



HERE'S COVERAGE OF THE 98TH. ACA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AND EMERALD WORLD MASTERS, YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!  
*The ACA thanks Jim Chapralis for his years as Editor. He's casting's best communicator and friend! Jim is still head of ACA's public relations.*

**2006 ACA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (P.2)**

Casters put Long Beach 2006 in the National Record book thirteen times. Read how Steve, Zack, Pam, and Dusty ran a gold monopoly!

**SPECIAL TEAM EVENT BY M.J. GUNDEN (P.9)**

The Special Team Prize money beckoned at this year's National. Read about the man and theory behind it, and how well it went.

**THE EMERALD WORLD MASTERS & ICSF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (P.11)**

Two weeks of very different Master events has ended in Ireland. See how our casters rank against casters from other nations. These scores really show how high the bar is!

**NEW ACA FISHING GALLERY (P.13)**

Are tournament casters better anglers with artificials than non-tournament casters? We think so. We would like you to send us your fishing pictures for The Creel and ACA website.

**NEW TACKLE- THE WINNERS! (P.14)**

Everybody wants to think they have an edge in competition. In casting, it's a combo of tackle and technique. Read some observations on winning tackle.

**Q & A - HENRY MITTEL'S PERSONAL TRAINING (P.17)**

Henry doesn't hang-out at happy-hour eating wings or watch fishing shows all weekend. He's out casting, casting, casting! Get some profound tips he shared this summer.

# 2006 ACA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Reported by John Field

I flew out to the Long Beach Casting Club for the Southwestern last January to see how ready it was to host the upcoming National Championships. It has a warm, welcoming clubhouse full of casting and angling history and memorabilia. With a membership over 500, they have enough dedicated, talented volunteers and resources to get the job done right. LBCC has hosted the National seven times before, so they have experience on their side.

On my first trip, I was very impressed with how fluidly they ran their tournaments. They were certainly prepared for the big one. I wasn't disappointed when I returned for the 98<sup>th</sup> ACA National Championships this August 1-5<sup>th</sup>.

The ACA wants to thank the whole Long Beach club, the Tournament Committee and especially Carole Katz, Mark Lipe, Frank Kropacek and Jeff Sadler. The lunch committee arranged a Chinese stir-fry,



**USCG Honor Guard at Opening Ceremonies**

a Long Beach Fire Dept. barbeque and Cajun Bill's Sturgeon Gumbo lunch. We also want to thank the host hotel, Guesthouse Inn International for accommodating all of our needs.

Approximately 75 casters from 10 US and 2 Canadian Clubs competed at this year's event. We also had a casting guest from Germany named Oliver Paeye who runs a German casting club website. There were three exhibition games cast Thursday through Saturday. Two of them were international games, Skish

Fly Accuracy (based on the extinct US game) and Arenberg (named after the German City). The third was the new ACA 5wt combination Accuracy & Distance event. Around twenty casters competed in each of the three demonstration events. These were very successful at exposing new possibilities and just having fun.

This year there was additional suspense and friendly competition with the Special Team Prize beckoning in the background. (You can read about it in this issue on p. 9)

Long Beach and Toronto are where almost all the distance records have been set. That's because both have more than their share of wind. This year was no exception and casters shattered thirteen plug and one fly distance records. However, we did have to contend with some radical wind direction and speed changes. The first day, the designated practice day was also uncomfortable, but the high temperatures for the rest of week were just above 80. This was how the week went.

### CHAMPIONSHIP WEEK HIGHLIGHTS

**Monday** August 1<sup>st</sup> had the "three Hs", heat, haze and humidity. The distance field, normally a model glider field, was a challenging place to work with and cast because of hills and gopher mounds, but it's an irrigated oasis in an otherwise arid spot. Most of the competitors spent practice day there since many habitually test new distance tackle, some do last minute line changes. In the case of one caster from Maine, that included cutting and attaching all new lines, and sawing and wrapping a blank. We'll get back to him later.

Opening ceremonies were held at the LBCC Clubhouse at 5 o'clock on Monday to commemorate the event's significance and prepare everyone for the competition

ahead.

On **Tuesday**, more comfortable than the previous day, we cast three distance events



**Steve Rajeff Grand All-Around Champion**

To start-off we cast 5/8 oz. Rev. Spool, then One-Hand Fly and Two-Hand Fly. These are considered "heavy lifting" and better completed first, than to have to do tomorrow. Veteran Steve Rajeff broke Henry Mittel's old 5/8 Rev. Spool Men's record by 11 ft. with his newly redesigned ACA blank.

Bill "Cajun" Clements broke his own Senior Men's record in this event by 16 feet. Pam Peters tied her old 5/8 Revolving Spool Women's record and Dustin Revel established the first Intermediate record for 5/8 Rev. Spool with a cast of 224 feet.

If it weren't for swirling winds on Tuesday, maybe the One-Hand and Two-Hand Fly records might have been challenged. When Steve

Rajeff was casting Two-Hand Fly, the winds came out of the west and he was forced to cast his fly onto hills almost 10ft. higher than the casting box!

