

ROD AND GUN

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BAIT casting differs materially from fly casting.

The movements in executing the overhead cast, which is the first style that should be acquired, are three—the address, the recovery and the delivery. In the address the arm is extended and the rod is pointed toward the point of objective at an angle slightly above the horizontal. The rod should be turned so that the reel handle points straight up. There can be about six or eight inches of line between the weight or lure and the rod tip, although the distance will vary, depending upon the relationship of the weight of the lure and the action of the rod.

The recovery is executed by swinging the rod back over the right shoulder. This movement should be made quickly enough to keep the weight extended away from the rod tip on the backward movement and should be checked at a point behind the vertical. This point will be governed entirely by the action of the rod and the speed of the reel. As the backward movement is checked the weight passes over the end of the rod and exerts a pull toward the rear, causing the rod quickly to reverse its bend.

As the rod pulls toward the rear the delivery is begun, at first slowly, but accelerating the movement until it ends with a sharp snap in exactly the same position as was held in the address. During the cast the thumb is held tightly on the line on the spool, but as the rod nears the delivery the thumb pressure is released slightly and the bait begins its outward flight.

How to Avoid Backlash

If the reel contains no anti-backlash device its speed must be controlled by a light pressure of the thumb, which is increased as the weight slows up at the end of the cast. This is done to prevent the spool of the reel turning faster than the line is going out, and neglect in thumbing causes the spool to overrun, resulting in that bane of the bait-caster's existence—the backlash.

The thumb pressure should be just sufficient to keep the spool revolving at the same rate of speed at which the line is leaving it. If the pressure is too great the cast is retarded; if it is too light a backlash results. But if the cast has been correctly executed the bait will fly out in arching flight, the distance being largely controlled by the quality of the tackle and the proficiency of the caster.

The main points to keep in mind are that the cast begins and ends at exactly the same position and that practice alone will produce that co-ordination of arm and wrist muscles that assures a skillful recovery and delivery. Most beginners make the mistake of employing too much force in their cast. The rod and reel were built to do the work, and it is possible to make casts of sixty to eighty feet, which is long enough for practical fishing purposes, with an easy flip of the wrist.

Correct spooling of the line when retrieving the bait is as necessary to good casting as the actual movements of the cast itself. If the line is spooled unevenly a backlash generally results on the next cast, and unless the reel is equipped with a level-winding device the angler must guide the line evenly onto the spool with the fingers of his left hand.

Need Variety of Lures

Some anglers appear to feel it

necessary to carry a large variety of artificial lures. We have never found this necessary, and for fishing waters such as the Croton Watershed, Champlain and the Adirondacks we like our collection to include a pork-rind spinner, one or two diving baits and the same number of sinkers and top-water plug for evening and night work.

Bass are caught on artificial lures along the shores, reefs and weed patches. The matter of handling the boat is almost as important as is skillful casting. The boat should be propelled slowly and quietly and kept at a distance from shore that is most convenient for the angler to cast.

St. Louis Conference Today

Aldo Leopold, professor of game management at the University of Wisconsin and chairman of the technical committee of the American Wildlife Institute, will speak on "Features of European Wildlife Management Applicable to the United States" at a symposium on game management during the second North American wildlife conference in St. Louis, which gets under way this morning. The symposium will bring together representatives of five universities—the National Association of Audubon Societies, the United States Forest Service and the United States Soil Conservation Service, all dealing with phases of the problem of restoring wildlife to the lands and waters of the country by improving natural environment.

During the conference the technical committee of the institute, which has mapped out a research program now under way in nine land-grant colleges, will meet to discuss further studies. Plans for research to be located in at least seventeen colleges scattered at strategic points across the United States are being made for initiation as soon as funds for the American Wildlife Institute are available.

Other speakers will be Dr. Rudolf Bennett, University of Missouri; Ross O. Stevens, United States Soil Conservation Service; Odell Julander, Iowa State College; Dr. Charles T. Vorhies, University of Arizona; Lawrence E. Hicks, Ohio State University; William L. Finley, Portland, Ore.; Dr. J. E. Shillinger, United States Biological Survey; Richard H. Pough, National Association of Audubon Societies; Dr. H. L. Shantz, United States Forest Service, and Leonard Wing, of the University of Wisconsin.

Topics to be discussed will include the development and maintenance of food and cover, making erosion control benefit wildlife, relative utilization of browse by wildlife, interrelation of range animals, methods of estimating wildlife population; the beaver, conservator of soil and water; relation of livestock to wildlife from the standpoint of disease; an inventory of rare species, the "sociology of a forest unit" and studies of wildlife cycles.

William L. Finley is lecturing in Canada for the Royal Canadian Institute and other organizations. He also has an Eastern lecture tour for the Field Museum at Chicago, the Carnegie Institute of Sciences, and other groups. Mrs. Finley is spending the winter at Ghost Ranch, New Mexico, home of her daughter, Mrs. Arthur M. Pack.