



Editor's Eddy

A warm and wet immigrant from the south has turned things around a little. As I write, the somewhat over-hyped tail end of Hurricane Isabel is giving us our first good soaking in quite a while. And it sure is welcome. What began as a reasonably wet summer turned completely around in August and the first half of September. I've seen low water in the Credit many times, but never as clear as it was until recently. The coupling of these conditions with extended periods of high water temperatures in mid-summer seems to have caused many fish to migrate from my normal haunts to safer reaches – and don't ask me where. Things were likely as tough in other freestone rivers in southern Ontario. In complete contrast, the north-eastern U.S. south of the Great Lakes got soaked this summer.

Alarmism usually serves little purpose, so let's assume – Isabel aside – that we are in the midst of a dry stretch of a long-term weather cycle rather than in a drying climate trend. But anyone who says that our local eco-system isn't getting damaged hasn't been paying attention. For example, have you noticed leaves changing colour and falling from stressed trees in early September instead of October? A recent article in *The Mississauga News* reports that the water table in our area has dropped by one metre due to low precipitation – drought conditions, if you will – over the last few years. This is having a heavy impact on many of our local mature oak trees by weakening them and increasing susceptibility to insect attack and a disease called "shoestring root rot." The City of Mississauga has removed several hundred oaks from one park, while more than 4,000 trees were cut down in Oakville this past spring. It's estimated that it will take above-average rainfalls for the next five years or so to correct the situation, and, sadly, the demises of many more trees are expected before then. (And now there's the Asian longhorn beetle!)

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Please be aware that the timing of the next few issues of *Single Haul* is a bit uncertain. I will soon have my faulty spine affixed with bits of modern alloys, which will probably leave me *hors de combat* for a couple of months thereafter. But we will try to have others fill in the gaps. For updated meeting information and other matters, please keep your eyes on the website.

Bob Kuehnbaum, September 19, 2003

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Quotable / Notable Quotes

I object to fishing tournaments less for what they do to fish than what they do to fishermen.

– Ted Williams

You can't talk yourself into a good cast.

– NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw

Conservation Update

September 13th: Log emplacement work-day, Forks of the Credit Provincial Park.

It took several attempts to get a group of volunteers organized for the installation of log jams in Forks of the Credit Provincial Park. One scheduled day (August 16th) was cancelled due to the infamous blackout and the demise of a rock drill needed for anchor holes; a second (September 6th) was postponed, again due to the drill. We apologize to any volunteers (most notably Mike Retallick and Pierre Turgeon) who were inconvenienced because of the delays.

Across from the first parking lot above the Forks, volunteers installed two "debris catchers," which are triangular structures held in place with duckbill anchors to the streambed next to the bank. The anchors, which are preferable over T-bars, are a novel technique for the Credit. It will be interesting to see how they compare to other methods.

We extend special thanks to Steve Copeland for arranging the materials and leading the workday. He is, coincidentally, also the President of Ontario Streams. A resident of Belfountain, Steve is a very long-time Credit River angler who has participated in rehabilitation work on the Credit for more than two decades.

Thanks are also owing to the following people for their physical help on the river: Wayne De Freitas and his son C.J., Gord and Dan Harrison, Ken O'Brien and Bob Thomson.

2003 Conservation Workdays

This is a reminder of the remaining IWFFC and TUC workdays on the Credit River. For updated and more detailed information, check the IWFFC website. Alternatively, contact Bob Kuehnbaum at 905-276-6684 or Dave Beaton at Credit Valley Conservation at 905-670-1615.

October 25th Joint IWFFC-TUC soil bioengineering – erosion control project on the Credit River. Downstream from Grange Sideroad. Meeting place TBA. 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. Waders required.

November 9th CVC-sponsored trout spawning survey. Meet at Beechgrove Sideroad and Credit River, south of Alton. 10:00 am – 1:00 pm.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

October 7th Fly tying. *Guest Tyer:* Dave Prothero Sr. will demo some of his own small dry fly and nymph patterns. *Intermediate Tyer:* Pete Pettos will demo simplified Spey flies and other migratory streamers.

October 21st General meeting: Club elections. Bob Morris will review conservation activities on the upper Credit River.

