tom's own rod! Tom began tournament casting in the mid-1980's and enjoyed fly-fishing with bamboo and old fiberglass rods in the new millennium. In his sixties, he began learning how to cast with switch and double-hand rods and enjoyed watching Spey-O-Rama at his club.

Tom earned a PhD from the Department of Zoology at UC Berkeley with an emphasis in cell biology. He retired after spending over 20 years as a research scientist in biotechnology. Everyone will miss Tom Gong.



Henry K. Fujita

To the members of the casting community:

Henry K. Fujita passed away on February 16, 2013, at 90 years of age. Henry's health had been deteriorating for some time, and issues with his lungs, and congestive heart failure ultimately caused his death. Henry's remains were cremated and buried at Sunset View Cemetery in El Cerrito, CA within steps of his parents and daughters grave sites.. Henry endured deaths of many people close to him, having outlived his Dad, Mom, brothers, daughter, and son in law. Tom Gong's recent passing was very upsetting to Hank. Both Tom and Elaine showed Hank so much kindness over the years, and were most responsible for reengaging Hank in casting many years ago.

Hank didn't have the unbroken years of participation in casting that Dick did, but his closest family were the members of the American Casting Association, the Golden Gate Casting Club, and especially the Oakland Casting Club. Our family is very grateful to the casting community for the many years of friendship, companionship, and competition that Hank enjoyed so much.- *Edited from an announcement from Robert Henry Fujita.*



**KENTUCKY STATE OPEN CASTING CHAMPIONSHIPS
MAY 18-19, 2013**

You are cordially invited to participate in the Kentucky State Open Casting Championships hosted by the Blue Grass Sportsmen's League-Casting Division. Please note that all distance events will be held at the Kentucky Horse Park's John Henry Polo Field in Lexington on May 18th at 8:00 AM. However, on May 19th, all accuracy events will be held at the Bluegrass Sportsmen's League, Handy's Bend Road, Wilmore, Kentucky beginning at 9:00 AM

KENTUCKY HORSE PARK JOHN HENRY POLO FIELD - LEXINGTON, KY - MAY 18', 2013
Starting at 8:00 AM (Please follow signs to the field which will begin at either of the two entrances into the Horse Park .)

- 18 G - 2-HAND REVOLVING SPOOL DISTANCE PLUG
- 18 G - 2-HAND DISTANCE SPINNING
- 7.5 G - 1-HAND DISTANCE SPINNING
- 2-HAND DISTANCE FLY
- 1-HAND DISTANCE FLY
- ANGLER'S FLY DISTANCE

BGSL, HANDY'S BEND ROAD, WILMORE, KY - MAY 19, 2013
Starting at 9:00 AM

- DRY FLY ACCURACY, MEN, LADIES
- TROUT FLY ACCURACY, MEN, LADIES
- BASS BUG ACCURACY, MEN LADIES
- ¼ OZ. ACCURACY PLUG, YOUTH, JR., INT., MEN, LADIES
- 3/8 OZ. ACCURACY PLUG, YOUTH, JR., INT., MEN, LADIES
- 5/8 OZ. ACCURACY PLUG, YOUTH, JR., INT., MEN, LADIES
- 5/8 OZ. PLUG CLUB TEAM EVENT

WALMART GIFT CERTIFICATES WILL BE GIVEN IN ADULT CLASSES:
DISTANCE EVENTS – REGULAR & SENIORS
ACCURACY FLY EVENTS - MEN, A & B; LADIES OPEN
ACCURACY PLUG EVENTS -MEN, A & B; LADIES, A & B

YOUTH, JUNIOR, INT. TO RECEIVE ACA REGISTERED TOURNAMENT MEDALS

PLAQUES WILL BE GIVEN IN THE FOLLOWING COMBINATION EVENTS:
DISTANCE PLUGS, DISTANCE FLIES, AND ALL DISTANCE
ACCURACY FLIES, ACCURACY PLUGS, AND ALL ACCURACY
GRAND ALL AROUND

ENTRY FEES:
MEN & LADIES = \$5.00 PER EVENT; \$50 FOR ALL AROUND ; \$25 FOR ALL DISTANCE; \$25 FOR ALL ACCURACY
JUNIORS AND INTERMEDIATES = \$2.00 PER EVENT
CLUB TEAM EVENT = \$5.00 PER TEAM (MAXIMUM OF 2 TEAMS PER CLUB)

