

The 95th Annual ACA Casting Championship WrapUp

There were many outstanding achievements at the 95th American Casting Association National Tournament, July 28 to August 2, 2003. The championships were hosted by the Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club and the Oakland Casting Club.

Here are just a few of the outstanding casting performances:

How far can you cast "1½ sheets of paper?"

Think of it this way: If you could take 1½ sheets of 8.5 x 11" stationery paper and compact them as tightly and as aerodynamically

as you can, how far do you think you could cast it with a spinning rod? 100 feet? 150 feet? 200 feet?

How about 325 feet!

Impossible, you say? It defies the laws of physics. Or gravity.

Well, that's exactly how far Steve Rajeff cast a 1/4-oz. plug in the one-hand distance spinning event at the ACA National Tournament in San Francisco, CA.

Incredible!

Some of the knowledgeable casters just shook their heads in amazement. "I think this record will stand for ever and ever," one of them said.

To put this amazing feat in

perspective, here are some of the winning casts in the three previous National Tournaments:

2000	Chris Korich	246 feet
2001	B. L. Farley	252 feet
2002	Steve Rajeff	299 feet

Rajeff's 299-ft. cast was a new record and many thought at the time that this distance would never be beat. But it was. By 26 feet.

Incidentally, Dick Fujita set a new record for the Senior Division with a cast of 267 feet. This was Dick's 55th National!!!

Watch out for the Revel brothers!

There have been a number brothers who excelled in casting: the Fujitas and the Rajeffs come immediately to mind, but surely two of upcoming casters are George Revel (age 14) and his brother Dustin Revel (age 13). George cast 126 feet in the Angler's Distance Fly Event!

Yeah, many fishermen think they can cast over 100 feet, but if they were to put a tape from where



The Nationals were held at the incredible Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club. Just being there was a reward in itself.



they cast to where the fly lands (not how much line shoots through the guides) most of them would probably be disappointed.

George's younger brother, Dustin, cast 109 feet. The Revel brothers, plus young Chris Walker, did very well in the accuracy events and the grizzled veteran fly casters certainly took notice. For example, in the Dry Fly Accuracy event, George cast 94, Dustin 92 and Chris 91. Remember, this is in a National Tournament where there is plenty of pressure. They cast in the Intermediate Division (ages 13-16) today, but surely they will be the champions of tomorrow.

Why are they so good? One reason is because of their casting coach, Guy Manning. We have a very interesting interview with Guy that we will run in our next issue.

Senior Bill Clements outstanding casting achievement

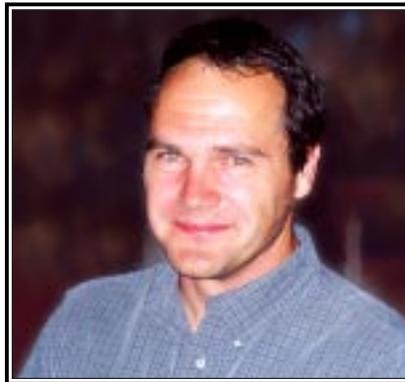
This was easily Bill Clements' best performance in a National. Casting in the Seniors' Division, he won the two handed 5/8 oz. distance spinning event with a cast of 364 feet; the 3/8 oz. plug accuracy event with a score of 93; the 5/8 oz. plug accuracy with a 99, topping all divisions and also tying Win Burke's ACA National record for seniors; came in 2nd in the Bass Bug accuracy (tying Tony Yap for first place but losing in the shoot-off).

"Cajun Bill" won the combined All-Plug Accuracy title as well as the All Accuracy (fly and plug) combined seniors championship.

That's a lot of gold for this Oakland Casting Club member. Amazingly, I believe he said he never won a gold medal at a National before!

Mittel captures Angler's Distance Fly event... and then some

Henry Mittel is one of the "new" champions in tournament casting. Whether it's distance or accuracy, plug or fly, he is a consistently superb caster. He has analyzed each



event meticulously and applied his "techie" knowledge to tackle preparation, but at the same time prepares himself mentally.