November 11th (note: 2nd Tuesday, not 1st) Fly tying. *Guest Tyers:* Carl O'Connor and Jorge Carcao will demonstrate about 5 foam flies for trout, salmon and bass. *Intermediate tyer:* TBA

November 18th General meeting: *Guest Speaker:* Len Yust will reprise his 2003 Forum presentation on river etiquette.

December 2nd Fly tying. *Guest Tyer:* John Mangold from Winter Hatches will demonstrate tying original Juliana Berners flies by hand (i.e. no vise). *Intermediate tyer:* TBA.

News Executive Members

We'd like to welcome **Don Arthurs** as **Program Chair**. He's taken over the slot from Ted Armstrong who has been double-tracking the program position with the duties of Vice-President.

Pat Kelly, a relatively new member, has offered to take over the **Library** responsibilities. Stepping down is Mike da Silva who's been doing the job for the last three years.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all of the above for their past and future service.

Executive Positions Available

The club has three elected positions: President, Vice-President and Treasurer. After two years at the helm, Bob Lundy will be stepping down as President on October 21st at the time of our elections. *Thanks, Bob!* Ted Armstrong and Ken O'Brien intend to stay on as VP and Treasurer, respectively.

There are a number of non-elected executive jobs, all of which are very important to the functioning of your club. These currently include: Conservation, *Single Haul* Editor, Membership, Mailing, Venue, Library, Beginners' Fly Tying and Webmaster.

A couple of those jobs in particular need filling:

Membership Chair: Not particularly time-consuming, it involves updating the member database as people join or renew; peak time is just after the Forum. Some comfort with databases and/or spreadsheets would be useful, but expertise is not required; Eli Robillard has made the process quite straightforward.

Beginners' Fly Tying: This position involves teaching fundamental fly tying skills to new members, usually with assistance from others.

In addition, **Webmaster** Bob Lundy set up and has been running our website for some time, and would like to pass the duty on.

Finally, we are considering the creation of the position of **Fundraising Chair** for someone who would like to take the lead in developing methods of financing for club (*not* Forum) activities, such as the purchasing of equipment and materials, and various conservation activities.

If you think that you could meet the modest challenge of any of the above positions, please notify us by email, by phone or at the next meeting.

Rabbit Hide Flies

Michael Jeavons

The following is a write-up of the patterns that Michael demonstrated as the guest tyer at our March 4, 2003, fly tying meeting.

I first read about flies tied with rabbit hide in the mid 1960s in John Veniard's book *A Further Guide to Fly Dressing*. They were developed in the early 1930s in New Zealand and are somewhat similar to the better known "Matuku" or "Matuka" patterns originally tied with New Zealand bittern feathers. In his book *Trout Flies in New Zealand*, Keith Draper tells the story that in 1932 one Alan Duncum met a Maori fisherman on the Waikato River who showed him a fly tied in this style with a dark fur wing and a red body. Mr. Duncum copied the fly and had great success. The original patterns were tied with chenille or wool bodies on standard length hooks or salmon irons and were fished at night around stream mouths in lakes such as Taupo for big trout.

The matuka style dressing spread to the U.K. and North America about thirty years ago (Doug Swisher and Carl Richards wrote about it in their book *Fly Fishing Strategy* in 1975) but the rabbit fly took a little longer to make its presence felt outside its country of origin.

Rabbit fur is a very versatile and relatively cheap fly tying material as rabbits are widely raised for food and the hides are tanned for use in clothing and crafts. The hair is commonly used for dubbing, but I want to focus on the use of the tanned hide (tanned hides are easier to work with, don't smell and retain their flexibility after wetting and drying).

In the classic New Zealand rabbit fly, the back of the fly is formed by a strip of rabbit hide which is attached to the hook by winding a tinsel or wire rib along the body, tying down the hide strip with each turn. In North America, a variation of this was developed, the "Zonker", in which the strip of hide is attached only at the back and front of the hook. The reason for this variation seems to have been that the original Zonker was tied with a shaped Mylar tubing body that did not accommodate a rib. The fully ribbed version now is often referred to as a "rabbit matuka."

