

# Many Happy Returns

Number 33

\$2.50

An International Newsletter of the U.S. Boomerang Association

Winter 1988

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## What They Had to Say

*compiled by Ben Ruhe*

"I was throwing my ultralight at dusk and had something interesting happen. A small bat came over and flew with it for awhile." - Diane Doig; Geneva, Illinois.

"Sad news from Australia today: the inventor of the boomerang grenade was killed yesterday" - Johnny Carson on the Late Night Show.

"I'm still waiting for the whirring coming closer that will tell me that my boomerang poem has come back, ready to be written" - Gary Snyder, Nevada City, California  
*continued on page 18*

## Discovery: World's Oldest Known Boomerang



23,000 year old  
boomerang  
found in Poland  
is made out  
of a mammoth  
tusk.

10 cm

*See story on page 10.*

# BOOK REVIEW

by Ted Bailey

The November 1987 issue of "National Geographic World" had a four page spread on boomerangs with beautiful colored photos. The feature craftsman was Doug DuFresne. Photos included Doug at work in his boomerang factory and his collection of performance boomerangs.

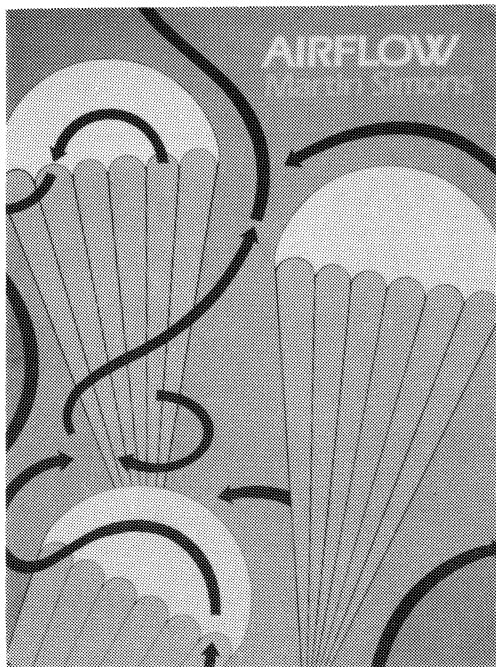
My son, Matt Bailey, brought home a fourth grade reader titled "FROM BICYCLES TO BOOMERANGS" with a wonderful story of a young boy whose father brings home a boomerang from Australia with a little magic left in it by the previous owner: an aboriginal witch doctor. This magical stick takes the boy to a planet in a distant galaxy where he is held captive on an advanced planet until he escapes, recovers his confiscated magic boomerang and returns to earth. Doesn't this sound like one of Barnaby's wild stories?

We can't forget the October 1, 1987 issue of "Nature" which featured two excellent articles on the Euro-boomerang.

Look for the magazine "Arts and Antiques" this winter, probably in the January issue, for an authoritative annotation on boomerang collecting by Ben Ruhe. Many of Ben's fine collectable boomerangs will be featured in the article.


In a closely related field to boomerangs, USBA member Stephen Weiss has two publications on the market which may be of some interest. "WINGS & THINGS" is a book on Origami that specializes in the theme of flight. When he sent me a copy of his book, there was an artificial samara (flying seed) inside that he had made for me. It hovered every bit as good as real Maple seeds from my back yard. His second project is a kit of five cut and paste 3-D flying rings which have terrific flying characteristics such as distance and MTA. "Flite Rings" is a

production of AG Industries which is associated with previous USBA President: Ali Fujino. Beat Aepi of the Schweizer Bumerang Club is currently working on a school text about boomerangs. More on this in a later issue.



**AIRFLOW** by Martin Simons  
A. E. Press, U. S. trade distribution rights by Motorbooks International Available from Zenith Aviation Books,  
P. O. Box 2REV Osceola, WI 54020. 1-800-826-6600.  
Pub. Date: November, 1987

A very interesting new book for pilots, modelers and even race car builders. Readable, well illustrated. Examines the many ways airflow affects moving objects and how to exploit it to maximum advantage. From kites on a string to the supersonic Concorde jet, the reader will learn how wind power affects shape, design speed and lift. Chapters cover streamlining, sailing, parachutes, gliders, airplanes, helicopters, rockets, jets and the future. Simons offers a superb understanding on what airflow means to models and machines.



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## Two Poems by Neil Kalmanson

The boomerang  
cast into space and time  
returns  
becoming what was and is again.  
Make something new  
that never was and  
making it do  
what's never been done  
merging into space and time.  
Cast into the looking -glass  
it returns  
with Einstein and Alice  
Leonardo  
and  
Narcissus

Behold the boomerang's flight  
As it circles and returns  
Upon itself  
Again and again  
Recalling ancient signs  
Full of meaning  
And magic



## NEW RATING SYSTEM FROM FRANCE

Jacques Thomas (La Perouse Boomerang Club, 24 Rue Tronchet, 69006 Lyon, France) proposes the introduction of an evaluation system based upon a thrower's abilities in three events. What degree are you?

DEGREE	ACCURACY EVENT	CATCHING EVENT	DISTANCE EVENT
LITTLE BLADE	2 returns out of 5 throws to the circle of 8 m. diameter -	Catch 5 times out of 15 throws -	Throw over 20 m.
BLADE of the 1st Degree	6 returns out of 10 throws to the circle of 8 m. diameter -	Catch 20 times out of 40 throws -	Throw over 30 m.
BLADE of the 2nd Degree	7 returns out of 10 throws to the circle of 8 m. diameter -	Catch 25 times out of 40 throws -	Throw over 40 m.
BLADE of the 3rd Degree	8 returns out of 10 throws to the circle of 8 m. diameter -	Catch 30 times out of 40 throws -	Throw over 50 m.
"Bronze" BOOMERANG	6 returns out of 10 throws to the circle of 4 m. diameter -	Catch 65 times out of 80 throws -	Throw over 60 m.
"Silver" BOOMERANG	7 returns out of 10 throws to the circle of 4 m. diameter -	Catch 70 times out of 80 throws -	Throw over 70 m.
"Gold" BOOMERANG	8 returns out of 10 throws to the circle of 4 m. diameter -	Catch 75 times out of 80 throws -	Throw over 80 m.
"Gold" EAGLE	10 returns out of 10 throws to the circle of 4 m. diameter -	Catch 100 times out of 100 throws -	Throw over 100 m.

