

# THE BACKCAST

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Trout Unlimited, SE Mass Chapter 241

February, 2008

Next Meeting: **Tuesday, February 12, 2008** at the Mitchell Memorial Club in Middleboro. Doors open at 6:00 for fly tying. General meeting begins at 7:30. As always, admission is free.



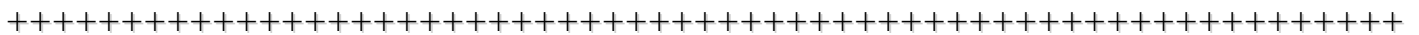
The February Meeting features the entertaining and informative speaker Randy Julius.



## Randy Julius

Last year Randy Julius transformed one of the members of the audience into an Indian princess. Now that is going to be one tough act to top. Whether he is writing about fishing Cape Cod for Stripers or speaking on an Alaskan wilderness trip, Randy is always entertaining. Outdoorsmen of Massachusetts seek out the artistic renderings of Randy on the Massachusetts Waterfowl Stamp. The last stamp that won him a competition was the Long-billed curlew in 2006. He won his first competition in 1978 with a Ruddy Turnstone. He has painted decoys that appeared on stamps in 1981, 1983, 1985, 1992 and 2000.

It is rare that you can find a person that can live in the wilderness for weeks at a time, render artistic drawings of their experiences, write a column that's entertaining and informative, finally wow and educate an audience. This one is a must see presentation.



## Ice Strength & Safety Tips

## Mass DFWL/ Web Page

This ice strength and safety information is presented for the benefit of ice anglers and other winter sports people.

The figures in the table below are for clear, blue ice on lakes and ponds. Reduce strength values 15% for clear blue, river ice. Slush or snow (white) ice is only one-half the strength of blue ice and can be very treacherous. One caution is that "Honeycombed" ice, which occurs in the spring or during major winter thaws as the ice is melting, is the most dangerous ice, and best avoided unless the angler is certain there is a safe layer of solid ice beneath the honeycombed surface.

Anglers should also be aware that many lakes and ponds contain spring holes and other areas of current that may create deceptively dangerous thin spots in areas that are otherwise safe. Always use caution, and don't venture out onto unfamiliar waters without checking ice thickness frequently.

## Ice Strength & Safety Tips *continued*

*How can you tell if ice is safe?*

There are no guarantees — always consider ice potentially dangerous. Assess ice safety by using an ice chisel to chop a hole in the ice to determine its thickness and condition. Make sure you continue to do this as you go further out on to the ice, because the thickness of the ice will not be uniform all over the pond or lake. Be aware that ice tends to be thinner on lakes and ponds where there are spring holes, inlets or outlets. Don't venture on to ice bound rivers or streams as the currents make ice thickness unpredictable.

*What if you, a companion or pet fall through the ice?*

As with any emergency, don't panic! If you fall through the ice briefly, call for help. It doesn't take long for the cold water to start slowing your physical and mental functions, so you must act quickly. Air will remain trapped in your clothes for a short time aiding your buoyancy. Kick your legs while grasping for firm ice. Try to pull your body up using "ice pins" that should be hanging around your neck. Once your torso is on firm ice, roll towards thicker ice. This will better distribute your weight. Remember that ice you have previously walked on should be the safest. After you reach safe ice, don't waste precious time because you need to warm up quickly to prevent hypothermia. Go to the nearest fishing shanty, warm car, or home.

If a companion falls through the ice remember the phrase "Reach-Throw-Go" If you are unable to **reach** your friend from shore, **throw** him or her a rope, jumper cables, tree branch, or other object. If this does not work, **go** for help before you also become a victim. Get medical assistance for the victim immediately.

When walking on or near ice, keep your pets on a leash. If a pet falls through the ice do not attempt to rescue the pet, go for help. Well meaning pet owners can too easily become rescue victims when trying to assist their pets.

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## Tri State Tournament

**George Costello**

The Massachusetts Sportsman's Council, (MSC) claim is that there is power in numbers. Whenever a right of a sport is taken away, i.e. a species of bird is no longer allowed to be hunted and no one takes action, that sport has now been compromised. When a just right is given up without a fight, members of that sport are now open to make other sacrifices. MSC believes that when outdoor sporting clubs ban together they can strengthen their position to further their sport.

The Tri State Tournament is a great example of how different sporting clubs working together can be extremely positive. A guy named Steve Mantia of Stripers Unlimited runs the Tri State Tournament. There are three legs of the Tri State Tournament;

Yarmouth, MA – June 6,7 & 8th

Old Orchard Beach, ME – September 5, 6 & 7th

Weekapaug, RI – October 25, 26 & 27th

**Tri State Tournament** *continued*

In the Yarmouth leg last year, I fished with Tim Brooks and Mark Fulton. Mark writes the North Shore report for On The Water magazine. He is a Plumb Island Surfcaster. Those two guys caught more fish than I've ever seen caught. The whole weekend they were giving me pointers on improving my catch ratio. This is an example of the camaraderie that is built on a weekend competition.

