

CASTING CORNER



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How good is your casting?

Are you an expert caster? Most of what I have written in past issues of *Casting Corner* has been aimed at those starting out in fly fishing. This month I want to focus on the expert casters among us. How do you know if you're an expert? Well read on.

To find out if you are an expert the best way is to compare your cast to that of an expert. My definition of an expert caster is someone who can place the fly exactly where they want in any conditions effortlessly and consistently. Unless you fish regularly with a Master Casting Instructor you don't often get the chance to make that comparison. But if you want to know how good your casting is you need to test your skills against the experts.

This is where technology comes in. Thanks to the efforts of two American fly fishers we can use technology to analyze our cast and compare it to that of real experts. That technology is the *Fly Casting Analyzer*.



Bruce Richards of Scientific Angler fame and Professor Noel Perkins of the University of Michigan first developed the *Sage Flycasting Analyzer* to be used by Sage fly shops. Now in a more compact form with a new name the *Fly Casting Analyzer* is available for anyone to use and analyze their cast. The *Analyzer* measures nine parts of a fly cast: peak speed, casting arc, smoothness ratio, deceleration, stop, rod load, creep, drift and symmetry. The *Analyzer* then allows you to compare your cast in all these key areas with casters that are regarded as the best in the business.

This is how it works. A Palm Pilot gathers information from a gyro attached to the fly rod. The gyro measures the rate at which the rod rotates while false casting. Results can be read straight from the Palm Pilot or downloaded to a computer for further analysis and printing. The reports can pinpoint how close all aspects of your cast are to those of the experts. Here is part of an *Analyzer* report.

CASTING ANALYZER Allan Ekert
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CAST SUMMARY

Rod model: Real model: Line: Cost: 40'
Cast Name: TCR28_6_2

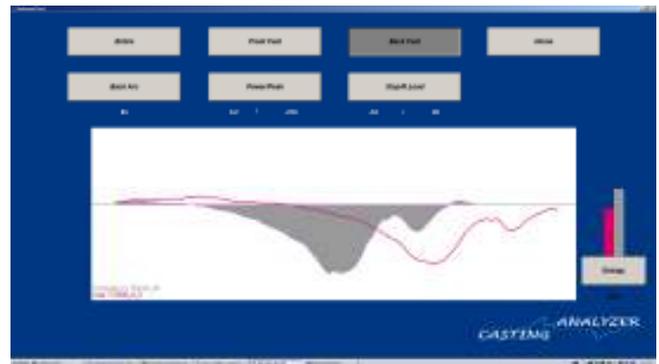
	Forward Cast			Back Cast		
	YOU	EXPERT	COMMENTS	YOU	EXPERT	COMMENTS
Cast Symmetry	90	100	Excellent			
Cast Arc	59	66	Needs work	65	66	Good
Creep	0	0	Good	0	0	Good
Smoothness Ratio	3.2	2.4	Excellent	3.2	2.4	Excellent
Peak Speed	233	260	Good	-210	-260	Needs work
Deceleration	-2137	-2200	Good	1666	-2200	Good
Stop	10	30	Excellent	-52	-30	Needs work
Rod Load	40	25	Excellent	20	25	Good

Symmetry Cast Symmetry Your Score: 90 Expert Score: 100 Result: Excellent
Your cast exhibits 90% symmetry. This is very close to the expert's symmetry of 90% or greater. Symmetry this high is often a good indicator of good technique and casting efficiency. Peak rotation speed is 233 degrees/sec on the forward cast, -210 degrees/sec on the back cast.

Cast Arc Forward Cast Your Score: 59 Expert Score: 66 Result: Needs work
Your rod arc is 59 degrees, the expert's arc is 66 degrees. Your arc is significantly smaller than the expert's arc indicating you may be throwing a tailing loop. Rotate the rod more to open the casting arc significantly.
Back Cast Your Score: 65 Expert Score: 66 Result: Good
Your rod arc is 65 degrees, the expert's arc is 66 degrees. Your arc is slightly smaller than the expert's. Try to rotate the rod just a little bit more to open up the casting arc slightly.

Creep Forward Cast Your Score: 0 Expert Score: 0 Result: Good
No creep detected.
Back Cast Your Score: 0 Expert Score: 0 Result: Good
No creep detected.

Smoothness Ratio Forward Cast Your Score: 3.2 Expert Score: 2.4 Result: Excellent
Your smoothness ratio is 3.2. The expert's smoothness ratio is 2.4. This indicates very smooth power application, usually an indication of good loops and efficient power application. Working to make your smoothness ratio even lower will yield worthwhile results. Very good.
Back Cast Your Score: 3.2 Expert Score: 2.4 Result: Excellent
Your smoothness ratio is 3.2. The expert's smoothness ratio is 2.4. This indicates very smooth power application, usually an indication of good loops and efficient power application. Working to make your smoothness ratio even lower will yield worthwhile results. Very good.



It looks complicated but when examined carefully the reports allows a fly casting instructor to quickly analyze all aspects of a person's cast and by comparing the data to that of the experts quantify how good the cast was. Now we can answer the question: are you an expert?

For those not yet in the expert category the report can also be used to help spot flaws that are not always visible to the unaided eye. Once pinpointed these faults can be worked on and the *Analyzer* can be used to map progress. Casting skills will improve if you understand how a good cast is achieved.

I have a *Fly Casting Analyzer* which I use to check my casting. When you practice on your own it is good to be able to know how well you are casting and where you can improve. I don't use it all the time but often enough to have come to the conclusion that I am not an expert. I come close at times but the *Analyzer* always seems to find some aspect of my cast that needs work.

If you would like to know how your casting compares to the experts or if you would like to find ways to improve your casting the *Fly Casting Analyzer* might help you. I am happy to make this technology available to members of our club. If you would like your cast analyzed all you have to do is email me at allan.ekert@yahoo.com.au and I will arrange a suitable time. For more information on the *Fly Casting Analyzer* you can go to: <http://castanalysis.com/>