For the LITTLE BLADE Degree, any boomerang can be used - with two blades only.

For all other Degrees, boomerangs must have at least a weight of 100 grammes, a wingspan of 35 centimetres, a length of 12 centimetres between the blades parallel to the wingspan at the centre of mass.

The use of gloves is permitted.

It is not required to succeed in the three events on the same occasion.



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## Circumnavigating Cleopatra

by John K. Derden

"I spent six weeks in June and July in New York City, where I was attending a seminar at City University of New York's Graduate Center. While I was there, Neil Kalmanson came up for a visit, and we unpacked our 'rangs and headed for Central Park. As we were walking behind the Metropolitan Museum of Art we came upon the Egyptian obelisk popularly known as "Cleopatra's Needle," and, of course, we couldn't resist the challenge. We used short-distance booms (c. 15 m.) and circumnavigated the obelisk numerous times. This performance was greeted by mixed reviews from the on-lookers. Their reactions ranged from those who were horrified at the sacrilege to those who expressed pure enjoyment of the spectacle. Anyway, Neil and I claim this feat as a 'first.' We know it isn't the Washington Monument, but the space constraints represent a different sort of challenge."

# TEAM GEL's Ultimate Boomtest

by Michael Girvin.

As usual, we held this way hip boomtest at Billy Martin Field in Oakland, California. The official name of this two-day event was the Third Annual Oakland California TEAM GEL Regional Championship. The first day was filled with official USBA events, and the second was filled with GEL tests.

There were many new boomers that showed up from all over Northern Cal. Radsters from San Francisco, Fresno, Sacramento, and the foothills of the Sierra Mountains showed us what N.C. is all about. There were people from Southern California and even a few East Coasters that helped this funtest define booming.

What made this contest truly enjoyable was the result of a factor called "diversity equals fun." Like last year, there were many different types people and lifestyles, and they were all on one grass field to prove one thing (actually it was probably many things that were all basically the same thing): Life is too short to not have fun, so rip it up while you can! People ran and jumped and caught with one hand and did head catches and butt catches, and all for the purpose of exciting their souls. It was particularly radical when the San Francisco Boys decided to catch every single one of their booms, in every single event, with one hand. And as always, at Billy Martian Field, the wind gods decided to make things a bit more challenging with sick winds and gusting bursts. Our booms flew wherever those gods wanted.

The first day's awards ceremony was held at LaVales pizza.

Pizza was eaten, beer was guzzled, and everybody received TEAM GEL awards and neat-o boom prizes. Everyone went home with stokedness in their hearts.

The second day of testing was held at the same field, at the same time, with the same wind, and same sun. But these same samenesses were radically altered when the previous day's USBA rules were thrown out the door and in their place (returning back through the window) was the TEAM GEL motto: There are no rules, only context. This was to be the Ultimate Boomtest.

We played five TEAM GEL events: George, Blindfolded Accuracy (the original idea came from Barnaby Ruhe), Woaahhh Nelly, Style Outback, and Full Contact Round Rang Relay (a funtest inspired by my close contact with boom great Mike Forrester). There were 10 diehard boomsters who entered this Ultimate Test. Three of these testers were rock stars from local bands. Dave Scavez from Verbal Abuse entered as Koko, Spock from House of Wheels entered as Spike, and Troy Takaki from Hells Kitchen entered as Xao Fang-Zu. Koko, Spock, Xao Fang-Zu, and the rest were stoked to play shred. And shred they did.

We started with George. This is an event where 13 trick catches are eliminated and drops do not eliminate you (count up). After the traditional six catches comes body catch, head catch, calf catch, hand-over-fist catch, butt catch, genital catch and hand-foot catch. Beginners are awarded two points for every catch they make. In this

event, it was beginner Blake Johnson who managed to tame the winds and claim the win.

The next event, Blindfolded Accuracy, was by far the highlight of the weekend. Everyone had to wear a blindfold and throw a boom. But we could not find any cloth to wrap around our face, so we used a Schaffers beer 12-pac box and slid it over our heads. Everybody looked stupidly rad as they took all five of their throws with a box over their heads. Moleman easily saw his way into first with 16 points. His boom even flew back and hit him in the leg for a bullseye — and it counted cuz he had a box on his head.

Woaahhh Nelly, the third test, is basically Aussie Round with points awarded for trick catches and no points for distance. Head, body, and feet catches earn an extra ten points, one-handed behind the back or under-the-leg catches earn seven extra points, and clean one-handed catches earn five extra points. It was a close battle between Rhett Butler and Michael Girvin, but a drop in the last round by Rhett gave Michael the win.

Next was Style Outback. This event has no rules. The thrower steps out to the circle and ... whatever... Then the dudes and chicks that are not throwing assign points to the thrower for style, anti-style, or for anything the hell the newly-appointed judges want to assign points for. Highlights are as follows: Moleman's consecutive distance and MTA throws and attempted catches, Tristin deFrondeville's diving spinning one-handed behind-the-back attempts, Rhett's jumping-while-

# 1987 Potomac Open

by Jim Jordan

eating watermelon-in-the-air throws and catches, Xao Fang-Zu's tinkle break in the bullseye and catch while standing on top of the newly created bullseye, Koko's rolling on the ground catches, Lani Huston's effort, and Spike's smile. But it was Erin Duran's sensual smearing of watermelon all over her thighs before throwing that was truly the antithesis of style and anti-style. Erin won Style Outback.

The last event was Full Contact Round Rang Relay. This is an event just like Team Relay except full contact is allowed. The word "Go!" was uttered and the race was on. People bumped and threw, people tackled and did not throw, people even picked up other people's dropped booms and threw them further out, and then tried to avoid being tackled by the dropper. At one point, someone yelled "Rollerboom!" and then people started to laugh and laugh and roll on the ground. People were having a good time. "Team Ugly the Best" featuring Rhett, Lani, Blake, Spike, and Moleman emerged the conquerors.