The advantages of rabbit hide are its mobility in the water and its relative durability as compared to marabou fibres. Arctic fox fur rivals rabbit fur in this regard but is much more expensive. Rabbit's two disadvantages are a lack of

translucency and the fact that flies tied with long strips of hide can be awkward to cast, as they do not shed water readily. For the latter reason I generally do not tie long (over 4 in, 10cm) flies with rabbit hide although longer flies can be cast with heavier lines (8-9 wt) and a short leader.

Rabbit hide is cut into strips with a razor blade or craft knife either from head to tail with the grain of the fur ("Zonker strips") or across the hide ("cross-cut strips"). You can buy the strips ready-cut, or you can cut them yourself from full hides. If you do the latter, always cut from the skin side of the hide using a very sharp craft knife and don't cut against a support such as a table top as you will then cut off much of the hair. Some tyers recommend cutting tapered shapes for certain patterns but this is wasteful of the hide and I find that most patterns can be tied with a parallel strip that can be tapered after tying in.

Some tying tips when working with rabbit hide are:

- Brush the hide with a wire pet comb before cutting the strips as this makes the ribbing much easier
- Always trim off the hair from the end of the strip where you tie it to the hook as otherwise it tends to slip
- Dampen the fur lightly with water as necessary to control it during tying
- Make one turn of the rib before you catch in the back of the rabbit strip and make two turns when you first catch in the strip – this stops the strip from twisting on the hook
- Part the fur with a dubbing needle before each wrap of the rib
- Use wire ribbing, as this doesn't snag the fur fibres as much as tinsel (Lewiscraft sells stainless steel beading wire that is ideal)

If you tie flies with a tail of rabbit hide that extends much beyond the hook bend, a frequent problem is the hide wrapping around the bend of the hook when you cast. This is because the strip becomes extremely flexible when wet. There are a number of ways to reduce this problem:

- With smaller flies, use a long shank hook and do not extend the rabbit skin more than 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) beyond the end of the body
- Tie in a tail of a stiffer material such as bucktail beneath the rabbit
- Tie a horizontal loop of stiff monofilament beneath the rabbit

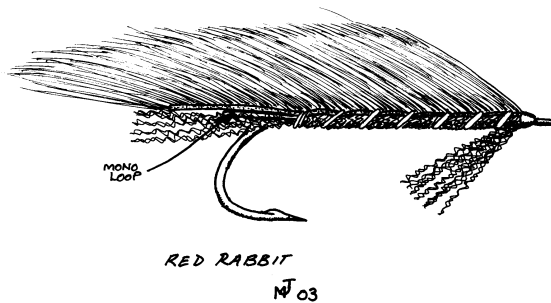
- Sandwich a spike or loop of stiff monofilament between the two layers of rabbit hide when you are tying a "Rabbit Clouser" or similar style fly

Patterns

Red Rabbit (striped bass)

Hook: Stainless L.S. (e.g. Mustad 34011) size 2
 Thread: Red or black
 Tail: Red Krystal Flash and mono loop
 Rib: Stainless steel wire
 Body: Red Krystal Flash, wrapped
 Wing: Red rabbit strip
 Throat: Red Krystal Flash
 Head: Thread, epoxied

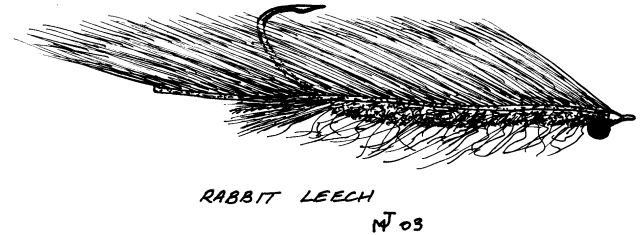
This simple fly has worked well for me on Cape Cod and once caught me 23 school bass in one night. It probably represents a marine worm or possibly a small fish. Striped bass apparently see red well at night.



Rabbit Leech (freshwater bass, trout etc.)

Hook: L.S. (e.g. Mustad 79580 or AC80050BR) size 10 – 4
 Thread: To match body/wing
 Eyes: Lead or bead chain, close to eye of hook on top of shank
 Tail (optional): Tuft of bright coloured marabou or rabbit fur cut off hide (red, chartreuse etc.)
 Body: Mohair yarn, picked out
 Wing: Rabbit strip. The hook is repositioned point up in the vice, the point of the hook is pushed through the strip from the skin side, the strip is pulled tight to the back end of the body and the front end of the strip is then tied down just behind the eye of the hook.