On **Wednesday** we reported back to El Dorado Park's Glider Field to cast 5/8 oz. Spin. Distance, 1/4 oz. Spin. Distance and Angler's Fly Distance. The skies were very cloudy and the winds were undecided, but most casters enjoyed what they were given. Pam Peters beat her old 1/4 Spin. Distance record by 11ft.

Zack Willson took Dick Fujita's Senior Men's 1/4



Spin. Distance record away by adding 22 ft to it. Dustin Revel cast the first entries into the National Records for Intermediates in 1/4 and 5/8 oz. Spin Distance.

Rene Gillibert salvaged his last Angler's Fly cast when he replaced a lost fly with 10 seconds to go. Steve Rajeff had some problems with line tangles and aborted several casts, but made his clean ones count for the gold.

**Thursday** brought us home to the comforts of the LBCC Clubhouse with its' dining room and front porch seating overlooking the casting pond. We started the accuracy events with Dry Fly, and 1/4 oz. In Dry Fly there was a five-way cast-off for 2<sup>nd</sup>. place when Steve Rajeff, Henry Mittel, Matt Richard Kazu Kashimizu and John Van Derhoof tied at 99! Steve cast 100 to take 2<sup>nd</sup>. Henry and Matt tied at 98 in their first cast-off, but Henry took 3<sup>rd</sup>. with a 99 in their second cast-off. When Kazu and John shot their cast-offs, Kazu took 5<sup>th</sup> place with a 95, leaving John in 6<sup>th</sup>.

After that suspense, we even squeezed in the Demonstration Event Arenberg Plug Accuracy (ICSF Event #1) before breaking for lunch.

After another great lunch at the Clubhouse and a free

afternoon, the ACA convened its' Annual Business Meeting in a conference room of the host hotel. Many important

made good improvement in her accuracy which she says has really helped her enjoy her trout fishing too.



**Women's Fly Accuracy in Progress**

proposals were decided which have an effect on the future of casting and the ACA's direction.

On **Friday** the fourth of August, we competed in the accuracy events Trout Fly, Bass Bug and 3/8 oz, then the Demonstration Event Skish Fly Accuracy (ICSF Event #1). Every casting division except Intermediates had a cast-off in Trout Fly. In Men, Chris Korich and John Seroczynski were in contention for 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Chris cast a 100 to decide it.

Amongst the Seniors, Zack Willson won the cast-off for 3<sup>rd</sup> against Ed Lanser 93-92. In Women, Nicole beat Carole Katz 92-90 for 3<sup>rd</sup>. Carole has

**Saturday** was the last day of competition when casters muscles are sore and their skins are varying degrees of cooked. Luckily, it greeted us with gentle blue-sky weather. 5/8 oz Plug Accuracy and 5/8 oz. Plug Accuracy Team Event were the last Recognized ACA Events of the tournament. There were ties for second places in Men and Senior Men's 5/8 oz accuracy. Men's Henry Mittel and Steve Rajeff jostled for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, and Henry won 98 to 96. In Senior Men, Zack Willson beat Elmer Bergendahl for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 96 to 79. Elmer's first round was a 94! Pressure!

After that warm-up, five, five caster teams competed in

the 5/8oz Team Accuracy Event. The Oakland Casting Club (team) #1 won with a total of 468 points. That's an average of nearly 94 points per member. GGACC was 2<sup>nd</sup>. with 459 points, OCC #2 was 3<sup>rd</sup> with 450, Chicago Angling and Casting Club was 4<sup>th</sup>. with 421, and last but not least, the Long Beach Surfers paddled in with a score of 403 for 5<sup>th</sup>.

After the comraderie of the 5/8 Team, Steve Rajeff went wireless on the public address and went over the procedure for the new Demonstration 5wt. Accuracy/Distance event to an audience of thirty casters. Dusty Revel accompanied Steve by demonstrating the casts We were served our last lunch of the week and after naps and early packing, we all drove back to El Dorado Park's Golf Course Main Dining Room for cocktails, a buffet dinner and the Awards presentations. (For full National Results go to the ACA website: [www.americancastingassoc.org](http://www.americancastingassoc.org).)

### TOP CASTERS

There were few surprises in the top places at this National. **Steve Rajeff** won the Grand All-Around with six firsts and three second places. He also won the Angler's All-Around. He set a new Men's Overall Distance record with 1725 feet. Within that he set the All Plug Distance Record with a total of 1041 feet, a new

National Record for All Fly Distance with 684 feet. Steve also won All Fly Accuracy and

a third in Overall Accuracy, a third in All Plug Accuracy and third in the Angler's All-



**Tony Yap and Steve Rajeff Casting Accuracy Flies**

Overall Accuracy.

**Henry Mittel** was second in the Grand All-Around with four first places, four second and three third place medals. He took All Plug Accuracy away from Steve Rajeff, winning by four points. Henry was second in the Angler's All-Around. Henry placed second in Dry Fly Accuracy, first in Men's 1/4 oz. Spin Distance, 1/4 oz and 3/8 oz Plug Accuracy.

**Chris Korich** would have been in contention for the Grand All-Around and the combined distance awards, and three distance events held the first day, but an obligation prevented him from being with us. He did however take

Around. His below par round in Bass Bug kept him just out of reach of the Fly Accuracy medals.