This was mostly evidently in the Men's Angler's Distance Fly. Steve Rajeff and Rene Gillibert—two of the best casters in this event—had already cast it. Steve cast 174 feet and Rene 173.

Up steps Henry. He is a long, lanky caster who obviously keeps himself in top shape. He works that fly line back and forth, with an incredible narrow loop and speed. He knows exactly how much overhang he needs. When he thinks that everything is right—with perhaps a puff of wind—he double hauls and that fly line, leader and fly soar and soar. 180 feet! He wins the event.

This is an incredible feat, because the rules limit the line weight to 310 grains (No. 10 fly

line) and length (30 feet).

In last year's National Rene Gillibert threw a fly 190 feet, tying Steve Rajeff's record.

Henry came in 3rd in the All Plug Distance, 2nd in the All-Fly Distance, third in the All-Distance, second in the 1/4 oz. Plug Accuracy, 2nd in the 3/8 oz. Plug Accuracy, 2nd in the Dry Fly Accuracy and 3rd in the Trout Fly Accuracy.

Almost for Chris Korich

In tournament casting, you obviously compete against your peers, but in some events/or combination of events, you strive for a personal performance. For example, no one has shot perfect scores and won three Gold medals in the three fly accuracy events in a National Tournament.

Korich shot a perfect score in the Dry Fly and Trout Fly events. He was up next in the Bass Bug Event. A silence prevailed among the gathering crowd. Most of us stood up. He hit his first five targets in a row. The sixth one is a tough one because it's 65 to 70 feet away. He hit it, but the crowd, sensing a historic event, remains silent and motionless. Korich hits the next three. Only two more to go. He misses the next one by inches. The crowd senses his disappointment. He misses the next one, too, because he is disappointed in not achieving what no one else has been able to do: Three perfect scores, three Gold Medals, in the fly games in a National.

(NOTE: Tim Rajeff shot three 100s in the 1981 National; he won one Gold and two Silver medals after the shoot-outs because of ties).

But Chris, as usual, wins or places second in a number of events and wins the Angler's All-Around which encompasses eight events, and comes in second to Steve Rajeff in the Grand All Around (all 12 events).

Women's Division —close competition!

There was some very interesting, intense competition among the women casters. Take the Dry-Fly Event. Nicole Kozicki shot a 93, while Peg VanNatter and Elaine Gong both cast a 92 (Peg won the shootoff).

In the 3/8-oz. plug casting Nicole Kozicki outcasts her mother Alice Gillibert by one point!

Peg VanNatter beats Elaine Gong by one point in the All-Fly Accuracy. In the 5/8-Distance Plug event Elaine Gong wins it while Alice Gillibert beats Peg VanNatter by a single foot for the Silver. In the 1/4-oz. distance spinning, Alice Gillibert beats Elaine Gong by three feet and Kate Blubaugh beats Nancy Burke also by three feet for the Bronze Medal.

In the Angler's Distance Fly Alice Gillibert casts 120 feet while Peg casts 117 feet.

New casters emerging

But there were new casters emerging, like Jay Clark who won the All Fly Accuracy—beating Chris Korich by one point.

I was very impressed with Randy Olson. The 33-year-old angler from Montana loves to fish “for any species that will take a fly” and became interested in tournament casting through web sites including this one. He started practicing in earnest about two months prior to the tournament. Randy did not win any events but cast with the poise of a veteran. In the Two-Hand Fly Distance event he cast 203 feet! Folks, that's two thirds of a football field.

I asked him how he went about it, what were his best practice casts and if he was nervous in his first National?

“I practiced for about an hour every day for about two months leading up to the National. I was able to practice distance casts in my

neighbor Viola Flynn's yard for which I am very thankful. I also set up hoops in my yard to practice accuracy. I was making progress in my practice sessions: My best in Two-Hand Distance Fly cast was 229 feet, Single Hand was 187 feet, and Angler's Fly, 148 feet. That was in practice; it's a lot different in competition. I wish I could say I was not nervous, but when Steve Rajeff is always right behind you in the casting order, and Chris Korich is judging, it is a little nerve racking. Steve has always been an inspiration to me because of his reputation as a great caster. Chris is a world-class caster also.