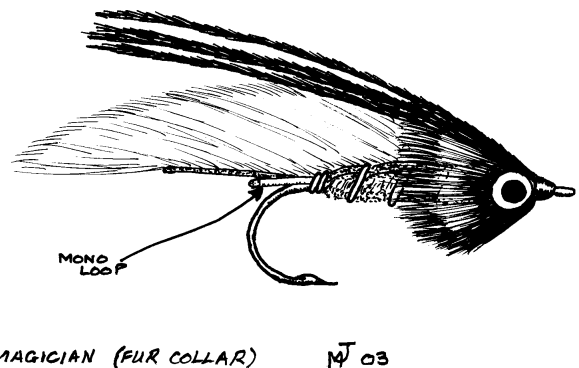
This is a simple, quick tie which has an up and down motion when retrieved and which is somewhat snag resistant as it fishes hook point up. Tie in standard leech colours.



The Magician (freshwater bass, striped bass etc)

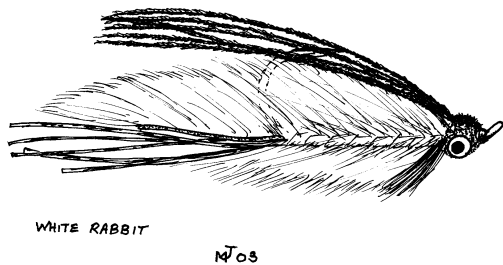
Hook: L.S. (e.g. Mustad Aberdeen 3261) size 8 – 1/0
 Thread: White for fly, fire orange for head
 Rib: Stainless steel wire
 Body: Fluorescent white nylon "baby wool", tapered
 Wing: White rabbit strip, tied down with wire
 Throat: Tuft of red rabbit fur
 Back: 6 – 8 peacock herls tied over rabbit
 Cheeks: Grey mallard breast feathers with gold adhesive eyes glued on with thinned "Goop" or similar flexible adhesive or "chinchilla" (grizzly) rabbit fur collar – see note at end of pattern list.

This is a rather complex tie but it is a very effective minnow or chub imitation that is realistic enough to be fished dead drift.



The White Rabbit (smallmouth bass)

- Hook: Heavyweight nickel plated (e.g. Eagle Claw 1197N) size 6
 Thread: White for fly, fire orange for head
 Eyes: Small brass dumbbell eyes with (optional) black painted pupils, tied on top of shank
 Tail: Strip of white rabbit, tied with fur side facing down towards hook point
 Flash: Pearl Flashabou or similar, either side of tail and a little longer
 Body: White cross-cut rabbit wound from hook bend to behind eyes
 Back: Peacock herl or peacock Krystal Flash just shorter than rabbit, tied underneath hook shank
 Throat: Tuft of red rabbit fur, tied on top of hook shank
 Head: Fine white chenille, figure-eight wound around eyes



This is a very simplified version of the Magician but is fished differently. It is stripped fast across pockets in riffles. The jigging motion from the brass eyes seems to goad the bass into attacking it. It would probably be effective in a chartreuse version.

Jeavons Crayfish (smallmouth bass)

- Hook: L.S. (e.g. Mustad 9671) size 12 - 8
 Thread: Brown or olive
 Eyes: Extra small lead dumbbell eyes, painted with flat olive model paint
 Rostrum: Olive Krystal Flash, a bunch about 5mm or ¼ inch long
 Antennae: Olive Sililegs (optional)
 Claws: Two very short, narrow olive or orange rabbit strips
 Body: Olive, brown or olive/brown mottled fine chenille
 Legs: Olive Sililegs

Start by bending shank of hook down 20 degrees about 3mm, (1/8 inch) behind the hook eye. The lead eyes are tied on top of this portion of the shank. Starting just past the bend of the hook, tie in the short bunch of Krystal Flash followed by the antennae (about 1cm. or 3/8 inch) then advance thread 3mm. (1/8 inch) and tie in claws on either side of hook shank so that the fur faces outwards. Next, tie in three pieces of olive Sililegs across the top of the hook shank, in the thorax area. Space these one width of the body chenille apart. Just ahead of the last pair of legs tie in the chenille and take the thread to the hook eye. Wind the chenille back between the legs and wind a turn on the far side of the claws before winding it back through the legs and all the way to the hook eye. Figure eight the chenille around the lead eyes and tie off. Trim the legs to length.