The medals he won this year include a first place in Dry Fly Accuracy (with a perfect score), and a second in Trout Fly Accuracy. Chris also took a first in 5/8 oz Plug Accuracy, and a third in 1/4 oz. Spin Distance.

**Rene Gillibert** was third in the Grand All-Around with three silver medals and a bronze. He was also third in Overall Distance, All Plug Distance and All Fly Distance. Rene won silver medals in Angler's Fly Distance, 5/8 oz Spin Distance and 1/4 oz. Plug



Accuracy. He took bronze in One-Hand Fly Distance.

There was one dark horse that surprised everyone. Jared Mertens of Hollis, Maine, took the Bronze home in Angler's Fly Distance with a 183 ft. cast and took fourth place in One-Hand Fly Distance with a cast of 200 feet! Jared had only cast in two previous casting tournaments since there aren't any clubs in the Northeast. He's young enough to really improve, if he can put in the practice.

**Pamela Peters** of Ohio set four new National Women's records and tied one she already held. They were One-Hand Fly Distance, Two-Hand Fly Distance, 1/4 oz. Spin Distance and Overall Distance with a total of 1226 feet. She tied her 5/8 oz. Spin Distance record. If my counting is correct, she took fifteen first places! The two fly distance records had previously been vacant because of their difficulty.

The Senior Men's Division is always a source of inspiration. **Zack Willson** also had a great National setting many records and winning medals in the process. Zack set a new Senior Men's 1/4 oz. Spin Dist. Record, broke the old Senior Men's All Plug Distance and the Senior Men's Overall Distance Record.



**Jay Clark Launching a Plug in 5/8 Spin. Distance**

**Bill "Cajun" Clements** surpassed his surprise 168 ft. Senior Men's Angler's Fly National Record he set last year by replacing it this year with a massive cast of 175 feet! Bill also set a National Record in 5/8 oz. Rev. Spool Distance.

**Jim Chapralis** seems to have had more time to practice casting since handing off the editorship of this publication. He earned a first in his favorite event, One-Hand Fly Distance with a fine 172ft cast.

**Tony Yap** put on his game face and cast to top honors in Senior Men All Fly Accuracy with a total of 288 points winning three first places!

**Dustin Revel** an Intermediate caster from the Golden Gate Club, took seventeen firsts and set nine new National Records. The two fly-distance

records that Dustin set, One and Two Handed Fly Distance, 5/8 Rev. Spool and 5/8 Spin Distance, had been previously vacant. Francois Labatt and Matt Pencer and Dusty were closely matched in the accuracy events, but Dusty won all of the Intermediate Overall titles.

We'd also like to praise our youngest casters. In Juniors, Caitlin Kozicki did a great job in 3/8 and 5/8 oz. Accuracy. Our Youth casters Dominic Gillibert, Lauren Kozicki and Rei Lipe also performed well at this National. We look forward to seeing them and all of you next year. Where? We don't know, but we'll let you know when it's decided!

# 2006 ACA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

*This 98th Annual event, was hosted by the Long Beach Casting Club in August. Here are some of the results (top three scores, ties and new ACA National Records in orange).*

## 5/8 OZ. REV. SPOOL DIST.

### **Men**

1 Steve Rajeff	363'
2 Jay Clark	340'
3 Henry Mittel	334'

### **Senior Men**

1 Bill Clements	321'
2 Richard Fujita	286'
3 Zack Willson	282'

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	261'
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### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	224'
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## 1-HAND FLY DIST.

### **Men**

1 Steve Rajeff	223'
2 Henry Mittel	211'
3 Rene Gillibert	207'

### **Senior Men**

1 Jim Chapralis	172'
2 Zack Willson	163'
3 Gord Deval	153'

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	125'
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### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	151'
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## 2-HAND FLY DIST.

### **Men**

1 Steve Rajeff	275'
2 Henry Mittel	245'
3 Jay Clark	244'

### **Senior Men**

1 Edward Lanser	215'
2 Gord Deval	210'
3 Zack Willson	207'

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	151'
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### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	192'
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## 5/8 OZ. SPIN. DIST.

### **Men**

1 Steve Rajeff	375'
2 Rene Gillibert	373'
3 Henry Mittel	373'

### **Senior Men**

1 Zack Willson	331'
2 Bill Clements	314'
3 Gord Deval	308'

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	314'
2 Peg Van Natter	232'
3 Elaine Gong	220'

### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	251'
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## 1/4 OZ. SPIN. DIST.

### **Men**

1 Henry Mittel	309'
2 Steve Rajeff	303'
3 Chris Korich	292'

### **Senior Men**

1 Zack Willson	289'
2 Bill Clements	255'
3 Bill Burke	248'

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	236'
2 Nicole Kozicki	226'
3 Alice Gillibert	211'

### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	223'
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## ANGLER'S FLY DIST.