“The video camera was a key in getting my rod path to track in the same plane. I set the camera up at different angles depending if I wanted to look at my loop shapes and plane of my rod. Bruce Richards six-step method can really be used to analyze the stroke here.”

John Seroczynski elected to the ACA Hall of Fame

John Seroczynski has been casting in tournaments ever since he was a youngster. He has competed in many national, regional and local tournaments and is always among the top casters in many events. He has made the ACA All-American team numerous times.

Besides his casting skill, John, president of the American Casting Association, has probably done more to introduce casting to the general public than anyone else.

He often drops everything to drive hundreds of miles to promote casting to a potential club or a group of individuals.

He was the driving force in the revival of the Chicago Angling and Casting Club (nee Lincoln Park Casting Club). A few years ago the club was defunct. To date, it has hosted the 94th ACA

National Casting Tournament, various state and local competition, the first Indoor National tournament since the 1950s and on and on.



On a personal note, “Coach,” as he is referred to in my household, is the person who got me interested in tournament casting again, after almost a 45-year hiatus.

He loaned me fly rods, lines, and coached me numerous times.

I have won a number of gold medals (senior division) in Nation-

als and other tournaments, but none of these would have been possible without Coach's advise and ghillie.

He is a tough coach. On me, anyway. At the 95th ACA National he came up to me after the Single-Hand Distance Fly and told me that I stunk or goofed it up or something to that effect. He was right. I felt badly. I sulked.

Later I said to him, “Hey, John, I came in second...for the silver.”

“Forget that stuff. Chapralis, you need to practice and practice a lot. Your forward haul is too early...your loop is too wide...” and on and on. And so I practice.

That he was elected to the ACA Hall of Fame surprised him.

“This is one of my proudest moments,” he said. And he should be proud: for all he has done for the wonderful sport that is casting.

—Jim C. Chapralis

All-American Casting Tournament Revived

The All-American Casting Championship was one of the most prestigious tournaments during the “golden years” of casting (1940s & ‘50s). It was hosted by the Jackson Park Casting Club (JPCC) in Chicago. This legendary casting competition was terminated when the JPCC, became inactive due to changing times.

Recently the indefatigable John Seroczynski, president of the American Casting Association, thought that this classic tournament should be re-

vived. And it was. Casters came from Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, California, Texas and Illinois.

On August 23 the distance casting events were held at the Valparaiso University athletic practice field, Valparaiso, Indiana.

The accuracy events took place on August 24, at the Chicago Angling and Casting Club, in Chicago.

Here are the winners and their scores:

TWO HAND SPIN. DIST.
 1. B. L. Farley 373 ft.
 2. Dave Roberts 366 ft.
 3. Zack Willson 354 ft.

1/4 OZ. DIST. SPIN.
 1. Zack Willson 267 ft.
 2. Andy Statt 257 ft.
 3. Dave Roberts 255 ft.

TWO HAND REVOLVING SP.
 1. Dave Roberts 304 ft.
 2. Dick Fujita 302 ft.
 3. B. L. Farley 299 ft.

ANGLER'S FLY DISTANCE
 1. Keith Pryor 152 ft.
 2. Zack Willson 150 ft.
 3. Dave Roberts 149 ft.

SINGLE HAND FLY DISTANCE
 1. Jim Chapralis 166 ft.
 2. Keith Pryor 160 ft.
 3. John Seroczynski 160 ft.

TWO HAND FLY DISTANCE
 1. John Seroczynski 234 ft.