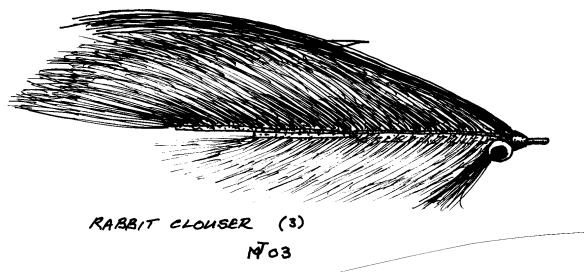
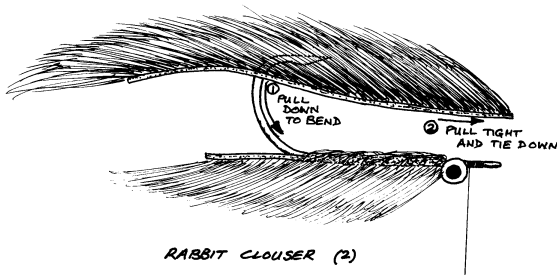
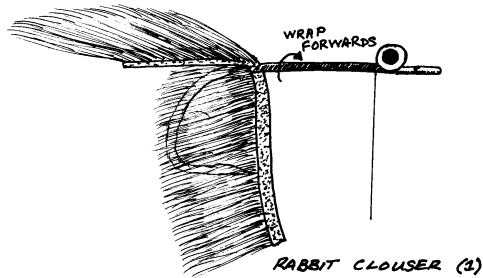
This pattern was developed to imitate immature crayfish, which swarm in my favourite smallmouth river in July. It is fished upstream dead drift like a nymph and is most effective tied on a size 10 hook. The bend in the hook and the weighting cause it to fish hook point up with the claws in a defensive posture, like the natural.

Rabbit Clouser (all predatory fish)

- Hook: Standard or L.S., stainless for saltwater, size 4 - 2/0
 Thread: To match colour scheme of fly
 Eyes: Lead, non-toxic or brass eyes, tied in as for a Clouser minnow
 Tail: Light coloured rabbit strip, tied with fur side facing away from point of hook. Flash material (optional)
 Body: Cross-cut rabbit, same colour as tail, wound up hook shank to behind eyes
 Wing: Rabbit strip, contrasting colour (usually darker). Pierce hide with hook point, invert hook in vice, pull strip tight and tie down front end of strip just in front of the eyes.
 Back: Peacock herl or dark flash material (optional)
 Throat: Bunch of red rabbit fur, tied in front of eyes and again immediately behind them.
 Head: Epoxy

After the fly is completed, except for the epoxy, turn the hook right way up in the vice and trim the tail (the light coloured strip) to length. Cut the hide to a length such that the lighter coloured fur just covers the underside of the hide of the wing strip (i.e. the lighter coloured strip will be shorter than the dark). Then separate the two strips, lightly

dampen the fur (not the hide) to control it and glue the two strips together with thinned "Goop" or similar waterproof adhesive.

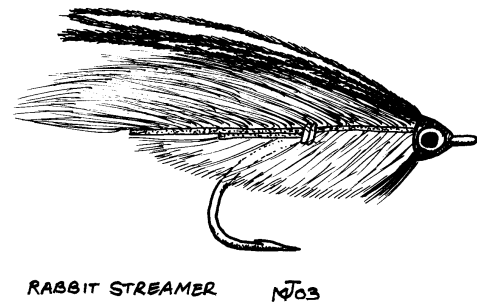


This is a style of tying rather than a specific pattern. The rabbit fur is more mobile than a standard Clouser Minnow but is less translucent. I am a little reticent about attaching the "Clouser" label but it does derive important design characteristics from the original. An important difference from the original is that, when viewed from below, the rabbit version has more of a minnow shape – fatter at the front and tapering to the tail. This "3-D" effect is missing from many streamer patterns.

