

# FISH IOWA GAMES COMPETITION GUIDELINES

## Materials Needed

### Fish Iowa Games Competition Kit

- Guidelines and diagrams
- Instructional DVD
- Score Sheets
- Reporting Forms (return to Iowa Sports Foundation)
- Targets – 2
- Contest spincast rods and reels – 2
- Casting plugs (5/16 oz) for practice – 16
- Participant ribbons – 1 per contestant
- Medals – gold, silver, and bronze for each class
- Sample press release
- Handouts (optional) – 1 set per contestant



### Other

- Rods and reels (1 per 2-3 students for practice; see list of loan centers)  
*Note: have extras rigged to replace tangled or broken equipment*

### Casting Basics

You will find a range of talents and experience among your students, but there are some basics to keep in mind when teaching casting:

1. Focus on the technique before using targets – students quickly forget basic instructions when staring at a target.
2. It is rare that a student has any experience flipping or pitching, even if he/she has fished before.
3. The first step in casting for accuracy is rod control – start beginners with both hands on the rod; more experienced students can move the hand from in front of the reel to on the reel to help them “brake” the line.

### Flip

- Underhand, pendulum-type cast
- Reel engaged prior to casting (no additional line comes off reel; don't use thumb stop)
- Start with rod tip up and lower to swing lure (use the tip of the rod, not the handle)
- Line length prior to cast – about the length of the rod (5' 6" rod)
- Older students can use one hand to control/feed the line
- Flipping done 10 feet from the target for the contest

### Pitch

- Underhand, pendulum-type cast

- Reel disengaged (weight of the lure pulls more line off the reel as you cast, use thumb stop)
- Press thumb stop in prior to cast
- Start with rod tip up and lower to swing lure (use the tip of the rod, not the handle)
- Line length prior to cast – at least 2 feet (2-3 feet seems to work best)
- Older students can use thumb stop or one finger to slow/stop the lure near the target
- Pitching done from 20 feet for the contest
- Pitching requires good hand-eye coordination – it is often the toughest cast for students

### **Overhand Cast**

- Overhand
- Reel disengaged (more line comes off with the cast, use thumb stop)
- Press thumb stop in prior to cast
- Start with rod tip straight out in front, raise over the shoulder and release the thumb stop as the rod moves forward
- Line length prior to cast – lure within 1 foot of rod tip
- Older students can use thumb stop or one finger to slow/stop the lure near the target
- 30 feet isn't very far for older, stronger students – the most common problem students may encounter is overthrowing the target

### **Set-up**

- We recommend setting up for the contest in the gym. If you set up outside do so on a paved surface, or at least place plywood or other firm material under the casting area. Have a back-up plan in case of strong winds or inclement weather.
- Set up at least two **casting lanes** to run the competition. You will want more if you have classes larger than 25 students. (See diagram.)
- Allow two feet between the lanes.
- Allow a minimum of 40 feet long by four feet wide per casting lane.
- Place targets at one end of the casting lanes.
- Mark 10 feet (flipping), 20 feet (pitching) and 30 feet (overhead casting) from the center of the target using tape.
- Mark off the remainder of the gym or casting area into practice casting lanes so students can practice as much as possible – mark practice targets using tape or paper taped to the surface.

### **Competition**

#### **Format**

- Each contestant/student must cast to the targets provided using the spincast combos provided in the contest kit.
- Each contestant/student must flip twice from 10 feet, pitch twice from 20 feet, and do an overhand cast twice from 30 feet. You may opt to have students complete one, two, or all three casts as part of the competition.

- You can either have all students in a class do flipping, then pitching and so forth, or have each student do two of each cast, then they are done competing – we found the latter worked best for older students, but doing one cast at a time seemed to be less confusing for younger students.
- With two casting for the competition, allow 50 minutes for up to 25 students to complete the three casts. If time is limited, you will need more lanes and scorers.
- Prepare for the unexpected if you complete the contest during school hours: rain that forces students into the gym for recess, fire drills, etc.

## **Scoring**

- The higher of the two scores for each flip, pitch, and/or overhand cast is added together to determine the contestant's overall score. A maximum of 150 points is possible if all three casts are included in the contest.
- Determine ahead of time how you plan to score the contest. Following are two options:
  1. Where the lure comes to rest on the target. (If the lure is on the line dividing the point areas, the score will be the area where the part of the lure is attached to the line comes to rest.) OR
  2. Where the lure first strikes. (This may be more difficult to score, but better emulates casting in a real situation.)
- The higher of the two scores for each type of cast (flip, pitch, and overhand) are added to determine the contestant's score. A total of 50 points per cast (150 total) is possible.
- Scores are recorded on the "Fish Iowa Games Score Sheet" for each class.

## **Tie-Breaking:**

- Select a cast (flip, pitch, or overhand) and have contestants with the same score cast until there is a winner.

## ***Other Resources***

### **Casting instruction/practice – resource people**

The following are some ideas for resource people to assist teaching casting and/or conducting your contest:

County conservation board  
 DNR conservation officers  
 Fishing/conservation clubs  
 Service clubs  
 Parents/grandparents  
 High school organizations/clubs  
 Other school personnel

## **Fishing Instruction**

*Fish Iowa! Basic Spincasting Module*  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Aquatic Education Program  
2473 160<sup>th</sup> Road  
Guthrie Center, IA 50115  
[www.iowadnr.gov/education/index.html](http://www.iowadnr.gov/education/index.html)

## **Practice Rods and Reels**

The DNR Aquatic Education Program provides free loan rods and reels at more than 100 sites statewide. Be sure to reserve equipment well ahead of time and check to assure it is in proper working order before your practice sessions. See the “Rod and Reel Distribution Site” listing for contact information.

## ***After the Contest***

- Turn in report forms to Iowa Sports Foundation.
- Prepare and submit press release to local paper – acknowledge state and local sponsors as well as any volunteers.
- Thank you – be sure to send a brief email or note to sponsors of the competition – their generosity makes the contest possible.

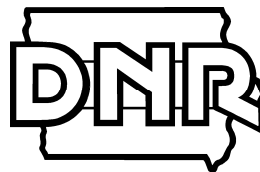
## ***More Information***

The Iowa Sports Foundation (Iowa Games) in conjunction with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources developed Fish Iowa Games. We hope you find this program useful and fun-filled for your students and yourself.

Thank you.

For more information contact:

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