

Single Hand Fly Casting Clinics - Winter 2021-2022

In October 2021 Mid Island Castaways Fly Fishing Club surveyed its members about their interests in clinics for single hand and double hand fly casting and invited members to sign up for notices about casting clinics. Briefly, results of the survey were as follows:

- Ability level for single hand casting: Novice 67%, Intermediate 33%
- Ability level for double-hand casting: Novice 80%, Intermediate 20%
- Interest in fundamentals of single hand casting: 78%
- Interest in fundamentals of double hand casting: 93%

There was a high level of interest in analyzing casting faults and fixes (86%) and general interest in all casting techniques ranging from introductory to advanced techniques listed in the survey.

During the winter and early spring Castaways instructors offered regular two-hour casting clinics on average twice every month between late November and March, with some variation owing to inclement weather. Uncertainty about the weather meant that notices were posted only two to three days in advance. The clinics focused on casting with single hand rods, progressing from essential bio-mechanical skills to single hand change of direction casts. Instructors offered drills and games to practice at home between sessions. With the exception of the last clinic, sessions were held in a sports field. Between eight and 14 club members attended as students and five to eight instructors were on hand to provide guidance. Seven single handed casting clinics were offered between November 2021 and the end of March 2022:

- 2021: November 20, December 4. Foul winter weather and Christmas break precluded casting clinics during most of December and early January.
- 2021: January 15, 29; February 12, March 5 and 22.

The final clinic in the single hand series was held on the water at Cameron Lake. Twelve club members took advantage of the opportunity to review skills they worked on through the winter. Six instructors helped with this class. Casting on water is fundamentally different from practicing on grass. The water acts like 'honey', allowing better loading of the rod during water-borne casts like the PULD, roll cast and single hand spey casts. Cameron Lake was unusually calm that day, its mirror-like surface picturesquely reflecting clouds and the surrounding mountains (see photos next page).

In April 2022, there will be a shift in focus of clinics to casting with double hand rods, including switch and spey rods.

Final Single Handed Casting Clinic - March 22, 2022 at Cameron Lake
(photo credits: Jeff Allen)