Rabbit Streamer (all predatory fish)

Hook: L.S., stainless for saltwater, size 4 – 2/0
Thread: To match fly

Tail: Light coloured rabbit strip as for Rabbit Clouser, this time with fur side facing down towards hook point. Flash material if wanted
Wing tie-in: Stainless steel beading wire
Body: Light coloured cross-cut rabbit strip, wound up hook shank
Wing: Dark coloured rabbit strip, tied in at back and front of body
Sides: Flash material (optional)
Back: Peacock herl or dark flash material (optional)
Throat: Tuft of red rabbit fur
Head: Epoxy



This is a "right way up" version of the Rabbit Clouser, using the "Zonker" technique. After tying in the tail, tie in the wire and use two turns to attach the wing strip at the rear of the hook before tying off the wire and trimming the waste. Now fold back the wing strip out of the way and attach and wind the cross-cut strip for the body. The front of the wing strip is then tied off at the head of the fly with the tying thread. After completing the fly, trim and glue the two fur strips together as in the Rabbit Clouser.

Suggested colour combinations for Rabbit Clousers and Rabbit Streamers

Back colour – Tail and body colour – Tail flash

- Chartreuse – White – Pearl
- Chartreuse – Chartreuse – Pearl or chartreuse
- Olive – White – Pearl
- Black – Black – Black or silver
- Red – White – Silver
- Blue – White – Pearl or silver
- Chinchilla – White – Pearl or silver
- Olive dyed chinchilla – White, cream – Pearl, none
- Grey – White – Pearl or silver

Collars of contrasting coloured rabbit fur can also be tied in to imitate the head and gill covers of small fish. An example of this would be to

substitute "chinchilla" or "grizzly" rabbit for the mallard breast feathers in the "Magician" pattern described above. One way to do this is to wrap one turn of cross-cut chinchilla rabbit in front of the white, but I find this too clumsy. Instead, cut a short length of cross-cut rabbit hide that will just cover the top and sides of the fly when it is folded over the hook at the head. Tie down the fur just behind the strip of skin and carefully trim away the skin before finishing tying down the butts of the fur. You should end up with a neat collar with a gap at the bottom to accommodate the throat of red rabbit fur. If eyes are to be added they can be glued to the head windings or glued to Mylar drafting film and tied in as cheeks (like jungle cock eyes).

Double-Haul Casting As the Piscatorial Walking and Chewing Gum

Joel Vance

It's tough for some of us. Walking and chewing gum, I mean. Doing two things at once.

The double haul is the quintessential walk/chew problem. Double hauling is the triple somersault off the high wire of fly fishing. It is a feat of hand-eye coordination as tough as going one-on-one with Michael Jordan. Both hands are in motion in opposing directions, obeying a law of physics as complex as the tax code.

When I tried the double haul it looked like a half-drowned sailor desperately clambering up a rescue rope while sharks nipped at his back end.

Some say it's as easy as falling off a log (I have no trouble with falling off a log and have done it many times), but these are people who not only can walk and chew gum, they can yodel and eat Wheaties at the same time. They are blessed.

No fly angler can claim to be a finished fisherperson until he or she has double hauling in the bag. Without it, an angler is like someone claiming to be an astronaut when all he did was accidentally get blown across the back yard when the propane barbecue blew up.

Once I had an office slightly below ground level. Visitors parked at the curb outside could peer down and see me, feet propped up, belly lapping over my belt, doing intensive research (reading outdoor magazines). I was reading an article by famed fly fisherette Joan Salvato Wulff on the double haul. There were many illustrative diagrams, showing hand placement and arrows to indicate movement direction.

I positioned my hands around an imaginary fly rod and line and carefully followed Ms. Wulff's little A's and B's and arrows. I began with a power

snap, let the imaginary line unfurl behind me, then power snapped again and brought my line fist up to the reel as the line curled over my head and settled to the water as delicately as an after-dinner belch of Queen Elizabeth.

And then I noticed a van parked outside with four tiny faces squashed to the window and I visualized them saying, "Mommy, look what the funny man is doing!" I figured mommy was about to put in a call to the nearest authorities and abruptly left the office for an in-depth conference with the coffee machine. I began pulling the shades after the incident.