2. Andy Statt 226 ft.
 3. Zack Willson 215 ft.

TROUT FLY ACCURACY
Men's Division
 1. Jay Klenk 98
 2. John Seroczynski 96
 3. Dave Roberts 92

Senior Division
 1. Zack Willson 96
 2. Bill Peters 95
 3. Dick Fujita 91

Ladies Division
 1. Pam Peters 86
 2. Beth Statt 79

DRY FLY ACCURACY
Men's Division
 B. L. Farley 97
 Andy Statt 96
 Dave Roberts 96

Senior Division
 1. Zack Willson 95

2. Bill Peters 92
 3. Dick Fujita 92

Ladies Division
 1. Pam Peters 92
 2. Beth Statt 88

BASS BUG ACCURACY
Men's Division
 1. Paul Melchior 93
 2. Dave Roberts 93
 3. John Seroczynski 91

Senior Division
 1. Jim Chapralis 90
 2. Frank Galak 89
 3. Bill Peters 86

Ladies Division
 1. Pam Peters 91
 2. Beth Statt 79

1/4 OZ. SKISH ACCURACY
Men's Division
 1. B.L. Farley 60
 2. Dave Roberts 44
 3. John Seroczynski 42

Senior Division
 1. Buck Kipper 52
 2. Frank Galak 40
 3. Bill Peters 36

Ladies Division
 1. Pam Peters 36
 2. Beth Statt 18
 3. Nancy Burke 8

5/8 OZ. SKISH ACCURACY
Men's Division
 1. B. L. Farley 72
 2. Andy Statt 60
 3. John Seroczynski 50

Senior Division
 1. Bill Burke 50
 3. Frank Galak 50
 3. Dick Fujita 46

Ladies Division
 1. Pam Peters 38
 2. Mary Seroczynski 28
 3. Beth Statt 14





8th ACA National Indoor Casting Tournament

Will include the coveted All-American Casting Event

WHEN: January 23, 24 and 25, 2004

WHERE: McCormick Place, Chicago, IL

HOSTED BY: The Chicago Angling & Casting Club & The Chicago Boat, RV, & Outdoor Show

SIX DIVISIONS: Men –Women –Seniors –Intermediate– Juniors –Youth

EVENTS: **Friday Evening:** (6 PM) 3/8 oz. Plug Accuracy. **Saturday:** (11 AM) 1/4 oz. Plug Accuracy; followed by - Dry Fly Accuracy ; followed by - Trout Fly Accuracy **Sunday:** (10 AM.) Bass Bug Accuracy , then the 5/8 oz. Plug Accuracy (Time permitting – 5/8 oz. Plug Accuracy Team)

SPECIAL EVENT: We will cast the prestigious All -American 5/8 oz. Accuracy event on Saturday evening (January 24). If you meet the participant requirements for this event AND ALSO ATTENDED this year's All-American Tournament in Chicago you are eligible. Only casters who have placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in any event at an outdoor ACA National tournament are allowed to compete for this coveted traveling award.

FEES: Adults - \$5.00 per event or \$25.00 for all six events

Non-Adults - \$3.00 per event or \$15.00 for all six events

AWARDS: ACA National Tournament Medals (Gold, Silver & Bronze).

Combined awards will include All-Accuracy Flies, All-Accuracy Plugs and All-Accuracy (fly and plug events) and will be awarded in the Men's, Women's, Senior and Intermediate divisions.

Based on the success of the January 2003 tournament, we will have a second pool (80' x 30') for practice, competition, and public use, as well as additional bleachers on both sides of the main pond for spectators. We expect to have special hotel room rates for out-of-town competitors.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

John Seroczynski 1-219-464-1125 j.seroczynski@worldnet.att.net

Phil Seroczynski 1-847-358-4152 psero@earthlink.net

Online registration: <http://www.discoverboating.com/boatshows/Chicago/casting/>



The All-American Casting Championship trophy

Items for the serious caster...



The Umpqua Fly Line Scale

If you're like me—fly fished and cast for years—you probably have a collection of unmarked fly lines and have absolutely no idea what size they are. Sure, you know a No. 8 fly line is thicker than a 5 weight, but little else.

The *Umpqua Fly Line Scale* solves the problem nicely and inexpensively (About \$20).

All you need to do is measure accurately the first 30 feet of your fly line (without the leader). Then loop this line and using a piece of tissue or string (to hold the loops together) clip the line to the scale, hold it steadily and read it. The calibrations are in grams, grains and line sizes.