### **Men**

1 Steve Rajeff	187'
2 Rene Gillibert	186'
3 Jared Mertens	183'

### **Senior Men**

1 Bill Clements	175'
2 Tom Gong	164'
3 Austin Emmerling	151'

### **Women**

1 Nicole Kozicki	139'	139'
2 Pamela Peters	139'	134'
3 Alice Gillibert	134'	

### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	157'
2 Francois Labat	129'

## DRY FLY ACC.

### **Men**

1 Chris Korich	100
2 Steve Rajeff	99 (100)
3 Henry Mittel	99 (98)

### **Senior Men**

1 Tony Yap	97 (96)
2 Richard Fujita	97 (95)
3 Zack Willson	97 (92)

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	94
2 Nicole Kozicki	92 (94)
3 Alice Gillibert	92 (89)

### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	94
2 Matt Pencer	90
3 Francois Labat	86



# 2006 ACA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

## 1/4 OZ. PLUG ACC.

### **Men**

1 Henry Mittel	96
2 Rene Gillibert	95
3 Dave Roberts	94 (96)

### **Senior Men**

1 Peter Edwards	96
2 Tony Yap	91
3 Bill Clements	90

### **Women**

1 Nicole Kozicki	89
2 Beth Statt	84
3 Alice Gillibert	82

### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	82
2 Francois Labat	78
3 Becky Statt	71

## TROUT FLY ACC.

### **Men**

1 Steve Rajeff	100
2 Chris Korich	98 (100)
3 John Seroczynski	98 (97)

### **Senior Men**

1 Tony Yap	95
2 Joe Libeu	94
3 Zack Willson	93 (93)

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	94
2 Peg Van Natter	93
3 Nicole Kozicki	92 (92)

### **Intermediates**

1 Francois Labat	93
2 Dustin Revel	91
3 Matt Pencer	81



## BASS BUG ACC,

### **Men**

1 Jay Clark	99 (99)
2 Steve Rajeff	99 (98)
3 John Seroczynski	98

### **Senior Men**

1 Tony Yap	96 (97)
2 Zack Willson	96 (95)
3 Bob Spear	93 (91)

### **Women**

1 Nicole Kozicki	90 (94)
2 Elaine Gong	90 (89)
3 Pamela Peters	89

### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	89 (91)
2 Matt Pencer	89 (89)
3 Francois Labat	76

## 3/8 OZ. PLUG ACC.

### **Men**

1 Henry Mittel	99
2 Steve Rajeff	98
3 Jay Clark	95

### **Senior Men**

1 Bill Clements	93
2 Larry Allen	85
3 Elmer Bergendahl	90

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	92
2 Elaine Gong	85
3 Beth Statt	84

### **Intermediates**

1 Dustin Revel	90
2 Francois Labat	77
3 Becky Statt	77

### **Juniors**

1 Caitlin Kozicki	54
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### **Youth**

1 Dominic Gillibert	55
2 Lauren Kozicki	54
3 Rei Lipe	50

## 5/8 OZ. PLUG ACC.

### **Men**

1 Chris Korich	99
2 Henry Mittel	97 (98)
3 Steve Rajeff	97 (96)

### **Senior Men**

1 Bill Clements	95
2 Zack Willson	94 (96)
3 Elmer Bergendahl	94 (79)

### **Women**

1 Pamela Peters	89
2 Beth Statt	87
3 Nicole Kozicki	83

### **Intermediates**

1 Mitch Rickerd	84
2 Dustin Revel	81

### **Juniors**

1 Caitlin Kozicki	59
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### **Youth**

1 Dominic Gillibert	99
2 Lauren Kozicki	85

### **Senior Women**

1 Martha Lanser	65
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# *Oakland Casting Club Wins Special Team Event at National; Will “Recycle” Winnings.*

By Mary Jean Gunden

**H**ow do you spice up the American Casting Association’s National Tournament? That’s been a favorite topic of conversation among ACA members since bamboo rods. The 2006 Nationals included a new Special Team Event, sponsored by the Oakland Casting Club and the Seattle Casting Club, to do precisely that.

Sixteen casters formed four teams competing for a total purse of \$1700! That constituted the first cash prizes offered at the National Tournament in the last 40 years. The Oakland Casting Club’s Team 1 won the event, and the accompanying \$1200 prize money with 2,341.1 points. Team members were Rene Gillibert, Chris Korich, Nicole Kozicki and Henry Mittel. You’re wrong if you’re thinking this Special Team Event was fixed, the winning team has contributed their cash prize as seed money to run the event again next year.

The sport of casting has traditionally rewarded winners with medals, trophies, and bragging rights. Even though Steve Rajeff has won the Grand All-Around title for more years than Tiger Woods could ever hope to win the Master’s, our sport generally receives little media attention. Chris Korich, the only caster to have beaten Rajeff in the All-Around since 1972 said, “The reality of sports today is that if there isn’t substantial money or other prizes, few people will be attracted to the sport either as participants or spectators. This new Team Event, along with offering money prizes for individual events, may help attract new participation.”

The Special Team Event was the brainchild of Henry Mittel of the Oakland Casting Club. Having participated in casting club events in



**The Winning Oakland Team 1**

Germany in his youth, Mittel wanted to encourage friendly club rivalries to get more emotion into the games. His concept, as one might expect from a physicist, was both simple and elegant. It was important that the event offer an opportunity to a wide array of casters to make a significant contribution to the success of their team. Since tradition holds that it is important to have skills in both distance and accuracy events, it was necessary to choose a variety of events that balanced those two skill areas, as well as a balance between plug and fly events.

