

Distance casting, which for so long has been considered the exclusive field of the revolving drum or "spinner" type of fishing reel, has now been invaded by the mallock or side cast type of reel of popular Queensland choice. The results are of some interest.

It has long been known along the Northern Rivers Coast where conditions of surf and rock fishing sometimes necessitate casting of heavy weights over long distances, that the side cast type of reel is admirably suited for the job, and is rugged enough to stand considerable abuse. However, the side cast reel has been practically untried on the tournament field where casts are made over measured distances on dry land. The distances possible with this gear were largely a matter of conjecture and a subject for argument wherever fishermen, particularly exponents of different types of reels gathered. This was largely due to the reluctance on the part of tournament casting clubs to allow this type of reel to compete in casting tournaments, and also to the lack of distance casting experience by the majority of Queensland anglers.

A band of enthusiastic surf anglers from Tweed Heads A.F.C. have, over recent months, determined to show what distances can be obtained with their "crude low cost" gear, in the hope that casting tournaments may be promoted where all types of reel may be permitted to compete against each other. As a yard stick of the side cast reel's ability, and at the same time retaining essentially practical fishing tackle, the existing Australian Casting Association tournament rules for two particular casts were adopted. They are namely: Level Line Long Distance and Artificial Bait Cast. Both these casts approximate actual fishing conditions and have as a primary condition that the line must be level; that is of one continuous length without a leader. Do not confuse these casts with "unrestricted" events where a leader is permitted and casts over 200 yards are made using line of nylon stocking thickness and reels of cotton reel size with no possible fishing use are permitted.

Let us quote here the words of Joe Carnemolla who holds and has held more casting records than anyone in Australia. Speaking of the Long Distance Level Line cast any weight - "Usually a standard fishing reel is used with no leader. It is a good fisherman's throw, like the artificial bait throw and is very popular -----". Of the artificial bait cast he has this to say: "The artificial bait is the real fisherman's throw. The line has to be level throughout, no leader". The bait for this throw consists of a piece of dowel $3\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ " rounded both ends, and attached to the end of a 20" trace. It is rigged with a running sinker of any weight above the trace.

The Australian record for this throw is held by G. Buckton of Newcastle at 425 ft. 4 ins. This is an exceptional cast made with the assistance of a 55 m.p.h. wind. Tournaments for this cast are usually won with casts of 350 ft. The Australian record for Long Distance Level Line stands at ~~460 ft.~~ ^{457 ft. and is to} ~~approximately~~. Again this distance is far above average as the following figures will show:-

Sydney Surf Casting and Angling Club

Club Championship	19th June, 1954	Level Line Long Distance	
		Longest Cast	415 ft. Joe Carnemolla
Tournament	7th August, 1954	" "	423 ft. Joe Carnemolla
			11 in.

New South Wales Casting Club

Tournaments	3rd April, 1954	Level Line	Long Distance	
"	30th May, 1954	Longest Cast	377' 11"	G. Hume
"	27th June, 1954	"	358' 1"	G. Keary
"	25th July, 1954	"	361' 3"	J. Carnemolla
"		"	424' 9"	G. Keary

You may now ask how the side cast distances compare with these Australian record figures for revolving drum type reels. The answer is that, on any day, irrespective of wind conditions, these Australian records will be approached, if not bettered, by the best of the side cast exponents. In fact, the Australian record for both casts has been exceeded in practice (four times in succession by the one caster would seem to rule out the element of chance), and it seems that an officially sponsored tournament ^{is} ~~seems to be~~ all that is necessary to ensure that the Australian Casting Association figures for revolving drum reels are exceeded with the side cast reel. An average cast will be in the vicinity of 420' for long distance level line, with no guarantee that 470' would be good enough to win a tournament. A similar result could be expected with the Artificial Bait Cast, where an average cast would be better than 360' and a winning cast would need to be at least 420'. It is doubtful whether these figures could be exceeded by any type of reel anywhere in the world.

What is the gear for these colossal distances? The rod is split cane or rangoon cane from 14 ft. to 16 ft. in length. The reels are standard side cast reels from 5 ins. to 6½ ins. in diameter as sold at any sports store. In every respect the gear can be and is used for surf and rock fishing in between casting competitions.

An opportunity will be given to see some of the leading casters in particular Ian Phillip ^{Hugh Phillip} and John Anderson of Tweed Heads A.F.C. at Johnny Fern's Field Day on 5th December. Casts exceeding 450 ft. can be confidently expected.



(Allan Gynther)