The second day's award ceremony was held at the Kwik Way restaurant and then moved to the Rock Stars' warehouse. There were awards to fifth in each event and overall awards, boom prizes, records, and band T-shirts for everybody. The TEAM GEL weekend had ended and the boomers left knowing that no one had to speak of radness, because they knew, they just knew.

On the morning of October 17, the tournament site looked like a scene from the Twilight Zone. Those who managed to find their way through the fog to the field were amused by losing sight of their boomerangs as they threw into the dense white mist. Most boomerangs returned out of the mist to the vicinity of the thrower, but some were never to be seen again!

The fog was cleared by joint efforts from the sun's heat and a perfect 3-5 knot breeze. Twenty-six veteran boomerang competitors, including this year's surprise Frenchman, Jacques Sotty, had assembled to do battle on what turned out to be a beautiful Indian summer day.

Events started with the traditional Consecutive Catch which was won by Barnaby Ruhe with 9 catches, closely followed by Rob Parkins and Larry Ruhf with 8 and 7 catches respectively. Peter Ruhf took Endurance with 46 catches, followed by John Koehler and Tim Mauttsby, who both scored 43 catches. Everyone should take notice of Tim Mauttsby's performance, since he took second in Endurance at the USBA Nationals in Cleveland, and is a relative newcomer to the sport, with only one year's experience.

Troy Williams was proud to win his first event - Accuracy, with a score of 39. John Flynn must have set a record in Position by taking first with a distance of .025 centimeters from the center of the bullseye! No one else came close to John's position.

After lunch the shifting winds provided tricky conditions for Fast Catch, which was won by Larry Ruhf with a time of 27.77

seconds. Only two other scores by Rob Parkins and Peter Ruhf were under 30 seconds. Ron Tamblyn's score of 61 in Australian Round held up through the second flight of competitors. Ron has demonstrated consistent high performances in this event.

The group voted to run MTA Unlimited vice MTA 50 for this tournament. Sensing the feel of the crowd, it is likely that this trend will continue. Larry Ruhf again had the magic stick which stayed aloft for 52.65 seconds.

Juggling was the last official event in the tournament. As Tournament Director, Jim Jordan had purposely scheduled this event, since he had taken a first in Juggling in the Catskill tournament, much to Barnaby Ruhe's surprise. Barnaby had said to Jim, "I never considered you a threat." It was time for a rematch. Barnaby and Jim paired off to count each other's catches. The winds again made the event difficult, and both Barnaby and Jim were delighted to tie each other with ten catches apiece. However, to their complete surprise, John Koehler had made 35 catches at the opposite end of the field. Great going, John!

Barnaby Ruhe claimed first over-all, with 51.75 points. He was awarded a beautiful brass boomerang that had been cast in India. Larry Ruhf was a close second, with 48.25 points and John Flynn third, with 42.5 points.

The celebration dinner and awards ceremony were hosted by Jim and Caroline Jordan at their home. Jim Jordan has extra T-shirts available for those willing to part with \$10.50 (including shipping). Write to Jim Jordan at: 11813 Silent Valley Lane, Gaithersburg, Md. 20878.

## Palenville '87

by Barnaby Ruhe

What have the Aussies thought out this time? Put an infinity flyer up in the air, hopefully forever. But don't let her drift over 50 meters downwind. Add a still breeze, and you have the improbable meeting of contrary facts. The better your aim the finer your flyer, the more doom, as you watch your best effort land outside the circle. Enter Strategy: a soft lob with an MTA that floats a lot, but not too high; a weighted maxi Bailey is just the thing. Ruhe uses this in Palenville for a 19.73 and finally a third place, as Jim Youngblood and Eric Darnell got the hang of the soft lob to edge him out on their last throw. Many great throws simply hit the trees. Larry Ruhe had a Deja Vu, his MTA waltzing over the trees, Dr. Hoppy dashing through the path under the trees, to finally reach his 'rang out at Rte. 9-W. At his over-a-minute catch, a scrub tree interfered at the last second to foil the finale. A good event, in its own bizarre equation.

Position was funny too: the veterans laughing at Ruhe scrambling out at the 20-meter circle, only to end up there too, blown by capricious, malicious shifting currents. Matt Jaeger wins with 14 foot 7 inches to the peg.

John Flynn takes Doubling, after catching one desperation drifter early on to stay in. One of those great catches arising out of great mistakes.

Jim Jordan wins Juggling with 34 (after Ruhe goes down in a soccer net at 26). Jim looked cool with a couple of cross winds, tossing like Bob Burwell in Virginia,

30 meter omega type jugglers. Could have gone on, but he was in a hole, buildings imposing on the limited space.

Aussie Round went to Rick Szumski, another lurking comet, at 52, and without the excess winds of the past Nationals, but clever wind out to foil your calculations, nonetheless.

Rob Parkins, a name we remember, 4th in Cleveland, took accuracy with 39. He took fourth over-all, just shy of Barnaby Ruhe, for 3rd, again. But hey, he's got fourteen years to figure it out, and I wish he'd take that time. Consec' was battled by Eric Darnell and Dennis Joyce, and for once someone other than Darnoulli took it.

Fast Catch was an upset. An altogether unknown man on that scene took it at 20.42 - John Flynn. We've never actually seen the guy who wins this event all the time, there's only a blur.

Rob Parkins took endurance at 36. Well, maybe the kid has guts too, oh no. And an arm in MTA. He's another scary fact of 1987. Give them the best and newest boomerang designs and watch out. Peter Ruhf can take honors for fitting Rob out with lefties.

The highlight of the day was the Style Outback contest: the 100 spectators bunched together to view each desperado milking the applause meter with spectacular free style boomeranging. A mink coat on Moleman was judged to be sibilant sequestering of sympathy; Moleman was fined \$15,000 and suspended from free style for three weeks. Ruhe took legal unfair advantage. The crowd hadn't seen the MTA event upcoming, so he

took a Bailey and got 10.0 on the applause meter with a two-hand catch. It was the B!

Ben Ruhe's third in Doubling and fourth in Position proved he is a comer.

## Summer's Final Fling

by Doug DuFresne

For the third year in a row, we were fortunate to have great weather. The breeze was light. It varied in strength and direction throughout the course of the day. All USBA individual events were contested. Including participants in the Novice events, 58 people including 20 women competed.

Dennis Joyce took THIRD overall with three seconds, two thirds, one fifth and three eighths.

