

# 'Baitcasting Basics': Get Cranking!

by Darren J. Park

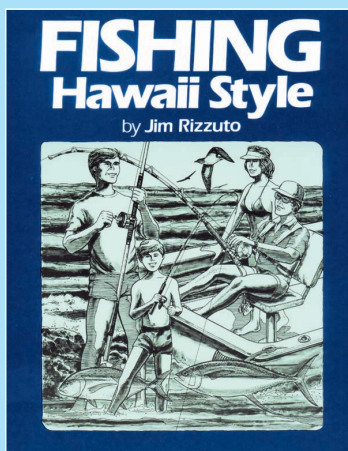
Most of us in Hawai'i have gone to the beach with a fishing pole and cast a piece of bait into the ocean, hoping to hook and land something, only to be disappointed time and again. Fishing trips may fail to produce the highly anticipated bell-ringing, ratchet-screaming, heart-pounding strikes because of the improper use and choice of equipment. Just a little knowledge on how to properly select and use fishing tackle for bait-casting could help more fishermen hook up to some very nice-sized fish when they are around and hungry.

I learned this firsthand. Like most fishermen who get interested in bait-casting, I had some general experience in other types of fishing, like trolling and bottom fishing. When my long-time buddy Chris invited me to go shore fishing with him on the Big Island, I jumped at the chance and thought I was going to hook up big time. I had been going fishing with my dad on his boat since I was a kid, and I felt pretty confident that I could do a little shore fishing with Chris. Long story short, it became quickly evident that I had no idea what gear was required for bait-casting or how to use it. The short casts, bankrupts, cutoffs and heckles from Chris' brother Pat affirmed that I had a lot to learn about bait-casting.

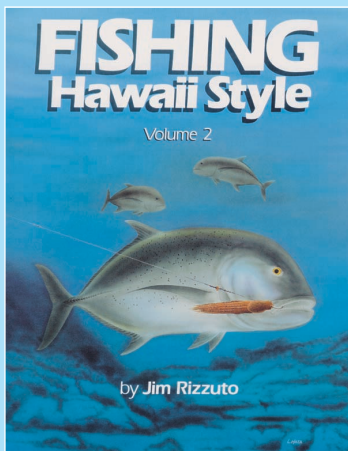
Soon after that humiliating and frustrating experience, I hit the stores. I bought books, read magazines, and watched shows on TV. There's an abundance of excellent bait-casting resources available including HAWAII FISHING NEWS, the "FISHING Hawaii Style" instructional books, "Hawaii Goes Fishing" or "Fishing Tales" fishing shows, and even the friendly staff at your favorite fish and tackle store. However, many fishermen who are familiar with these sources still have a lot of basic but very important questions. Surprisingly, many still ask these basic questions: Conventional or spinning reel? What length and action of pole? What type and weight of lead sinker? What size and type of hooks? Mainline and leader material? Pound test for mainline, leader, and break line? The list goes on and on. Having someone show you how to match and select tackle for your target fish and how to use it properly is also helpful. I was fortunate that my friend Chris was willing to sacrifice his fishing time to teach me these things so that I could enjoy my time fishing and actually catch some fish.

To help others and to answer some of the basic shorecasting questions about essential bait-casting techniques, guidelines and tips, we produced a DVD entitled "Baitcasting Basics."

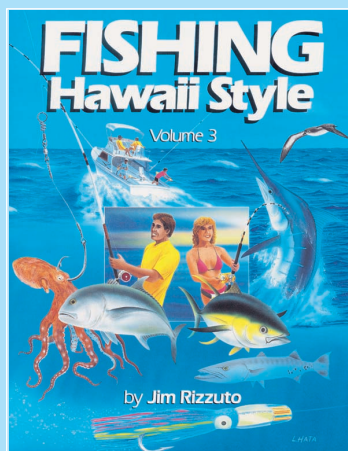
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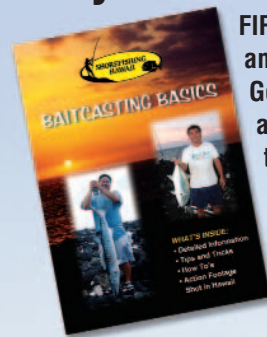
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Chris used to videotape our fishing trips and share the footage with others; then we realized that despite the popularity of shore fishing here in Hawai'i, there were no videos featuring this favorite pastime. With Chris' video production skills and my role-filling duties to pitch in wherever needed, we decided to embark on this project to produce an instructional and entertaining DVD. The completed product features more than 40 minutes of instruction by Brian Kimata, owner of Brian's Fishing Supply, on all the bait-casting gear you would need and the gear's proper use. There's also action footage of our fishing gang catching prized fish from moana-'ukali to ulua using bait-casting techniques that Brian describes in the instructional segment.

We also share proven "Tips and Tricks" that we and our friends have used successfully over the years, including how to hook an 'a'ama crab and keep it alive for use as bait, a product that will help extend the life of live bait in a bucket without frequent water changes, and other useful but less commonly known techniques.

"Baitcasting Basics" is nearly 90 minutes long with informative and exhilarating video footage. While one video won't immediately transform you into a fish-catching "pounder," when used in conjunction with the instructional books, help from fishing supply store owners, and advice from other fishermen, your chances of catching fish will definitely improve. We hope it gives you that needed edge on your next fishing trip to hook up and get cranking!

... Darren