Double hauling has threaded through my fishing life like a persistent cough. Once a guide on a famous trout river asked, "Can you double haul?"

At the time, I had never heard of the double haul and thought he was talking about the fear for the canoe. "Well, sure," I said, "if I can't get it all done the first time." He looked at me for a long time.

On that same trip, I assailed the water with a No. 10 Muddler Minnow and the guide cried in anguish, as if I had just stuck his earlobe with the hook (I waited until later to do that). "You're throwing wind knots!" he cried.

I looked narrowly at him, not sure if this was a compliment or not. "Is that good?" I asked hesitantly. He looked at me for a long time.

I've finally achieved a bit of skill with double hauling, but no one is going to mistake me for Lefty Kreh. Fly fishing is a game of finesse. With me and fly fishing, it's like watching Hulk Hogan knit.

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When Should I Hit It? Part 1

Tim Rajeff

If there is one fundamental aspect of casting that will improve a person's enjoyment, it is knowing "when to hit it." The term "hit it" refers to the burst of acceleration used during the casting stroke. All good casters are able to use different amounts of speed and acceleration in their casts depending on the rod action and power as well as the type and length of line being cast.

If all goes well, a good cast will bend the rod in such a way that the tip of the rod travels in a straight line. When this happens you have thrown the "perfect" cast, one where the loops are tight and there is no hint of any tailing or tangling. No one needs to be told when they have thrown a good cast because a great cast feels like nothing else. A great

cast puts the optimal amount of bend in the rod and the cast will feel like it went farther with less effort. There will also be a heavy bounce-like feeling from the rod immediately after the rod was stopped on the forward and back cast.

So when should you hit a cast? Well that depends on whether you live in the northern or southern hemisphere of the planet. Ah, well, that might not be totally correct. The first factor we'll be covering that determines the best time to hit a cast is rod design.

There are a million different rod actions and rod power levels available to the fly fisher people of today. To avoid confusion for now I will only address rod power in this casting tip.

You might have heard expressions like soft, medium, stiff, etc. These words give you a rough idea as to the overall stiffness of a rod. For example an extra stiff #4 rod might be the exact same stiffness as a very soft #5 rod. Does that make sense? If it does than you should run for public office. The whole issue of how the rod companies rate their rods is unfair and abused. I should know: I've been in the rod manufacturing industry for over ten years. Understanding the overall stiffness will help you adjust your casting style to make a great cast with any rod.

The rule I use to cast softer rods, and look cool doing it, is to be smoother, less aggressive, and more gradual when applying the power during the cast. Pretend you are trying to throw a melon-sized blob of Jell-O without it falling apart in your hand. That is what it feels like when you are applying power to a soft (low power / wimpy) rod. You need to be mellow when "hitting" the cast. In fact, when casting a soft rod, the word "hit" should be substituted with a word like "tthhwwaacckk." You can still use a lot of power and cast with high speed; however, you need to blend your power into the cast smoothly.

The stiffer the rod, the more aggressive, abrupt and explosive you must be with the power application. To make the perfect cast you must wait until the very end of your stroke to apply the majority of the power. So hit it hard and hit it late when using stiff rods.

So which rod is better for you - a stiff or a soft rod? How the heck should I know? I've never even seen you cast!

As a rule, if you were born with muscles that feel best making longer slower motions than you might like a softer rod. You are a distance runner, a painter who makes long smooth brush strokes, or a Tai-Chi in the park kind of person.

Maybe you like reading excerpts of Robert Frost in between casting strokes. You have what some people call "long muscles." You don't feel comfortable having to come up with that explosive power application needed to bend a stiff rod. Don't worry, we still love you.

If you were born with an abundance of fast twitch muscles, you might like a stiffer rod. You are a sprinter, shot putter, a jumper, or a boxer with a great jab. Or maybe it's just all that caffeine. Your explosive burst of acceleration will be enough to bend a stiff rod and will result in good loops.

Courtesy of FFF ClubWire newswire service

(Editor's Note: This one of the better explanations I've encountered for the differing strokes required for stiff and soft rods. Part 2 will be in the next issue.)



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