Barnaby Ruhe took SECOND with wins in all of the afternoon events; a seventh in Consecutive Catch, and a third in Juggling. He won Australian Round with 81 points, MTA50 and MTA unlimited with 33.44 seconds ( a USA record in MTA50), Endurance with 48 catches, and Position with a bull's-eye.

Michael "GEL" Girvin WON the tournament by posting wins in Consecutive Catch with nine catches and Doubling with eight catches, and by placing in all other events. His other places were second in Juggling, fourths in Australian Round and Fast Catch, fifths in MTA50 and Position, sixth in MTA unlimited, and eights in Accuracy and Endurance.

Accuracy was won by Ted Welker of Portland with a score of 40. Doug DuFresne won Fast Catch with 22.42 seconds.



To continue a tradition of disappointment started in LA in 1985, DuFresne's first MTA throw (he was the first thrower in the event) went up for 2+ minutes but fell to the ground without being caught. It hit a limb in the top of a tall oak tree and fell to the ground on the side of the fence from which the throw was made. This time he made it over the fence to be on the wrong side.

Mike Parker, son of Jim Parker of Stick Around Boomerangs, won the Novice overall championship. He won Consecutive Catch with two catches and Australian Round with 51 of 70 possible points (range points were not scored). He took second in Accuracy. Sean Gardner won Accuracy by one point with 26.

Events were run one at a time with four team events conducted immediately before their related individual events. The tournament started about an hour late at 11 a.m. and concluded just after the sun went down. There was a barbecue after the tournament at the DuFresne's house where award presentations were made.

Plans are being made to shorten the time needed to run all of the events in the next tournament. Mark September 18 on your 1988 calendar for the next Summer's Final Fling.

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reception

Sunday, November 1, 1987

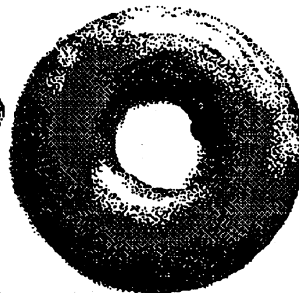
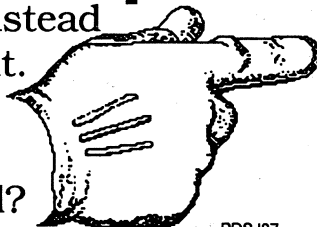
3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

### *Boomerangs as Art?*

The Emanuel Arts Council in Swainsboro, Ga. hosted a major boomerang show at the Emanuel Arts Center, from November 1 - 27. The show featured major works of boomerang art/sculpture by artists: Patrick Cardiff, Neil Kalmanson, Patrick McCormick, and David Philpott. The show is a major first step in acknowledging the boomerang as an art form. It is hoped that additional shows, including national and international tours, will follow in the near future. Look for updates on future shows in MHR.

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enough said?



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### 1987 Rating System

The Rating system for 1987 is composed of three parts. The first part that is covered in the system is the best throw in an event during the year. Second is the average score in an event excluding your best throw. And finally the average placing in the events is the last factor.

these factors are computed, all throwers are then ranked from best throw down. Points are then given in the same manner as in a tournament, 11 points for first, 9 points for second up to 1 point for 10th. Ties divide the points they would receive evenly.

events, Consecutive Catch, Accuracy, Australian Round, Fast Catch and MTA Unlimited, have their points totaled. These points are then used to rank the throwers. The tables show the rating points and also the top ten in each event (approximately).

All points are then added

After the value of all for each event. The core

Name	Consecutive Catch	Accuracy	Fast Catch	Australian Round	MTA Unlimited	Total
1 Chet Snouffer	6.60	3.67	14.50	26.00	0.00	50.77
2 Eric Darnell	33.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	43.00
3 Olivier Vuctovitch	3.50	21.50	5.00	5.00	0.00	35.00
4 John Flynn	1.60	0.00	28.00	0.00	0.00	29.60
4 Stephan Marguerite	0.60	0.00	26.50	2.50	0.00	29.60
6 Peter Ruhf	7.50	5.00	9.00	0.00	8.00	29.50
6 Barnaby Ruhe	10.50	1.00	0.00	18.00	0.00	29.50
8 Dennis Joyce	16.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	12.00	28.50
9 Gary Broadbent	18.00	0.00	6.00	4.00	0.00	28.00
10 Michael Siems	0.00	13.50	0.00	14.00	0.00	27.50
11 Uli Konzelmann	0.00	14.00	7.00	2.50	0.00	23.50
12 Dale Riendean	7.00	4.50	0.00	10.00	0.00	21.50
13 Ted Bailey	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	20.00	21.00
13 George Reitbauer	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	17.00	21.00
15 Michael Girvin	5.50	10.00	0.00	2.50	0.00	18.00
16 Volker Behrens	7.60	5.17	5.00	0.00	0.00	17.77
17 Thomas Munch	0.00	6.50	0.00	9.00	0.00	15.50
18 Stuart Jones	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.00	4.00	15.00
19 Larry Ruhf	0.00	0.17	4.50	0.00	10.00	14.67
20 Rex Grasso	3.00	0.00	11.00	0.00	0.00	14.00
21 Mike Forrester	0.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	13.00	13.60
22 Gregg Snouffer	0.00	6.50	4.00	0.00	3.00	13.50
23 Rob Parkins	0.60	5.50	0.00	7.00	0.00	13.10
24 Doug DuFresne	0.00	0.00	5.00	0.00	7.00	12.00
24 John Koehler	3.50	0.00	3.50	0.00	5.00	12.00
24 J. Camp	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	2.00	12.00
27 Jerome Quinn	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.00	0.00	11.00
28 Jim Parker	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.50	0.00	9.50
28 Ted Welker	0.00	9.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.50
30 Dave Saba	0.00	9.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.33
30 Meredith Dean	0.00	9.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.33
32 Jim Jordan	0.00	3.00	0.00	0.00	6.00	9.00
32 Red Whittington	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.00	9.00
32 Steve Kavauangh	0.00	0.00	6.50	2.50	0.00	9.00
35 Bob Foresi	0.00	8.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.50



## "They're Weapons, You Know"

*submitted by Ben Ruhe*

URBAN ASSAULT BOOM

Henry Thompson, a young Englishman who wanders the world as an agricultural consultant, has thrown boomerangs in the Sinai Desert, Africa, the Philippines, Australia, and many

other places. Here he recounts how a 'rang provoked an American misadventure.

