

Let's keep casting sane

By "FULL CREEL"

Distance casting is quickly becoming a popular sport in Queensland, especially along the South Coast, where surf anglers have perfected a method of obtaining long casts under fishing conditions with a side cast reel.

However it is hoped that these enthusiasts keep casting sane.

When distance casting was first introduced into Queensland in 1949 by Q.A.F.C.A., all competitors used the over the rod spinning reel, and much controversy took place on the advantages of side casts and spinning reels.

The spinning men, in their attempts to get longer casts, and they did, used a nylon silk of very low breaking strain which could not be used under actual fishing conditions.

With this line the caster used a leader, which is a trace heavy enough to send the lead on its way, thus eliminating any strain on the very light nylon silk.

It was considered by the side cast enthusiasts, that they could throw just as far, if not further, using a fishing line of any breaking strain desired, but no leader could be used. This meant that at least an 8 lb. line would have to be used to prevent any break-offs.

But it is considered in some quarters that these

men are going to the other extreme.

They use a one piece Rangoon cane rod, 16 feet long, with about a 2in. diameter at the butt.

It might be claimed that these rods can be used in surf fishing, but reports to hand indicate that experiments are being carried out with 20 ft. rods.

The Queensland Amateur Fishing Club's Association will conduct, for the first time, the Queensland Casting Championship at their State championships at Rockhampton in June.

Actual rules for the tournament has not yet been drawn up, but it is hoped that some restriction be placed on the length of rods to be used, and also the weights of leads used.

Club Notes

GEE BEES fished Tangalooma last week-end, resulting in a win for G. Short, with 16. T. Blake won the B grade competition, with 11. The heaviest, a 2 1/2 lb. flathead, was caught by T. Cush. A general meeting will be held at Ivory St., at 8 p.m., tomorrow night.

SHORNLIFFE fished Toorbul Point last Sunday, resulting in a win for R. Prackert from J. Clayton.

MIRIMAR fish the second round of the club championship at Tangalooma on Saturday, leaving Hayles Wharf at 1.15 p.m. (LM5002).

BALMORAL creeled 164 at Coombabah last Sunday. W. Clegg (28) won from S. Nellsen (18). L. Covey landed the heaviest, a 2lb. flathead. Next trip to the same ground on March 13, leaving Balmoral at 3 a.m. (XL1747). A general meeting will be held at S. Vaughan's residence tonight.

E.D.C.O. fish Tangalooma on Saturday, leaving North Quay at 1.15 p.m. Visitors welcome.

WINDSOR go to Comboyuro on Saturday, leaving the Hamilton Game Wharf at 12 noon (LX2728).

SCARBOROUGH fished Dennybrook last Sunday for the H.M.A.S. Perth Cup. R. Melsom won with 11 and I. Sehlmann won the handicap with 12.

PADDINGTON go to Jumpinpin on Saturday, leaving Turbot Street at 10 p.m. (XW3189). A general meeting will be held at 8 p.m. tonight at Turbot Street.

A.F.A.'s competition to Hollywell last Sunday was won by J. Buckley. E. Byrne caught the most—20. Next trip to Southport on March 12. A general meeting will be held in the club rooms next Monday night.

MAXAM fish Tangalooma on Saturday, leaving North Quay at 1.15 p.m. (XW3120).

CAMP HILL: Belmont fishing Hollywell 13th March. Bus leaving terminus at 3 a.m. Visitors welcome. Ring XL2543 to book.

MT. GRAVATT will fish Hollywell Saturday, 5th March. Bus leaves Stone's Corner, 3 a.m. Visitors welcome. Phone XY6587. General meeting Mt. Gravatt State School, Thursday, 3rd, 8 p.m.

VALLEY. Competition held on Sunday at Jumpinpin, on the 27th February, resulted in a win for Bob Ridgewell and Eddie Anderson came second. Heaviest fish caught by Bob Ridgewell, 8lb. 4oz. grunter bream.

WATERSIDERS. 25 members weighed in 300 fish caught at Cowan and Comboyuro Saturday night. Dick Ricketts won the double, most fish 41 and the heaviest 4lb. 4oz. Flathead. L. Austin won Club Monthly Trophy.