After you know what size your line is, mark it with a permanent black magic marker. I use a one-inch mark for 5, two-inch marks for 10 and half-inch marks for each additional size. For example a size seven would have a one-inch mark plus two half-inch

marks. I've tested the Umpqua Fly Line Scale against very sensitive balance scales and it is amazingly accurate. This item is one of niftiest new products for the fly fisher/caster.

A dial gauge that costs about \$50!

With so many events specifying different diameters for lines, or if you want to construct an accurate fly leader, a dial gauge is a necessity. Unfortunately many of them cost \$200 to \$300.

Now comes a dial gauge that costs \$50. I have no idea who is the manufacturer is or where it's made. Mike Carl told me about it.

I acquired it from Rusty Gates, who operates a fine fishing lodge on the Au Sable River, Michigan. Phone (989)348-8462; email him at gator@gateslodge.com

It comes in a hard plastic padded case, and includes a diameter to x (as in 5x, 6x tippets) conversion card.

I've tested it against the

expensive dial gauges and this one is absolutely accurate.

It's indispensable for the serious fly caster but also of good use to plug casters.

Use it to trim down your fly lines, buying tippets, mono shooting line, etc.





The rebirth of the Toledo Casting Club

During the golden years of tournament casting (1940-60s), the Toledo Casting Club (OH) was one of the more famous clubs in the United States and was home to Marion Garber, Frank Galak Bill Peters, Jim Kangas and other great casters. Through the years, interest in tournament casting waned, and the Toledo and several other casting clubs became inactive.

But tournament casting is on the rise again and the good news is that the Toledo Casting Club (TCC) has been revived with the help of Cabela's new super store at Dundee, Michigan and former club member Frank Galak.

In 2003, the new club hosted two important tournaments:

- *The Michigan State Casting Championship* on July 20th.

- *The Ohio State Casting Championship* on September 14.

Spinning, plug and fly casting accuracy events were held. While weather was a slight problem, the future of the Toledo Casting Club is certainly bright.

Because of its unique location (the store is located just a stone's throw from the Ohio state line), both state tournaments took place at Lake Cabela, Dundee, Michigan.

This area is ideal because of the numerous accommodations and restaurants available in various price categories within walking distance from the lake & Cabela's.

"We're very pleased with the

revival of the Toledo Casting Club," says John Seroczynski, ACA president. "We're indebted to Frank Galak who did the groundwork and, of course, to Cabela's for providing its lake and store facilities to tournament casters."

For further information:

- Write: Toledo Casting Club, P.O. Box 6963, Toledo, OH. 43612; call TCC's answering service at (419) 475-5865; or email FGskish@earthlink.net .

- Mark Rue (734) 529-4700 is the contact at Cabela's.

Perfect Scores

From Alice Gillibert: "The Oakland Casting Club, CA hosted a registered tournament, Sunday, September 28.

"Henry Mittel cast a perfect 100 in the Trout Fly event while Tony Yap scored 100 in the Dry Fly game. Both received their 100 Club patch with big smiles."

How to increase interest in casting?

Canadian casting champ and fishing author, Gord Deval, who has been through it all, offered a long list of suggestions on how we can popularize our casting sport. Here are just some of them (condensed):

- Every *fishing* club in the U.S. and Canada should be invited to participate in ACA functions (e.g., tournaments, seminars, etc.).
- Every ACA casting club

should nominate an individual to obtain a list of the fishing clubs in his/her state or province and *contact them*. *Communication* and *contact* is the name of the game in any growth attempt in any project.

- Every ACA club should elect one of its members to provide a hotline of information for the local and regional newspapers—through direct contact with the sports editors.

- Every ACA club should offer the sports editors free columns of information that would be beneficial to their fishermen-readers. The info would obviously lean in the direction of tackle and casting tips.

- All clubs **MUST** support fellow clubs in their area by attending their functions when invited. The ACA should more actively pursue and encourage this interclub competition and cooperation...

- Every club should contact the manufacturers of the equipment necessary to get beginners started so that each club can outfit these folks until they can equip themselves.

- As soon as someone has a basic command of casting principles and stroke, then he/she should be encouraged to teach and pass on what they have learned to others. One person in a club can't do it all.