Having spent my Sunday on a New York beach, throwing boomerangs with a bunch of Japanese friends, I went home to the very rich, very quiet suburb of Riverside, Connecticut. I got out of the train station at a quarter of midnight and started my half-mile walk home through the humid, foggy streets.

Up behind me comes a car, and slows, and slows, and stops on the other side of the road. I recognise it as a police cruiser. (OK, so this is a rich neighborhood and here I am in jeans and sneakers holding a boomerang.) The window opens and a voice calls out something quite unintelligible, I decide to play British and hail back in my best Oxford tones. The officer repeats his call louder.

He: Where are you going?

Me: Home, to sleep.

He: (unsure) Where are you going?

Me: 90 Club Road.

He: You own a house there?

Me: Who ME? You're kidding! (point to self incredulously)

He: You staying with friends?

Me: Yes, absolutely. (I HAD to use that word)

He: D'You want a ride? Get in. (It starts to rain hard)

Me: Oh, thanks. (try to get in front - back door opens automatically)

He: (nervous) In the back!

Inside the back of the police car there is some sort of armour-plate between me and him, the armour plate leaves about enough leg-room for a Chinese midget. The door shuts and an unmistakable stench comes of the vinyl seats, alcohol and bile. The car does a sudden U-turn, away from my intended direction of travel.

He: Are you foreign?

Me: Yes, British.

He: You shouldn't be carrying a boomerang around in a public place, they're lethal weapons, you know.

Me: Well I'm not sure about that, um...(total confusion)

He: You want to test me on that? I bet I could run you in for that.

Me: No, no, er, if you want I'll wrap it in my towel with the other two.

At this point the radio becomes excited about some kids having a party that the neighbors are complaining about. He slows the car and turns the volume up.

He: OK, I'm putting you out here. Don't carry that thing around in public.

Me: I won't, Goodnight.

He lets me off two miles from the house, it's chucking down, I arrive home ten minutes to one. Soaked.

# World's Oldest Boomerang

*see diagram on page 1*

Pawel Valde-Nowak and his associates from the Polish Academy of the Sciences created quite a stir in October when they published a paper in the October 1, 1987 edition of the British publication "Nature". Immediately, the press picked up on the story. Major newspapers and television networks ran stories all over the country to celebrate this major archaeological find.

The boomerang was excavated from a cave in the Oblazowa Rock in south Poland mixed with lithic and organic artifacts, including the earliest human remains ever found in Poland: a human thumb bone. It is not known why only a thumb bone was recovered from the site or whether the thumb bone was once connected to the boomerang thrower.

The span of the boomerang is approximately 70 cm, the greatest breadth is 6 cm., and the maximum thickness is 1.5 cm. The convex upper surface of the boomerang is the natural external surface of a mammoth tusk complete with scratches which probably originated during the animal's lifetime. The flat under side has several scratches that probably originated during the manufacture of the boomerang. Otherwise, the under surface is smoothly polished. The boomerang was fragmented into several pieces and reconstructed to the shape as shown on the front cover of this issue. Another interesting artifact was that of a snail

shell modified to possibly function as a bull roarer.

A second article in the same issue of "Nature" was written by Paul Bahn who is a freelance writer of archaeology. This article mentions that other Euro-boomerangs have been unearthed in the past including a mammoth tusk fragment from an Austrian site that was possibly an Upper Paleolithic boomerang. A Mesolithic boomerang from a settlement of about 5000 B.C. was discovered in Jutland. An Oak boomerang was found preserved in a dutch bog and dated at 300 B.C. Boomerangs with golden caps were found in King Tut's tomb (2000 B.C.) and African Cave paintings from 7000 B.C. depict boomerang shaped objects. The Hopi and Eskimos of North America used throw sticks as did the Polynesians and the Indians. Paul Bahn relates that the invention of the bow and arrow made the throw stick technology take a back seat in most primitive cultures.

The earliest boomerangs ever recovered in Australia were less than half the age of the Polish boomerang. Three complete wooden boomerangs were found in South Australia with an estimated age of 9,000 to 10,000 years of age.

Paul Bahn goes on to caution that not all curved sticks are boomerangs. Many will not label a non-returning throw stick as a boomerang. The only way to tell if a boomerang is returnable is to throw it.

Felix Hess made a copy of the early Dutch boomerang and found it to be capable of a return flight. Perhaps a copy of the Polish boomerang will be flight tested in the near future?

Editor's note: The sharp tips of the Polish boomerang are not desirable features for a returnable boomerang. If the sharp tips had been removed, then there would have been a low eccentricity of mass which would degrade stability in flight. The airfoil sections depicted in the sketch appear to be biased toward that of a right handed thrower which indicates that some forming of the upper surface may also have been done. It is difficult to tell with only 3 airfoil sections showing. The artifact certainly appears to be an aerodynamic device but only the test throwing of a replica by a knowledgeable person will determine whether or not it can be classified as a boomerang or as a non-returning throw stick.

Many thanx to Wilhelm Bretfeld of West Germany and John Jordan of the BBS who sent in a copy of the "Nature" article. Thanx is also given to other members who sent in local newspaper articles so this story could be shared with all members. And special thanx goes out to the Australian Aborigines who may not have invented the boomerang, but kept the technology alive over the past several millennia so we could enjoy boomerangs today.

*Rangs Around the World -  
submitted by Ben Ruhe*

Dr. Clifton Furukawa of Seattle takes Boomerang Fevers wherever he travels. Here he makes a catch on a Juneau glacier as the Alaskan helicopter pilot who delivered him there guards his aircraft. The pilot later tried his hand at throwing and was so successful Clif gave him a boomerang for himself. "One has to be very accurate with returns," said Furukawa, "since there are lots of slippery surfaces leading to water channels under the ice." Next stop for Furukawa on his summer travels was Finland, where he threw homemade boomerangs of Baltic five-ply..."sort of a return home for the models, since the wood was made in Finland," he noted. "I didn't dare throw in Leningrad - the Russians are sensitive about small aircraft coming out of Helsinki!"