Mittel chose games for this team event that have long been recognized by the ACA, since historically, it’s been quicker to pass a bill in Congress than a new ACA event. He limited the distance events to Angler’s Fly and 1/4 oz. Plug Distance. He perceived too many distance events to be a disincentive for women casters to participate. The accuracy events

were evenly divided between plug and fly events to make it appeal to all ACA members. That made it simple. He chose 1/4 and 5/8 oz. Plug, Trout Fly, and Bass Bug.

Each competitor's performance would be calculated in comparison to a base score from the immediately preceding National in the division they would each compete. This too is simple.

Of the 16 participants, ten cast in the open Men's Division. Three women and one intermediate competed. But in reviewing the total points earned by individual casters, Dusty Revel casting in the Intermediate Division earned 612.44 points, exceeding Steve Rajeff's point total of 596.80 by 15.64 points! Nicole Kozicki competing in the Women's Division was less than one point behind Rajeff at 595.97. Mittel himself was fourth with 591.42, and Bill Clements of the Senior Men's Division contributed 583.77 to his team's total. Thus, the top five individual contributions came from one Intermediate, one Women, a Senior Men's caster, and only two Open Men's division competitors.

The other teams competing were the Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club, Oakland Casting Club Team 2, and the Chicago Casting Club. The Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club Team of Jay Clark, Alice Gillibert, Keith Pryor and Steve Rajeff, placed second with 2,260.5 points. That earned them \$400. The Oakland Casting Club Team 2 of Bill Clements, Elaine Gong, Glen Nagumo and Dusty Revel, took third place and \$100 with 2,225.0 points. The fourth place squad was from the Chicago Casting Club and consisted of Bill Burke, Dave Roberts, Andy Statt and John Seroczynski who ended with 2,148.7 points.

The Oakland Casting Club Team 2 as well as the Chicago Casting Club Team illustrated another important ground rule since their

members didn't belong to the same club prior to the Nationals. Any club which doesn't have enough members who compete in all the included games can entice members from other clubs to join their club and participate on their team. The only restriction placed on this was that the decision to join another club and compete on their team had to be done and acknowledged before the first event began.

The games constituting the Special Team Event were spread across four days of competition. Game results per team, and running totals were posted each day. The Oakland 1 team took an early lead in the competition after the two distance events on the first day. They won the 1/4 oz. distance with 396 points, but the Oakland 2 team had the most points in Angler's Fly Distance with 387 points. On day two, Oakland 1 dominated 1/4 oz. Accuracy with 384 points. Day three, Oakland 1 posted a huge 405.3 in Trout Fly Accuracy: all four team members surpassed 100 in this event! Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club won Bass Bug Accuracy with 387.8. On the final day, Oakland 1 again posted the high score of 388.1 in 5/8 oz. Plug Accuracy.

So, what will next year's Special Team Event look like? The games and rules will stay the same. The base scores for point-earning calculations will be those just set at the 98<sup>th</sup> National as the high for each division in each game.

Now that everyone understands how the Special Team Event works, look for an even more exciting event next year. Start thinking now about how your club can field the best possible team. Oakland's Team 1 agreed to donate their winnings back to their club for next year's event, ensuring that it could be run again next year. Make it more exciting: with more clubs and teams participating, the standings could change after every game!



## & ICSF World Championships



*Dublin, Ireland*, Sept. 5th.- In EWM competition, Steve Rajeff took two firsts and a second place. His two 1st places were in Trout Fly Distance on Water (7wt) and Trout Fly Accuracy on Water (7wt). Out of a field of 44 he took 2nd. in Salmon Fly Distance on Water with a 171 ft. cast with the official Airflo Polyfuse 10wt line.

Pam Peters also cast well in the Women's Finals. She took 1st. place in Trout Fly Accuracy on Water and a 2nd in Trout Fly Distance on Water (7wt) with a cast of 85.8 ft. Pam also took 5th place in Spey Fly Distance on Water with a 84.4 ft. cast. The US took fifth place in Spey Fly Distance on Water- Teams.

Steve Rajeff returning from Europe had this to say about the two events," *The tournament was fun, and I cast really well. It was most satisfying regaining the All Around title. Weather was horrible, with slashing rain and there were other unforeseen events that landed on the same weekend, which might have affected attendance.*"

According to Steve, David Wilkinson, EWM producer and sole investor, had a three man film crew doing a show on the competitions. Once edited, it is likely to be the best educational and strongest marketing tool ever made on ICSF casting. David will be soliciting sponsors as soon as it is ready with hopes of announcing another EWM for next year.