STAFFORD—GRANGE will fish Coombabah Lakes next Sunday. Bus leaves Grange taxi rank, 2.30 a.m. and Stafford terminus 2.45 a.m. Ring LU1533 to book.

SPARE THE ROD OR SPOIL THE CAST

Along the Northern Rivers Coast of New South Wales, the side cast fishing reel and long ragoon cane rod is the overwhelming choice of beach anglers and rock hoppers. If we examine the fishing conditions in these waters, the reason for this almost exclusive preference becomes apparent.

This stretch of coast is noted for big surf with a long roll and heavy sweeps and a successful angler may need to use leads of up to 6 oz. to slow down the movement of the bait to within reasonable limits. Offshore reefs at the rocky headlands also necessitate long and accurate casts. So, the ability to accurately cast heavy weights over long distances has determined the type of gear preferred.

The ragoon cane rod now being used for casting over the tournament field is not one iota different in length or weight from the same ragoon cane rod, tried and proved most successful for these fishing conditions for the past twenty years or more.

Certainly, further knowledge of desirable rod tapers, placement of runners, etc. has been gained in distance casting. However, it is not a recent development that a length of 14 feet to 16 feet is generally chosen.

Ragoon cane is a natural growth of bamboo from the jungles of Buma and its weight and taper is beyond the control of man. It so happens that the angler selecting from available lengths, finds the weight and taper most suitable for these fishing conditions and distance casting will give him a finished rod between 14 and 16 feet in length.

The butt diameter of such rods is generally between $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches and $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Whilst rare specimens of cane do grow to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the butt, they are usually far too heavy for practical use. The weight is determined mainly by the size of "pipe" or hollow through the cane and this together with taper will mainly determine its action.

Heavy rods with a small pipe and longer rods than 16 feet tend to become slow in recovery and generally unwieldy in use, apart from taxing the strength of the angler. As there is a wide variation in these characteristics, all rods within the above measurements will not be good casting rods.

To give of its best a rod should be fully loaded by the weight being thrown. Insufficient weight will not fully arc the rod. Too much weight will overload and give slow recovery again with consequent loss of distance.

The conditions of the fisherman's casts as laid down by the Australian Casting Association have, as a primary condition, that the line must be level; that is, the line must be of one continuous length, without a leader. No one will doubt this most essential condition, if casting is to simulate actual fishing conditions.

This one requirement of level line automatically determines the relationship between line gauge and the weight of lead. Maximum weight of lead with minimum gauge of line will give the greatest distance. However, as weight of lead is increased, so gauge of line must be increased to avoid breakoffs and no gain in distance is attained. A line too light will cause the same parting of line and lead. Perhaps a slightly softer rod will cushion the shock of moving the lead away; but here we are sacrificing distance again.

The lead weight moved from rest, reaches in a distance of some twenty feet, a speed approaching if not exceeding 100 miles per hour. The strain applied to the line in this distance can easily exceed its breaking point and must, require a fine balance of tackle and a little finesse.

It should now be evident that the gauge of line and weight of lead together with the rod determines the balance of the gear and must be left to individual selection.

Present knowledge would indicate that a minimum line diameter of .015 inch or .40 millimetre is necessary to throw a tournament lead of 3½ or 4 oz. Lines of this gauge have an advertised breaking strain of 13 to 15 lbs.

If it is considered desirable to specify any particular maximum weight casts, such as 1oz, 2oz or 4oz then these events should be provided for in addition to, and not in place of the established cast of "any weight" which is already used by both types of reel. It should also be remembered that to obtain maximum results a separate rod and line may be necessary for each event.

A more practical suggestion may be to hold an aggregate throw as well as an outright cast. The aggregate to be of four throws; two each way in opposite directions, with no break-offs allowed. This would cancel out the advantage of any prevailing wind and give a fair comparison on any day irrespective of wind conditions.

An officially recorded cast of 164 yards was made at Downey Park on the 6th February, 1955, with the following gear. Rangoon cane rod 15'6" in length, 1½" diameter at butt, 4oz tournament lead, .40 millimetre Tortue line, 13 lb B.S. 5 inch Alvey side cast reel with bakelite barrel.