## He Didn't Know What a Boomerang Was

Ted Bailey decided to take H.L. Mayhew's advice and volunteer to give up his seat on a flight out of Chicago in exchange for a free ticket to anywhere in the USA. There was only one catch: a high speed ride in a cab from Midway to O'Hare Airports in rush hour traffic to meet a connecting flight. On the way a conversation ensued between passenger and driver and it was discovered that Frank Ansa, an emigre from Ghana in West Africa, had never heard of a boomerang and had no concept of a returning stick. He is now the proud owner of a Wham-O triblader which was used as a tip.

## OVERSEAS NEWSLETTERS

The British Boomerang Society has revitalized the original format of their newsletter under the direction of Gordon Shuttleworth. The October issue had many fine articles and a listing of British boomerang outlets. The USBA newsletter is still available to BBS members as a supplement.

There are now two newsletters published in the country of Switzerland. Philippe Haake and Kasper Kramis of the Boomerang Club of Geneva publish a newsletter in French. The Boomerang Club of Geneva is sending a team down under to compete in the 1988 World Cup in Alice Springs. They will also be hosting the last event of the 1988 International Team Cup.

Beat Aepli is President of the Schweizer Bumerang Club which produces a newsletter in the German language. The USBA is in need of a translator of German and French newsletters. If you are interested, please contact the editor, so we can add more commentary about our overseas counterparts.



## BOOMERANGS FOR SALE

I am in the process of thinning down my collection of boomerangs. I have compiled a listing of the boomerangs I am willing to part with: collectibles, aboriginal, competition, etc.... For a complete listing, write to:

**Ted Bailey**  
2967 Gracewood Rd.  
Toledo, Oh. 43613

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**\$20**

Mondo  
**\$40**

Micro  
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**Collector**

will *kill* for Gerhards White  
Oak distance rans in good  
condition. Call me.

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Maxi size ad  
**\$50**

Put your ad in  
***Many Happy Returns***  
and get  
**BIG  
RETURNS**  
on your investment.

PDS 11/87

## News Briefs

by Ben Ruhe

After thinking about the title "The United Stated Boomerang Association," Ray Wilbur of suburban Washington, DC came up with an ingenious transposition of the letters to form an apt new sentence: "Has got intention to beat Aussie comrades." Now he's working on an anagram for the Australian Boomerang Association.

Gary Knudsen of Hawthorne, CA wears his heart on his sleeve (20th century style). His Honda car sports the license plate:

**BMERANG**  
CALIFORNIA

Jacques Thomas and members of the LaPerouse Boomerang Club de France will be in San Francisco next mid-march in connection with their retracing of the voyages 200 years ago of the French explorer for whom their club is named. West coast people wanting to meet Thomas and friends can contact Thomas at 24 Rue Tronchet, 69006, Lyon, France, to make arrangements.

Now it can be told. Ber Henley, a Yale Law student, last year convened a group of colleagues who dressed in "Y" sweaters, fake moustaches and donned fatuous expressions while posing for a group photograph of the "Yale Boomerang Club," circa 1890s. The sepia-toned photo was duly signed, framed and secretly hung up in the gloom of the Yale gym. It's probably still there.

Doug DuFresne of Portland, OR drew puzzled police attention when he threw a night boomerang for a National Geographic

## 1988 WORLD CUP

The 1988 World Cup is scheduled for the 12 day period from May 4-15. The site is Alice/Yulara near Ayers Rock in the heartland of Australia. The countries of Australia, France, Germany, Switzerland and the United States have selected teams to compete at this important event. Three matches will decide the outcome. Each match will have Tag Team Relay, Australian Round, Consecutive Catch, MTA 100, Fast Catch and Accuracy. Participants are invited to compete in the Australian Nationals in Sydney during the weekend of April 30/May 1. The USBA has selected a team based upon competitor performance during the 1987 throwing season ending on Sep-

tember 30 and based on the events: Accuracy, MTA 50, Fast Catch, Consecutive Catch and Australian Round. The three man team and six runner ups in order are:

- 1: Barnaby Ruhe
- 2: Chet Snouffer
- 3: Eric Darnell
- 4: Dennis Joyce
- 5: Michael Girvin
- 6: Gary Broadbent
- 7: John Flynn
- 8: Peter Ruhf
- 9: Dale Riendeau

The three team members are to be accompanied by Doug DuFresne who will represent USBA as the North American Judge. We wish these competitors the very best luck in May.

World photographer. The police were responding to a telephone call reporting a UFO.

Two new books on the boomerang have been published overseas, a French hardcover by Dominique Pouillet (visitor to Washington last year) and Jean-Luc Porquet, and a large-format Australian paperback by Steve Silady and wife Pauline Pahlow complete with boomerang shrink-wrapped to the cover (à la the American volumes by Workman and Klutz presses). The Paris book is notable for its many color photographs of 'rangs and throwers, including Jacques Sotty tossing a 'rang at the Berlin wall at night. The Aussie book is a trove of historic photographs of Aborigines and white throwers from the mid-century period.

## PAUL HARVEY COMMENTARY

by Ted Bailey

On October 28, 1987, the airwaves were blessed with a Paul Harvey commentary on the boomerang movement within the USA.

Some of the information was outdated as he related the USA win over Australia in the 1981 test series and the MTA world record by Dr. Larry Ruhf.