LUNCH MAY BE PURCHASED ON SUNDAY AT THE ACCURACY POOLS

MOTELS CLOSE TO KY HORSE PARK
MOTEL 6 (EXIT 110) (859-293-1431)
HAMPTON INN (EXIT 110) (859-299-2613)
RAMADA LIMITED (EXIT 110) (859294-7375)
SLEEP INN (EXIT 108) (859-543-8400)

MOTELS CLOSER TO ACCURACY PONDS (BGSL)
COMFORT SUITES (859-296-4446
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS NICHOLASVILLE (800-465-4329)
RED ROOF INN (859-277-9400)
TURFMOR MOTEL (859-858-4839)

IMPORTANT NOTICE: THE ACA BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS DISALLOWED THE USE OF ALUMINUM AND BUDD PLUGS IN THE PLUG DISTANCE EVENTS.

The ICSF 7.5g and 18g Distance Plug are the ONLY plugs allowed for the distance events.

- **The ICSF 7.5g and 18g plugs are now permitted for use in the Accuracy Events.**

ICSF 7.5G AND 18G DISTANCE PLUGS WILL BE FOR SALE AT THE TOURNAMENT

Dry Fly Accuracy

Republished from a 1979 issue of the Creel

By Chris Korich

The Dry Fly Accuracy, like any other casting event, takes a lot of practice.

Consisting of five targets randomly placed from twenty to

fifty feet, a caster is required to make ten presentations (two at each target), taking as many false casts as desired between targets. All extending and shortening of the line from target to

target must be done while false-casting.

In watching someone cast the Dry Fly, especially an experienced tournament caster, the event can seem simplistic. Quite the contrary, to score well the caster must master basic fly casting fundamentals, such as line control, hand and eye coordination, and false-casting consistency. Unfortunately, most of our nation's average fly fishermen have not yet obtained these basic skills. On several occasions I have witnessed even so called "Expert Anglers", who supposedly can lay a fly within two inches of a feeding trout's nose, fail in presenting a fly within three feet of a Dry Fly target. I propose that many of us can stand some brushing up of our basic fundamentals. The Dry Fly Accuracy, for the novice tournament caster or even the non-competitive conscientious angler, is the place to start.

In trying to assist both the novice and the experienced tournament caster, who is possibly seeking his or her first perfect score, here are some suggestions with regards to the Dry Fly Accuracy:

TACKLE

Most casters use between an 8'6" and 9'3" rod. Because of the fact that weather conditions are always unpredictable at tourna-



Chris Lines-up on target

ments out like when fishing), I opt for the 8 1/2' length finding that it's easier to control on windy days.

Line weight obviously depends on your choice of a rod. Most casters choose an outfit that will handle a number seven double-taper. This is what I use, however, a six or an eight will also do just fine. You may wish to consider a fluorescent or bright colored line. This aids in visibility therefore helping you follow your fly. Whatever line you choose, keep it clean and lubricated with a good dressing.

With regards to a leader, there are many fine formulas being used by various casters. To save the inexperienced from having to experiment with fifty-thousand different leaders, I recommend following the specifications suggested by Steve Rajeff (Now on ACA website).

Lastly, the fly reel one chooses is relatively unimportant. As a general rule, the lighter the rod is, the lighter the reel should be. Do make sure, however, that the reel is filled close to its capacity (use backing behind the fly line). This will keep the line from becoming unnecessarily kinky.

Above and beyond, what's most important is that the outfit you finally choose for the Dry Fly or any other event be balanced and comfortable to cast. What's best for one caster may not be what's best for you. Experiment a little in choosing an outfit and then stick with it!

CASTING TIPS

When extending or shortening line between targets, false-cast a good five to six feet above

the water. Being that you're not actually attempting a measurement between targets, there's no reason to false-cast low and risk a chance of ticking. Once you're trying to measure a given target, lower your false-cast to about two feet.

In trying to spot your fly, follow your line-leader-fly from the time you stop your rod on the forward cast. In other words, as you're making the back-cast concentrate on the center of the target. Just as you complete your forward stroke with the rod, look up (without moving your head) and follow the line as it flows towards the target. You'll find with practice that spotting the fly over the target is much easier using this method, than by just concentrating on the target and looking for the fly to pop into your field of vision. By the way, don't be afraid to vary the amount of line you have out while measuring any given target. Sometimes, especially with poor light conditions, it is extremely helpful to over-measure and then under-measure a target. By doing this, the correct measurement can be found much quicker. Once you are confident with your measurement you should be ready to make the presentation.