# ICSF RESULTS

## **ALL AROUND- Men (rank):**

**Steve Rajeff USA** 1st Place with a score of 1081.205

## **ALL-AROUND LADIES (rank):**

**Pamela Peters** 19 th Place

## **PENTATHLON MEN (rank):**

- 1- Patrik Lexa CZE
- 2- Jens Nagel GER
- 3- Ralf Stein GER...
- 8- **Steve Rajeff USA...**
- 18- **Henry Mittel USA...**
- 20- **Jay Clark USA...**
- 47- **Jared Mertens USA**

## **PENTATHLON LADIES (rank):**

- 1- Jana Maisel GER
- 2- Zuzana Kocirova CZE
- 3- Tereza Havelkova CZE...
- 5- **Pamela Peters USA**

## **HEPTATHALON (rank):**

- 1- Patrik Lexa CZE
- 2- Jens Nagel GER
- 3- Ralf Stein GER...
- 5- **Steve Rajeff USA...**
- 27- **Henry Mittel USA...**
- 39- **Jay Clark USA...**
- 49- **Jared Mertens USA...**
- 67- **Randy Olson USA**

Steve and Pam placed in the top six places of four of 9 individual events-



## **Steve Rajeff USA-**

**Event 2-** Fly Distance Single Handed- Men 5th Place Final (av.) 65.77 m (216 ft).

**Event 6-** Fly Distance Double Handed- Men 1st. Place Final (Av.) 269 m (269 ft)

**Event 8-** Multiplier Acc. Men- 3rd. Place

## **Pamela Peters USA-**

**Event 9-** Multiplier Distance Double Handed-Ladies- 5th Place Final (av.) 57.64 m (189 ft)

# New ACA Photo Gallery

**T**he majority of us apply the casting and tackle knowledge we learn in our tournament casting, in our fishing. So let's share with outsiders and the



tackle industry what we've learned and how much more successful it's made our fishing.

Casting Champion and angler Chris Korich wants to share it too. While he was competing in the Fly Fishing Masters a few years ago, he pointed out that a large percentage of the finalists on the west coast were ACA casters and had excellent fundamental skills.

To illustrate the connection between casting mastery and fishing success, we're going to post ACA Member fish photos on our website and in the Creel. We're interested in photos of the proud angler with trophy sized live

fish photographed where they were landed.

Email sharp digital photos to [webmaster@americancastingassoc.org](mailto:webmaster@americancastingassoc.org). The files should be jpeg or tiff at 72 dpi. for the web and 180-300 for The Creel. Also please include the angler's name, date and place (or water) caught, the tackle and lure/fly used, and the fish's recorded or estimated, weight and/or dimensions.



The fish in these photos must be caught legally within the last three years by casting artificial lures. No dead fish photos please. The ACA Webmaster or Editor of The Creel will publish any image or story at his/her sole discretion. Please do not send prints or film, for we can't guarantee their return.

# NEW TACKLE- THE WINNERS

**C**asters are always looking for new tackle to increase their competitive edge. This is especially true in distance casting, but accuracy casting also benefits from better matching and technology. We fight against nature's laws of air resistance, friction and gravity.

Aging is another fight against nature all who compete past age 60 will wage. Our wise and esteemed senior casters seek softer replacements for those stiff blanks they used to bend in their youth and heavier reels they once cast all day. Ideally, a caster wants to have confidence that the equipment is as good as it can be and just concentrate on the cast.

So most of us look for thinner, smoother lines and lighter outfits. Strong casters, who can handle them, are also looking for light well-designed blanks with more speed and power.

## SPOOLS & REELS

Since competitive casting began, spool design has been one key to performance in revolving spool events and more recently in spinning. A spool's cone angle in the case of spinning or side angle in the case of revolving spools

have been highly adapted for top distance performance in special tournament spools. There is a fine line between too little or too much angle. Diameter and weight are extremely important too. Large diameter spools reduce distance robbing coil memory.

In revolving spool reels, less bearing friction, low start-up inertia, and spool mass, means fewer backlashes, more distance and control. Drilled or "wiffle" spools are



**Drilled Spool**

the newest most effective way to reduce spool mass and are available on most production baitcasters. To hold weight to a minimum, aftermarket tournament distance spools offered by ACA or JapanTackle.com are designed to only hold as much line as needed for casting.

Casters are successfully



**Shimano TE100DC**

using wiffle spool reels like the Shimano Calcutta CT50B, Calcutta CTE100DC and Chronarch CH50MG for accuracy. Caster Bill "Cajun" Clements says his Pflueger Purist reel is "smooth and fast" for 5/8 accuracy. For Plug Distance, the Calais CL100A has had good results. The Shimano TE DC also includes digital control that minimizes the need to manually control backlash. Thumbing is still needed to brake the spool to shorten the landing of a cast that's too long. What do you want, laser guidance?

The favorite reels for 1/4 & 3/8 oz. Plug Accuracy has been the 308/408 Mitchells since the 1970s when they first came out. Casters have had a problem finding new



spinning reels that work as well. The problem with today's reels is; you can't reach the spool rim as easily. Spools have gotten smaller and the stems have gotten straighter. Frankly, the only new spinning reel I've seen around the casting ponds last year was Pam Peters' Mitchell Avocet S2000 that she wins with pretty consistently.



**Mitchell Avocet**

In fly reel design, large arbor reels have not only helped keep a higher percentage of a fly-line at a larger diameter to reduce coiling than a small arbor, but in many cases, doesn't have unnecessary backing capacity. Unneeded line just adds weight. Ideally, we like light, large arbor, large diameter fly reels without the unneeded drag (if possible). Echo, Scientific Anglers, Ross, Bauer, Waterworks, Loop and a few others make them.

### BEARINGS & LUBE

To fight friction, bearings and lubricants have to be carefully chosen to maximize casting potential. Bushings, axles and bearings need the right viscosity oil to spin at their fastest at a given ambient temperature. An experienced reel tuner will carry a range of lubricants and apply what's necessary for up to the minute conditions. TG's Rocket Fuel and HotSauce Reel Lube are some favorites manufacturers.