There was no mention of the Aussie win over the USA in 1984 or of Dennis Joyce's new MTA world record. The most unusual thing about the commentary was that it was entirely positive advertisement for the sport we all so dearly love and for that we must give him our thanx.



ratings continued from page 8

#	Best	Catches	Consecutive Catch		#	Average Placing	Ave Pts	
			#	Average				Catches
1	Eric Darnell	17	1	Eric Darnell	9.50	1	Eric Darnell	9.07
2	Gary Broadbent	16	2	Gary Broadbent	7.50	2	Bob Poole	8.75
3	Peter Ruhf	14	3	Dennis Joyce	6.67	2	Dale Riendean	8.75
3	Dennis Joyce	14	4	Volker Behrens	6.50	2	Frank Weldon	8.75
5	Michael Girvin	11	5	Chet Snouffer	6.25	2	Scott Pruitt	8.75
5	Barnaby Ruhe	11	6	Barnaby Ruhe	6.00	7	Mike Krausser	8.50
7	George Reitbauer	10	7	John Koehler	4.50	8	Rex Grasso	8.00
8	Rob Parkins and	8	7	Olivier Vuctovitch	4.50	9	Mike Ullman	7.25
8	John Flynn	8	9	John Flynn	4.00	10	Dennis Joyce	6.92
8	Stephan Marquerite	8	9	Ray Laurent	4.00			
8	Mike Forrester	8	9	Mike Ullman	4.00			
8	Volker Behrens	8						
8	Will Gix	8						
8	Ray Diecco	8						
8	Jim Youngblood	8						
8	Mike Ullman	8						
8	Chet Snouffer	8						

#	Best	Score	Accuracy		#	Average Place	Ave Pts	
			#	Average				Score
1	Michael Girvin	45	1	Olivier Vuctovitch	38.00	1	Dave Saba	11.00
1	Olivier Vuctovitch	45	2	Uli Konzelmann	36.00	1	Meredith Dean	11.00
3	Mark Legg	44	2	Bob Foresi	36.00	1	Ted Welker	11.00
4	Michael Siems	43	4	Michael Siems	32.00	4	Jim Hooker	10.00
5	Rob Parkins	42	4	Thomas Munch	32.00	5	Steven Plummer	9.00
5	Uli Konzelmann	42	6	Volker Behrens	29.00	6	Rusty Harding	8.00
7	Jim Jordan	41	7	Gregg Snouffer	28.00	6	Dale Riendean	8.00
7	Peter Ruhf	41	7	Chet Snouffer	28.00	8	Brian Deitwyler	7.50
9	Larry Ruhf	40	9	Peter Ruhf	27.40	8	Becky Palos	7.50
9	Chet Snouffer	40	10	Barnaby Ruhe	27.33	10	Olivier Vuctovitch	7.25
9	Adam Lewis	40				10	Tom Peterson	7.25
9	Thomas Hartman	40						
9	Volker Behrens	40						
9	Ted Welker	40						

#	Best	Score	Australiian Round		#	Average Place		
			#	Average			Score	
1	Stuart Jones	86	1	Chet Snouffer	67.67	1	J. Camp	16.50
2	Chet Snouffer	83	2	Thomas Munch	66.00	1	Dale Riendean	16.50
3	Barnaby Ruhe	81	3	Michael Siems	65.00	3	Paul Doyle	15.00
4	Rob Parkins	80	4	Jerome Quinn	62.00	4	Jim Parker	13.50
5	Michael Siems	79	5	Barnaby Ruhe	56.50	5	Chet Snouffer	13.12
6	Mole Man	78	6	Olivier Vuctovitch	55.00	6	Tristan de Frondeville	10.50
7	Jerome Quinn	77	7	Gary Broadbent	53.33	7	Barnaby Ruhe	9.54
8	Michael Girvin	76	8	Stephan Marguerite	53.00	8	Steve Kavauangh	9.00
8	Jim Parker	76	9	Uli Konzelmann	53.00	10	Ted Bailey	8.25
10	Ron Tamblyn	75	10	David Bullock	52.00			

**Fast Catch**

#	Best	Time	#	Average	Time	#	Place	Average	Points
1	John Flynn	19.10	1	Stephan Marguerite	22.62	1	Rex Grasso		11.00
2	Peter Ruhf	21.47	2	John Flynn	25.99	2	Stephan Marguerite		10.00
3	Eric Darnell	22.34	3	Chet Snouffer	26.33	3	John Flynn		9.40
4	Chet Snouffer	22.36	4	Uli Konzelmann	27.91	4	Steve Kavauangh		9.00
4	Stephan Marguerite	22.36	5	Gary Broadbent	30.45	4	Greg Hays		9.00
6	Doug DuFresne	22.42	6	Volker Beherns	30.53	6	Robert Letson		8.00
7	Larry Ruhf	22.93	7	Gregg Snouffer	31.41	6	Paul Kimball		8.00
7	John Koehler	22.93	8	Olivier Vuctovitch	31.48	6	Brian Deitwyler		8.00
9	Olivier Vuctovitch	23.50	9	Eric Darnell	31.64	10	Larry Ruhf		7.08
10	Paul Sprague	23.55	10	Thomas Hartman	32.42				

**MTA Unlimited**

#	Best	Time	#	Average	Time	#	Place	Average	Points
1	Dennis Joyce	179.94	1	Ted Bailey	34.04	2	George Reitbauer		9.00
2	George Reitbauer	76.68	2	Peter Ruhf	31.14	2	Red Whittington		9.00
3	Larry Ruhf	52.65	3	Mike Forrester	30.47	2	Sean Elkenbery		9.00
4	Doug Dufresne	52.56	4	Chuck Smith	29.96	2	Mike Forrester		9.00
5	Jim Jordan	49.87	5	James Sprague	29.33	6	Rex Harrison		8.00
6	Ray Diecco	47.83	6	John Koehler	29.27	7	Ted Bailey		7.50
7	Ted Bailey	47.42	7	Stuart Jones	29.07	8	Tom Kidwell		7.00
8	Gregg Snouffer	46.74	8	Tom Williams	28.92	8	Ed Love		7.00
9	Jacque Sabrie	46.27	9	Larry Ruhf	27.63	8	J. Camp		7.00
10	Red Whittington	45.18	10	Dennis Joyce	27.43				

**MTA 50**

#	Best	Time	#	Average	Time	#	Place	Average	Points
1	Barnaby Ruhe	33.44	1	Doug DuFresne	22.55	1	Jim Youngblood		10.00
2	Dennis Joyce	31.94	2	Jim Youngblood	21.64	2	Doug Dufresne		9.50
3	Doug DuFresne	26.14	3	Barnaby Ruhe	19.73	3	Eric Darnell		9.00
4	Celese Thompson	25.93	4	Dennis Joyce	13.70	4	Peter Ruhf		7.00
5	Mike Girvin	23.58	5	Dean Kelly	12.34	5	Barnaby Ruhe		6.33
6	Tom Peterson	22.95	6	Celese Thompson	6.81	6	Garry LaMothe		6.00
7	Mike Ullman	22.76				7	Mike Girvin		6.00
8	Jim Youngblood	22.04				8	Steve Kavauangh		6.00
9	Eric Darnell	21.38				9	Celese Thompson		6.00
10	Josh Skov	19.66				10	Gary Friedman		5.00