STOP! At this point it is time to reveal the most important tip that I can give you: "**A good caster plays the wind.**" You will notice that even on the windiest of days, especially those where it seems to blow in circles, every so often the wind will either pause or at least become directionally consistent. Even if this is just for a moment, this is all the time you need. Make your presentation **now!**

You should also take advantage of **long pauses** in the wind to move from target to target as fast as (accurately) possible. Don't waste time making unnecessary false-casts. Yet on the other hand, **don't rush.** There's nothing wrong with using your allotted time. If your hand or arm becomes fatigued, throw the line behind you and rest.

Another useful tip involves observing where your fly is landing with respect to the target. Is it consistently long or short? This can be a valuable observation for your remaining shots for it tells you something about your measuring.

An observation that's a must is on the farthest target. After making your first round presentation, observe where your fly lands and take notice as to how much excess line remains hanging from the reel. If you scored a perfect, simply extend your line in the second round until the same amount of excess remains from the reel again. Even if you missed the first round shot, you still should be able to estimate what would have been the correct amount of line, and hence, have the second round shot pre-measured.

The object of the Dry Fly Accuracy is to score ten perfect presentations.

Hopefully the suggestions and comments which have been made here will assist you in achieving this goal. See you at the tournament!

(Editor's note: Trout Fly and Bass Bug Accuracy by Chris Korich will also be reprinted in the Creel.)

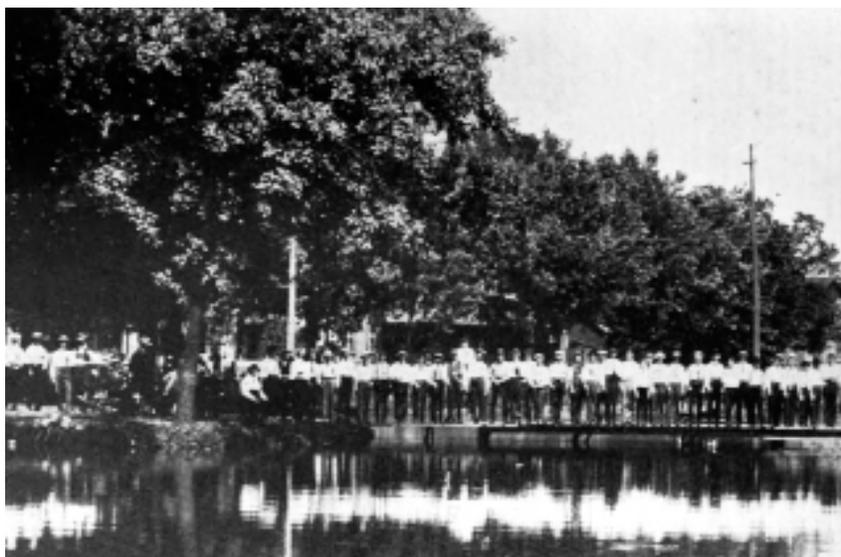
GREAT CASTING TOURNAMENTS: *Kalamazoo 1906*

By Dr. Todd E.A. Larson

Many years ago I was a competitive chess player. One of the ways I used to prepare for my matches was to replay games from the great chess tournaments, collected by any number of publishers over

reading about the great casting tournaments from the past. However, you will learn a lot about the history of the sport, and as the erstwhile Cliff Netherton always counseled, to understand where you came from helps you

ing Tournament held in August, 1906 in Kalamazoo, Michigan was just such a dramatic affair. Held in the sweltering heat, it offered up some amazing scores as well as some great surprises, and had an important legacy for the history of the sport.



The contestants at the 1906 Kalamazoo tournament line up for a group photo.

the years. I cut my teeth, so to speak, reading about Bobby Fischer's triumph at Palma de Mallorca in 1970 and Szymon Winawer and Wilhelm Steinitz's shared victory at Vienna in 1882. I guess it says a lot about me as a chess player that I was more interested in reading about the drama of the great chess tournaments than in playing in them.

Unlike chess, you probably won't learn to be a better caster by

to decide where you want to go. I suspect this is probably more true of the sport of casting than it is for most competitive endeavors, including chess.