You are split into groups of six. We had two Mass Striped Bass, two Stripers Unlimited and two Plumb Island Surfcasters. It is a catch and release tournament, the system keeps everyone honest. At the Weekapaug leg last year, Ron McKee, a very well known Weekapaug Surfcaster, shocked a group of locals when he released a 52.9 pound 47" fish.

I went up to Old Orchard a week early last year, spending the week fishing stripers from my kayak. The tournament builds friendships, opens you to new techniques, shows you gorgeous parts of New England and reveals new areas to fish. I combined this group of competitions with the Plumb Island Invitational, which will take place May 24 this year. The whole episode made for a very well rounded season.

Trout Unlimited Southeastern Massachusetts would need six people to make up a team. Let me know if this is of interest and I will reach out to Steve Mantia and Charlie Murphy to get the ball rolling.

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**Ice Fishing Techniques**

**Michael Edwards**

**New England Sportsmen's Network**

During the summer, all anglers use rod & reel setups. Many anglers will also take out a metal spoon or Silver Buddy type lure to catch any number of different species of fish. Yet, as soon as ice fishing season arrives these same anglers put down the rod & reel setup and switch to tipups.

Many anglers that use only tipups are unnecessarily limiting themselves during their ice fishing trips. There are many times that when tipups are not producing, a jigging technique will be very successful.

**Less Gear Equals More Fishing Time**

The gear involved in jigging is significantly less than with tipups. Most anglers don't realize this. All you need is an ice jigging rod, a small box to hold your lures and clippers, and a tool to make a hole in the ice. With such a simple list of items to take out onto the ice, a day of jigging is really a very simple approach to ice fishing. A quick hint ... if you're using a power auger be sure to bring about a half gallon of mixed gas with you since you'll probably be drilling a large number of holes.

## Ice Fishing Techniques *continued*

### More Holes Means More Fish

With so little gear, it doesn't take the angler long to learn that (s)he is very mobile. Matter of fact, with a power auger a few anglers can cover a vast area in search of fish.

When I go out on the lake with just a jigging rod and auger, I will often times start on a shoreline and begin drilling holes just off the shoreline. I will then continue in a straight line out towards the middle of the lake separating the holes by about 50 feet. Then I will drill holes parallel to the shore. This allows me to identify points, drop offs, and submerged humps. Combine this approach with a good depth contour map and your fishing success is only limited to the amount of time you have on the lake.

### Baits

A number of baits are available to a mobile ice angler. You should have baits that will work for a number of different types of fish since you will undoubtedly be covering a lot of ground.

Swedish Pimple – these are probably the most popular ice fishing baits. It is always good to have a couple of different sizes. Swedish Pimples sizes are identified in numbers. The number 5 is the most typical size used for crappie and white perch. Size 7 or larger is typically used for bass and pike. The number 5 is equivalent to a 1/4 ounce lure. You will want to have a number of different colors of Swedish Pimples also. Red and chartreuse are the two colors I make sure are in my lure box.

Kastmaster – these are another very popular freshwater ice fishing lure. 1/4 ounce is good for panfish, while 1/2 ounce is better suited for bass and pike. I often find that Kastmasters with the white and red bucktail work better than the bare hook models.

Rapala – Rapala makes a special fish styled bait that has fins on the front and back. This Rapala model is unique in its action and sometimes can be very productive for fish of all species. The Rapala moves in a figure-8 when slowly lifted up and down.

Bucktail or Marabou Jig – very good for lake trout and rainbow trout, a 1/2 ounce to 1 ounce bucktail jig is a lure that you don't want to be without.

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### Diagnosing Your Cast

**Ed Jaworowski**  
**Fly Fisherman**

All serious fly fishers would like to cast better. If you want to move ahead, here is a game plan for remedying problems and improving your casting.

This isn't a way to cast but instead a way to think about casting. I have long preached that there are no advanced mistakes. All casting errors involve violations of basic mechanics. I'm a staunch fundamentalist: Know what must happen in terms of mechanics to make any cast, and then make it happen.

## Diagnosing Your Cast *continued*

### LONG VS. SHORT STROKE

Note the position of the arm and rod just as the caster starts the forward cast (top). This is the position many instructors, manuals, and films recommend. While it may not be categorically wrong, it should not be considered right in all situations or accepted as a norm. This starting position works fine for short casts with light lines and flies but requires a short, more difficult stroke that often causes the rod tip to come downward at the end of the forward stroke, making distance casts impossible. With the rod farther back and lower at the start of the forward cast (bottom), as well as more to the side, a longer stroke is possible.