Stock bearings are usually lubricated with an all weather oil or grease that slows down bearing speed. Changing factory all metallic, or low quality bearings to aftermarket high speed ceramic hybrid bearings is an effective upgrade. Buy ABEC 5 or 7 ceramic bearings since they are smoother and can sustain high speeds better than all metal without slowing. These are available from Boca Bearings and select dealers.

### LINES

Superlines have been redesigned in recent years and cast very well on revolving spool reels but are not as well suited for spinning. Casters have benefited from these lines in both accuracy and distance. In the last two years, the most popular new line has been 15lb. test Cabela's Ripcord SI for 5/8 oz Accuracy. It is Gel-spun and has a silicone coating. This coating is a lubricant, but also

prevents water absorption into the line. This year, quite a few casters are using new Berkley Fireline Crystal for 1/4 oz. Spin Distance in the smallest diameter available.

Casters competing in both the 5/8 oz Revolving Spool and Spin Plug Distance games are using conventional monofilament lines. Their



**Large Arbor Fly Reel**

favorite is Sufix Elite in 8lb. test measuring .011" diameter.

Most tournament casters in 1/4 and 3/8 oz. Accuracy feather their mono line against the rim of the spinning reel spool. Coiling of monofilament line causes erratic control during this feathering. To prevent it, select soft, low memory lines and replace them when their performance lags. Berkley Trilene IronSilk in 4lb. test shows promise in 1/4 and 3/8 oz. Plug Accuracy. IronSilk has also outpaced Amnesia as a fly running line.

Traditionally, Angler's Fly

Distance contestants used yellow Amnesia running line and One-Hand and Two-Hand casters used Maxima. With advances in co-polymer lines, many casters now prefer Berkley Trilene IronSilk for all three, in varying diameters. It seems slicker, has less memory, and the color Solar Mint is slightly more visible. In 14lb test, it has passed ACA tackle inspection for Angler's Fly, measuring under the .015" maximum.

### GET A GRIP

Tournament casters have been credited as the first to wrap rod-grips with tennis racket grip tape for casting. I believe the original Tycoon Fin-Nor off-shore rods had perforated leather strips wrapped on the upper grip for long fights. The most popular tape has been blue Tourna-Grip. Rod-Wrap is a new alternative that is thinner, doesn't have adhesive on the back and comes in a variety of colors. This was developed mainly for bass tournaments. You can remove Rod-Wrap from cork without damage to the handle.

### RODS & GUIDES

As you may have read on our website, ACA has stopped offering Trout Fly and Dry Fly Accuracy blanks. You can now buy well designed compete rods for the price of those limited production blanks. Check Echo, TFO,

and Scientific Anglers for their rods and rod, reel and line packages. When you want distance performance, our ACA blanks are still hot and getting hotter. Rod designer Steve Rajeff redesigned a few blanks and they're mainly receiving great reviews. Steve used the new longer



**Berkley Trilene Ironsilk**

(13') blank for 5/8 Revolving Spool Distance to set the new National Record.

Zziplex of England is a manufacturer of blanks and tournament rods that win in the ICSF tournaments. They have blanks that can be used in our events if you want to experiment. To order their special blanks, call company owner and designer Terry Carroll at 0(044) 1797 366602.

The verdict is still out, but I think REC Components Recoil stripper guides are worth using. Steve Rajeff and Jay Clark have tried them on my salmon distance rod and liked them, but Henry Mittel

did not. Henry says they cause running line wrapping because without bracing, wild line won't slide off. These guides are double-footed and made of titanium wire. They are much lighter and are less damage prone than ring guides. That's why they're on G.Loomis Cross Current Saltwater fly rods. Well, this is how we learn about tackle and evolve.

The most important lesson in casting though is; tackle is somewhat important, but learning and practicing good mechanics and strategy is most important.



# Henry Mittel's Personal Training

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With John Field

*The quest to be the best in the world of casting is a very hard journey. Henry tells us the way he prepares himself mentally and physically for the challenge.*



which I need water, i.e. Trout Fly, Dry Fly, Bass Bug, and Wet Fly. During the week, I can go to parks with large areas of grass. That's when I practice distance events. When there are other people on these large areas getting in my way, I retreat to practice plug accuracy, which needs much less space.

I recommend practicing at least two different events each practice session, for a number of reasons: if one event is not working so well, you have another one for a more positive practice experience.

**Q:** How do you decide what to practice?

**Henry:** My goal is to be a very good all-around caster. I have at least two good reasons for that. That's what it takes to win the coveted all-around competitions and it gives me more chances for winning individual events; less pressure in each event.

Consequently, I tend to spend a lot of time on my weaker events. Otherwise, I have to follow the constraints life has sent me and compromise accordingly.

I can only go to the ponds on Saturdays and Sundays. Hence, when I am at the ponds, I almost exclusively practice those events for

That's good to keep the motivation level up. Also, you don't use just one set of muscles in only one way. This avoids fatigue and injury. Lastly, tournaments require switching your mindset to different events; might as well get used to it by practicing it.