With this in mind, I'm going to profile a number of the great casting tournaments in history, with the express purpose of capturing some sense of the drama and excitement surrounding such events. The great International Fly and Bait Cast-

As the September 1906 *Field & Stream* breathlessly announced, "It was a goodly gathering of lovers of the gentle art who stormed in upon the pretty and progressive little city of Kalamazoo to participate in or witness the events wherein the giants of rod and reel battled for the supremacy that betokens champions of the art." The national casting tournament was held as part of a larger festival; newspaper accounts note that there were four days of horse racing (trotters), a two day baseball tournament, a circus, and to culminate the week's events, a two day casting tournament billed as the International World Championship. While the *Oshoksh Daily Northwestern* (August 4, 1906) declared that Irish salmon casting champion John Glennon was going to compete, making it a truly international affair, I can find no record of him in the results. Contemporary accounts note that all of the hotels were filled, and many casting competitors had to be put up in privatehouses for their stay.

Michigan was home to a number of important casting clubs at the time, and all of them sent representatives. Lansing, Battle Creek, Delton, Grand Rapids, and of course, Kalamazoo itself all sent competitors. Ostensibly the Kalamazoo Bait & Fly Casting Club played host, but certainly the other local clubs played a significant role, as did the local Shakespeare Tackle Company.

As we'll see, the roster included some of the great casters of their day from out of state, from Illinois to Wisconsin to New York to as far away as Canada. And it wasn't just the tournament casters that made this event so special. Just a list of notable spectators gives you a sense of the kind of the importance of the affair. Noted reel designer George W. Upton made it up from Warren, Ohio; E.A. Pflueger, proprietor of the legendary Enterprise Manufacturing Co., traveled up from Akron; Charles Antoine of the growing firm VL&A made it over from Chicago, as did the University of Chicago's most noted piscator Harry English; rod-maker H.W. Buschmeyer of Louisville was there; and of course, the Wolverine state was well represented. James and William "Billy" Heddon from Dowagiac, sporting goods maven William B. Jarvis from Grand Rapids, and Kalamazoo's own William Shakespeare Jr. were just a few of the locals who turned out for this competition.

The two day event took place August 4th and 5th, 1906 and the weather was, to put it mildly, brutally hot. Tackle maker Jim Heddon, who wrote up the tournament often in the months preced-

ing it in his "Bait Casting" column in *The Northwestern Sportsman* magazine, declared in the May 1906 issue that "the tournament committee...is leaving nothing undone to make the tournament a great success." But despite the planning, not everything went according to book, as we shall see.



The big winner was Captain E.R. Owens of Kalamazoo.

One of the things that makes this one of the most important casting tournaments of all time was the fact that on Friday, August 3rd, delegates from eight casting clubs met to decide on the rules and by-laws for a national casting organization. The men who eventually decided on what would become the National Association of Scientific Angling Clubs (NASAC—replacing the National Bait & Fly Casting Association) were:

David Osborne (Kalamazoo, MI)
W.F. Church (Chicago, IL)
John Waddell (Grand Rapids, MI)

W.L.Rick (Kansas City, MO)
William Stanley (Chicago, IL)
O.F. Botsford (Racine, WI)
A.J. Winteringham (Aurora, IL)

As such, this tournament is considered the First International Fly & Bait Casting Tournament of the NASAC. Eight clubs originally formed the core of the NASAC, but it would soon expand to include many more casting clubs.

The tournament itself led off with Delicacy and Accuracy (fly casting) at 35, 40 and 45 foot distances. Twelve casters vied for the Diamond Trophy and eight prizes, but it was the great caster Fred N. Peet, using a 10-foot Leonard tournament rod (5¾ ounces) who won first prize with 99.33%. Runner up was I.H. Bellows with a 99.13% score. He utilized a 10' 5¾ ounce Leonard tournament rod. Third place went to W.T. Church with 98.4%. Church used a 9' 1½" VL&A (likely made by Thomas) weighing 5½ ounces. Those who didn't finish in the money included such legendary figures as Reuben Leonard, E.J. Mills, Jay B. Rhodes, and John Waddell.