The tip also straightens going ahead or slightly rising at the end of the cast. This combination makes longer casts easier.



Physics comes first, not casting rules, instruction, style, or technique. Before you can correctly analyze and diagnose your cast, you must understand the principles that determine the outcome of all casts. Then you can decide whether your cast conforms to those principles or violates them. Common sense tells you specifically what you must do to correct each cast.

Anglers too often think of casting as a series of dos and don'ts. We are told, and believe, that if we adhere to the dos, and avoid the don'ts, our casts will succeed. So we stand a certain way, hold the rod at a certain angle, point it a certain direction, move the arm to a certain stopping point, and so on.

Of course, anyone with experience knows these instructions fail to produce good casts as often as they succeed. They fail because we ask the wrong questions and get hung up on rules. Never ask "What do I do?" without also asking "Why?"



### THE FLY BOX: Wadsworth Shad Fly

- Hook:** Mustad 7957 size 4 – 6 (or equal).
- Tail:** Short yellow marabou, such as the fuzz at the base of saddle hackles, this should extend only to the back of the hook bend.
- Body:** Embossed or plain mylar silver tinsel.
- Throat:** Yellow marabou.
- Wing:** White marabou extending to the back of the hook bend.
- Head:** Fire – orange or red.

This fly was developed by Les Wadsworth of the Pioneer Valley Chapter , it has all the makings of a good Shad fly the addition of some none lead weight on the body would allow this fly to get down deeper in fast water. This pattern could also be tied with orange or red wing.

Till then Tom Magee.

*Editor's note:* Please feel free to send me one of your favorite recipes for this column. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Stop by and tie a fly with Tom Magee. He is one of the instructors at the annual fly tying classes. He'll show you some easy steps to tying flies that work!



### Upcoming Monthly Events

Red Brook work day is on the first Saturday of every month, rain or shine. We meet in the Lyman Reserve parking lot. Stream readings usually start at 9:00 A.M. Arrive early and wet a line. Check the railroad bridge tide chart. The dates are:

February	High Tide 11:55 AM	March	High Tide 10:08 AM
April	High Tide 3:21 AM	May	High Tide 2:02 AM

### **Directions:**

**From Route 25, get off at exit 1 (to Buzzards Bay, Bourne) just north of the Bourne Bridge on the Cape Cod Canal. Bear right off ramp and take an immediate right onto Head of the Bay Road. Follow for approximately three miles around the eastern and northern shores of Buttermilk Bay. Parking lot entrance is about 250 feet beyond Packard Street on right.**



Call Warren Winders for more news.

**In order to relieve angling pressure on the salters in Red Brook during their fall spawning season, we request that you give them a break starting in mid October throughout the winter. Thank you for your cooperation.**

### Quashnet area High Tides

February	High Tide 7:17 AM	March	High Tide 6:59 AM
April	High Tide 11:45AM	May	High Tide 10:57 AM

For Quashnet Workday information Call Bob Nickerson. Cape Cod Chapter meets at the Martin Road gate, off Route 28 Falmouth- Call Bob Nickerson for info: 508-428-8320

**GENERAL MEETING DATES AND SPEAKERS:** The meeting starts at 7:30 PM. Doors open at 6:00 PM for fly tying. Bring your mattarelli, deer hair, thread and hackle and tie a few.

**Up Coming Events:**

Red Brook work days, February 2, March 1, April 5, May 4  
Quashnet work days, February 17, March 16, April 20, May 18  
The Standish Show, February 2 & 3  
Eastern Fishing & Outdoors Expo, February 7-10, Worcester DCU Center  
February Meeting: February 12  
The Massachusetts Striped Bass Show: March 1 10am-7pm, March 2 9am-5pm Stonehill College  
Casting for Recovery Fundraiser Casting /Tying Instructions March 15 Gus Canty Arena, Falmouth 10am  
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Your Directors are ... \* Are also Council Delegates

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**Chapter Shirts, T-Shirts and Hats Available**  
We have button down shirts with our embroidered logo, t-shirts with Jay Mulcahy's sketch of a brook trout and hats for sale in various sizes. *Prices are as follows:*

Button down shirts.....	\$40.00
T-shirts .....	\$10.00
Hats .....	\$10.00

*See Nancy Dube at the general meeting.*

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Thanks go out to Printing Unlimited in Holbrook for the fine job they do on our newsletter. Thank you.

Thanks to the following businesses for distributing the Backcast to the general public.

<b>Red Top Sporting Goods</b> , Buzzards Bay	508-759-3371
<b>Rod Builders Workshop</b> , Kingston	781-582-1015
<b>Bear's Den Fly Fishing Company</b> , Taunton	508-977-0700
<b>Fisherman's Outfitter</b> on Union St., Plymouth	508-747-7440

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