- The little bit of lip service we give in regards to contacting the media (television, newspaper and magazine) about our principal

More short casts....

casting events (Canadian and U.S.) should be stepped up enormously. Let's shout it out, damn it, we're good at what we do and it can be darn interesting for anybody, not just fishermen.

Fly Fishing Masters TV show on the OLN

From Chris Korich: Just thought you'd all like to know that we represented tournament casting well at the *Fly Fishing Masters* Western regional casting event at the Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club (GGACC). Our five primary teams placed first through fifth as follows:

1. **Tim Rajeff and Steve Rajeff** (6,189 pts.)
2. **Bruce Bowles and Chris Korich** (5,802.2 pts.)
3. **Rene Gillibert and Matt Rickard** (5,698.4 pts.)
4. **Keith Pryor and Henry Mittel** (5,206 pts.)
5. **Bill Ward and Floyd Dean** (4,454.2 pts.)

Of the three remaining teams that qualified for the fishing portion, only the sixth place team had no tournament casting experience.

Individually, the top all around casters (distance and accuracy) over the two-day competition were:

1. **Tim Rajeff**
2. **Chris Korich**
3. **Rene Gillibert**
4. **Steve Rajeff**

On the production side, I think it would be safe to say that no casting competition has ever been captured for TV like this weekend. Barrett Productions had six cameras, huge gibs, booms, radio mikes on casters and an impressive staff of production people that pulled this off (with a lot of help from GGACC and Oakland Casting Club members!).

John Barrett has said that Outdoor Life Network will present

twelve 30-minute (prime time) TV specials and three of these will cover the various regional casting competitions (with Golden Gate receiving much of the airtime). Video tapes will be made available.--Chris.

Editor's Note: Since the above report, Steve and Tim Rajeff won the western fishing competition and will be vying for the national championship in early October with a chance to win \$30,000 (\$55,000 total cash prizes). Win or lose, this should be a big boost for tournament casting, because distance and accuracy are important integrals in the championships.

Besides being great casters, Steve and Tim are superb anglers and have fished many of the great places in the world.

Tim was responsible for managing the Pono River salmon fishing camp in Russia's Kola Peninsula.

When Steve isn't casting, he seems to be fishing.

We wish them the best of luck!

Need the best leader formulas for the fly-casting events?

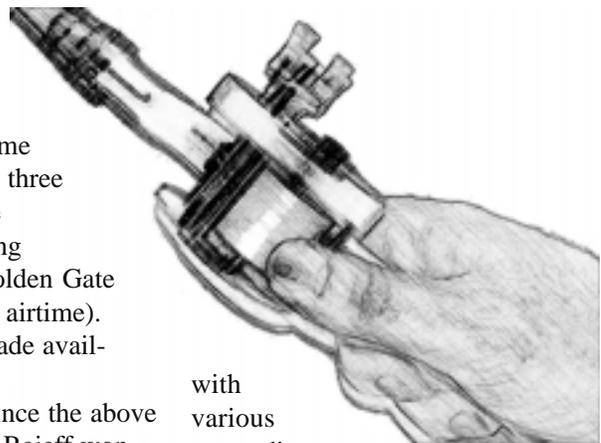
You can spend half-a-lifetime trying to design leader formulas for all the fly games, but through the magic of the internet you can obtain some of the best by visiting

<http://www.americancastingassoc.org/Equipment/Leaders.html>

(Or you can go to the ACA home page: www.americancastingassoc.org/ click on *Miscellaneous* then *Equipment* and then *leaders*.)

You'll find leader formulas by Steve Rajeff, Chris Korich and John Napoli. We thank them for sharing these formulas with us.

They've invested countless of hours casting and experimenting



with various mono diameters and lengths.

We also thank Henry Mittel who has done an excellent job in maintaining the ACA website. I believe he did the schematics of the leader formulas.

And a great big thanks to Elaine Gong....

The ACA, casters and all of us associated with tournament casting thank Elaine Gong for producing *The Creel* in the past.

Folks, it ain't easy.

Thanks, Elaine.

The Creel

the official newsletter of the *American Casting Association* is published several times a year.

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