Up next was the Salmon Fly-Casting event. Although Jim Heddon may have noted the tournament committee had planned well, sometimes things just don't turn out the way they are supposed to. I suspect the Irish salmon caster John Glennon did not make the tournament in time (perhaps suffering from travel problems). The event itself was cancelled when the rod shared by the only two contestants (and world-champions, by the way) was broken during practice. It was E.J. "Eddy" Mills of the legendary firm of Wil-

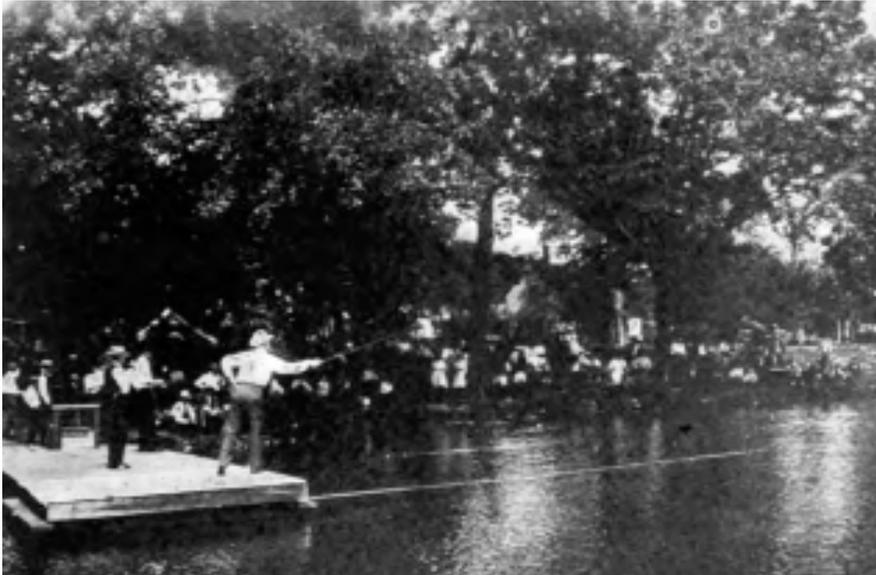
(Continued on p. 10)

liam Mills & Son who broke the rod, which was shared by Reuben C. Leonard.

The tournament got back on track with the third event, which was Delicacy and Accuracy (Bait-Casting) at 60, 65, 70, 75 and 80 foot

The third event was Distance and Accuracy (Fly Casting) at 50, 55, and 60 feet and seventeen casters entered. The legendary Reuben C. Leonard ran away with the prize with an amazing score of 99.4%. He (of course) used a Leonard 10 foot ½ inch 6¼ ounce

the title with a cast of 112 feet—a full 14 feet further than his nearest rival E.J. Mills at 98 feet. John Waddell came in third at 96 feet. All competitors in this competition used Leonard fly rods.



Abe Rabbers at Kalamazoo competing in ½ ounce accuracy.

distances—three casts at each distance and ¼ ounce weights. A whopping 27 casters competed but it was Bill Stanley of Chicago who came up the winner with a new world record of 98.87%. He used a 6' 4" VL&A bamboo rod weighing 5¾ ounces. The runner up, Abe Rabbers (98.4%) used a 5'2" 4½ ounce bamboo rod of his own make. Third place went to E.R. Owens at 98.27% and he used a 5' 8½" 5¾ ounce rod made by local tackle maker Jay B. Rhodes. Several competitors did not use split bamboo casting rods, including Ray Lum (he used a Tilden Robb-made Greenheart rod), E.M. Wurtenburg (who used a Lancewood rod made by L&R), and A.J. Winteringham (who was the only one to use a steel rod).

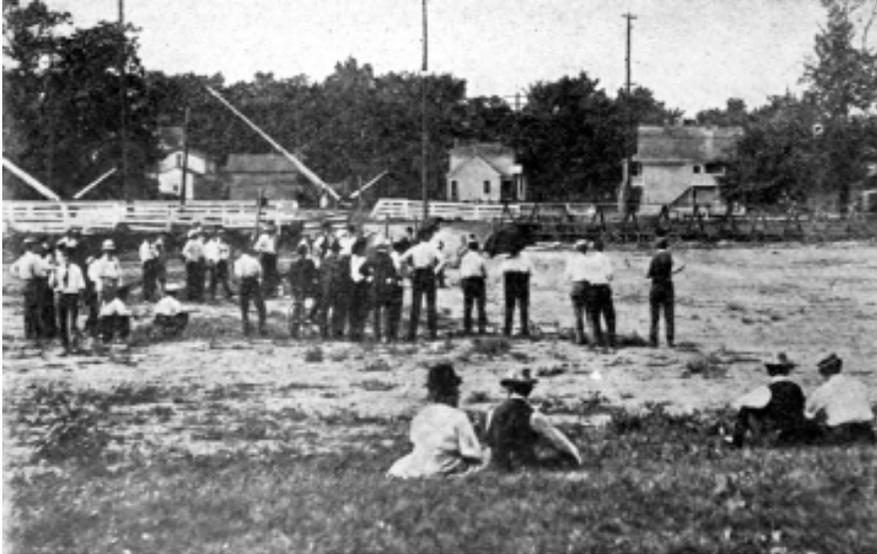
bamboo fly rod. Fred Peet was runner up with 98.73% (10½ foot Leonard weighing 8 ounces) and E.R. Letterman of Chicago took home third with the same 98.73%, utilizing the same model Leonard rod as Peet. There was probably not a better tournament caster of the day than Reuben Leonard, the H.L. Leonard Rod Company foreman since 1890, and the old man certainly showed why with an astounding score.