**Q:** How much do you practice?



**Henry:** I practice as much as my body and the rest of the world let me get away with. That means every single day if I can manage and as many hours as possible. Well, there is an exception.

As important tournaments draw close, practice should ease up to allow the body and mind to be fresh when the tournament comes. However, I suspect that virtually no caster today practices at a level that requires easing up, except the last three days before the Nationals.

**Q:** What's your seasonal and weekly schedule of casting, and physical conditioning?

**Henry:** I generally cast all the time, because that's what I like to do. I might take a break or an extended time when I really take it easy after a big tournament like a World Championship. This is mostly to gather some energy and motivation that was used up in the preparations for that big event. But there are some differences in what I do between the seasons.

The fall and winter are a good time to work on something new, on breaking specific bad habits, to improve technique. This year, I spent a lot of my available time on learning to false cast the Salmon line. I know I came close to Steve last year, but it was a lucky



shot (my second best cast was quite a bit shorter). I am quite sure that was because my false casting was so crappy that it took luck to get into a good launch position. Hence that is what I practiced.

I also worked on my fly accuracy stroke, which included too much wrist action. Whenever you change something in your stroke, scores are likely to dip for a (long) while. That's why the fall and winter are a good time to work on major changes.

I don't have a natural desire for physical conditioning. Hence, I only increase the amount of conditioning above the maintenance level as big tournaments draw closer. However, that can backfire.

For example, two years ago, I found an unusual amount of motivation for strength train-

ing maybe a month before the Nationals and two months before the World Championships. I didn't practice the Two-Handed Plug Distance events very much while I got stronger. I ended up with trouble with my technique, in part because I was "too strong".

I remember practicing before the World Championships and the harder I tried the shorter my casts became and the worse my directional control was. At the World Championships, I got into the final (top 8), but then bombed out with three invalid casts.

Essentially, I didn't have enough practice time to adjust my technique and timing to the strength I had. I turned on the power too early in the stroke and couldn't keep up the acceleration. That changes the speed and direction of the plug quite negatively.

Lesson learned: bulk up, but start early and give yourself enough time to adjust your casting. The opposite can happen too.

You bulk up all winter, practice during the spring enjoying your big strength, and then the tournament comes around and the strength is largely gone because you didn't keep up the strength training.



**Q:** Do you have a special diet?

**Henry:** I don't have a scientifically designed diet. I gener-

ally try to eat on the healthy side, but I know I don't invest enough time to really get a very balanced diet. I bring food to work and eat there whenever I am hungry. That saves me the time for trips to lunch and dinner, which I spend on practice instead. I do make sure though that I get enough protein - especially when I work on my strength.

Some of my friends suspect that ketchup is my secret 'sauce', but I don't have it often enough to make a difference.

**Q:** What types of conditioning exercises do you do?

**Henry:** The vast majority of my exercises are geared towards back strength. I've had a rather severe lower back problem. That's because I can't do much practicing without being able to stand upright or to concentrate beyond the pain.

Specific to casting, I work mostly on my stomach and arm muscles. I use standard exercises like crunches, push-ups, and pull-ups. I also use exercises developed by others for javelin throwers and for grip strength. As a general hand and wrist conditioner I use a Dyna-Flex gyro exerciser.

**Q:** What exercises would you recommend for the aspiring

caster for the more physically demanding distance events?

**Henry:** I recommend the exercises I do. Just make sure you keep a balance. Don't just strengthen your stomach but also your back. Otherwise, cast those distance events as much as you can. Strength is important, technique is even more important.

When practicing those distance events, you want to have a mix of three different power levels, zero, medium, and all-out. All three are important for the beginner, as well as the expert.

Zero power means no line or plug and no speed. Go through the motions as slowly as you can. At each point, check if all parts of your body and rod are where they should be. This is very important for laying the fundamentals of a technique but also later for strengthening and maintaining those fundamentals.

Medium power is where you learn the technique in almost real time. Let's face it you can't keep a fly line in the air or a plug spinning around you at zero power. With practice, medium power still lets you pay attention to the technique (hopefully your body will remember what you learned at zero power).

Then there is all-out power.

# 2006 ACA Hall Of Fame Inductees

Yes, technique is likely to go to pieces when you apply all your strength. Although the hope again is that your body remembers what you learned at lower power levels. Distances will possibly be less than at medium power with good technique.

However, if all you ever practice is zero and half power casting, then that's all you will be able to do. Let's face it, the best technique won't give you a national or even international distance title when you can do it only at accuracy-casting power levels. It is common sense that the combination of maximum power and best technique will give the best distance. Hence, it is important to practice both.

(John Field is a caster and currently ACA Webmaster, Creel Editor and ACA Vice President.)

Congratulations to Alice Gillibert and Chris Korich, of Oakland California, for receiving this lifetime achievement and service award! Alice is an ACA Past President, has 1 appearance on the ACA All American Team, and holds the ACA Women's Angler's Fly Distance Record of 150 feet.

Chris has appeared 30 times on the All American Team, is co-holder of Men's Dry Fly Accuracy Record (score 100), and co-holder of Men's Bass Bug Accuracy (score 100). He lead an ICSF Championship in South Africa and was involved in bringing casting into the Olympic World Games.



## The Creel

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