The fourth event was the always anticipated Long Distance Fly Casting event, with seven entries. Although there was little wind, the humidity made for tough casting and the distances achieved were rather short, even for the day. Of course, this didn't stop Reuben Leonard from running away with

The marquee event was held Saturday morning. It was the Distance Accuracy Bait-Casting, using a ½ ounce weights at distances of 60-70-80-90-100 feet, with three casts per station. An amazing 48 casters entered, vying for an enormous number of prizes (16) and a special silver loving cup known as the *Field & Stream* Trophy for the caster who hit the bullseye most often. The namesake magazine reported that the new day was even hotter than the previous. "This being the big event of the meet, it was hotly contested, although it could not have been otherwise, as the day was hot, so hot that the air was charged with stifling shimmering heat [that] three relays of referees and judges were called to judge the event."

The winner of this hugely important event was a bit of a shocker: Kalamazoo's hometown boy Captain Edward R. Owens. "A nervy little man of Kalamazoo," as the magazine anointed him, came home with a final score of 98.66% using a 5½ foot 5 ounce Rhodes casting rod. Since he also hit the bullseye five times he won the *Field & Stream* Trophy as well. Second place went to William Stanley with 98.46% and Abe Rabbers came third with 98.4%. Stanley used a 6'4" VL&A and Rabbers used a 4'9" rod of his own make.

The final event was the Long Distance Bait-Casting (½ ounce),



The ½ ounce distance competition attracted a lot of interest.

best of five casts, and here again Reuben Leonard was the odd-on favorite. Although primarily known as a fly caster, in bait casting he was “considered invincible, as he has acquired a habit of attaching long-distance records in order to place them on display at his tackle shop down on Park Place.” The weather was “perfect calm and torrid heat” and Leonard did perform well at 167.92 feet average, utilizing a Leonard rod and, interestingly, a reel “of his own make.” But the winner, in a shock as “no one even considered him... in the running” was Abe Rabbers, a Kalamazoo native who used a special 5’2” bamboo rod made by “Edwin D. Still, a clever metal worker of the city” and a Meek tournament reel. He came in with a fine score of 177.75 feet, ten feet longer than Leonard. Ray Lum took third at 165 feet using an L&R rod and Meek reel.

It was a rather amazing tournament that is historically important, and not just because the basis of the NASAC was formed here. A look at the list of casters who did

not finish in the money is a virtual who’s who of the casting world. Tilden Robb, W.E. Kidder, Fred Rhodes, Fred Peet, William J. Jamison, Benjamin Flegel, A.J. Winteringham, and E.J. Lockhart all were or became famous tackle makers and inventors. Leonard, Mills, Stanley, Peet, and Waddell were all hugely influential and legendary casters.

Of interest also is that a woman, Mrs. Ernest Bartholemew, competed alongside the men in the ½ ounce accuracy event. She finished in the middle of the pack, and ahead of legendary casters John Waddell and Ben O. Bush (who penned the tournament write up for *Field & Stream*) and Dr. Charles F. Browne, Treasurer of the newly founded NASAC.

From a technological standpoint, it’s interesting that when it comes to rod making, that although the majority of competitors were using split bamboo rods for both fly and bait casting, that some of the older styles of building persisted, at least in the bait casting realm.

Rods of Betharaba, Greenheart, Beefwood, Lancewood, and Steel are recorded to have been used, and numerous contestants built their own rods (it is recorded in *The Northwestern Sportsman* that Reuben Leonard even built his own tournament bait casting reel).

As the first International Fly and Bait Casting Championship, Kalamazoo 1906 deserves to be remembered not just as the birthplace of the NASAC, but as one of the strongest casting tournaments ever held.

Dr. Todd E. A. Larson, is a history professor at Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH, and the owner of the Whitefish Press, publishing books on the history of fishing. The Whitefish Press (<http://www.whitefishpress.com>)



The Creel

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