**Juggling**

Best	Catches	#	Average	Catches	#	Place	Points	
1	Chet Snouffer	60	1	Chet Snouffer	53.00	1	Chet Snouffer	11.00
2	Gary Broadbent	36	2	Barnaby Ruhe	10.25	1	John Koehler	11.00
3	John Koehler	35	3	Gregg Snouffer	8.00	1	Jim Mayfield	11.00
4	Jim Jordan	34	4	Jim Jordan	7.00	4	Kurt Williams	8.50
5	Barnaby Ruhe	27	5	Eric Darnell	6.33	5	Jeff Asher	7.75
6	Peter Ruhf	23	6	Rob Parkins	5.00	6	Gregg Snouffer	7.50
7	Larry Ruhf	17	7	John Flynn	4.33	6	Peter Gibson	7.50
8	Rob Parkins	14	8	Will Gix	4.00	6	Dave Saba	7.50
8	Doug DuFresne	14	8	Paul Sprague	4.00		Barnaby Ruhe	6.60
10	Gregg Snouffer	13	8	Gary Broadbent	4.04			

### Doubling

#	Best	Catches	#	Average	Catches	#	Place	Average	Points
1	Barnaby Ruhe	20	1	Chet Snouffer	6.00	1	Chet Snouffer	11.00	
2	Dennis Joyce	19	2	Dennis Joyce	4.25	2	Paul Joldersma	9.00	
3	Peter Ruhf	11	3	Rob Parkins	3.50	3	Sam Gottlieb	8.00	
4	Chet Snouffer	10	4	Will Gix	3.00	3	Mike Forrester	8.00	
5	Rob Parkins	9	4	Ray Laurent	3.00	5	Dennis Joyce	6.17	
6	Michael Girvin	8	4	Gregg Snouffer	3.00	6	Dale Riendean	6.00	
6	Gary Broadbent	8	4	David Bullock	3.00	6	Peter Gibson	6.00	
8	John Flynn	7	8	Garry LaMothe	2.67	6	T. de Frondeville	6.00	
8	Ron Tamblyn	7	9	Ted Bailey	2.00	6	Tom Kidwell	6.00	
8	Stuart Jones	7	9	Peter Ruhf	2.00	6	Rhett Buttler	6.00	
8	Rob Greer	7	9	Ron Tamblyn	2.00				
			9	Stuart Jones	2.00				

### Endurance

Best								
1	Eric Darnell	52	1	John Koehler	41.00	1	Chet Snouffer	11.00
2	John Fylnn	50	2	Lukyn Phipps	37.00	2	John Koehler	9.75
2	Barnaby Ruhe	50	3	Jeff Asher	34.00	3	Brian Deitwyler	9.00
4	Chet Snouffer	48	4	Chet Snouffer	33.00	4	Gregg Snouffer	8.75
5	Peter Ruhf	46	5	Mike Ullman	32.00	5	Ed Love	8.50
6	Gregg Snouffer	45	6	Gary Friedman	31.00	6	Rex Grasso	8.00
6	Brian Deetwyler	45	7	Gregg Snouffer	29.00	7	Jim Parker	7.50
8	Tim Maultsby	43	8	Will Gix	28.00	8	Tim Joyce	6.50
8	Paul Sprague	43	9	Eddie Carrigg	24.00	8	Joe Siegel	6.50
8	John Koehler	43	10	Rob Greer	23.00	8	Peter Gibson	6.50

### Position

Best	Distance	Average	Distance	Average	Place			
1	Barnaby Ruhe	0.00	1	Garry LaMothe	7.40	1	Matt Jaeger	11.00
2	John Flynn	0.03	2	Dennis Joyce	12.24	2	Brian DeVitta	9.00
3	Mole Man	0.53	3	Jim McConnell	15.09	3	Doug DuFresne	8.00
4	Brian DeVita	0.63	4	Bill Hulstrunk	15.81	4	John Flynn	7.00
5	Rob Parkins	1.81	5	Ben Ruhe	17.27	4	Josh Skov	7.00
6	Doug DuFresne	2.00	6	John Flynn	18.34	6	Mike Girvin	6.00
7	Josh Skov	2.20	7	Larry Ruhf	19.10	6	Tom Tuckerman	6.00
8	Mike Girvin	4.15	8	Jim Jordan	20.55	8	John Koehler	5.00
9	Tom Tuckerman	4.37	9	Barnaby Ruhe	23.34	8	Jim Parker	5.00
10	Matt Jaeger	4.45	10	Eric Darnell	25.22	10	Mole Man	4.50
						10	Barnaby Ruhe	4.50
						10	Bill Hulstrunk	4.50

Ratings compiled by Tom Tuckerman

*Many Happy Returns*

## What They Had to Say

- from page 1

fornia.

"Boomerang throwing isn't about competition. It's just about having a lot of fun." - Doug DuFresne; Portland, Oregon.

"I seem to have an obsessive need to make objects. Making boomerangs is an enjoyable/whimsical alternative to my sculptural and pottery work—no more—no less! The solitary nature of boomerang making and throwing particularly appeals to me." - Patrick McCormick, Bellingham, Washington.

"I confess to not having any time to throw boomerangs. Between work, my sweet wife, and the latest Citroen ('70, white) my time seems quite agreeably spent." Jan Franklin; Los Angeles, Ca.

"My friend and I have become interested in the art of boomeranging. We thought that one was to become more mature with age. Hah!" - Andrew Ellis, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada.

"No amount of scientific theory can alter my feeling that the boomerang and its flight are magic. To launch it into space and watch it circle, returning upon itself like some mystical symbol or Einsteinian reality, is challenging and fascinating. Aesthetically, the boomerang has become my block of stone, my canvas.

When I'm carving I use my sculptor's sense of proportion and form. Although the shape of my "canvas" is different, my painterly concerns remain the same and my imagery is alive. Perhaps making and decorating boomerangs has struck a chord in me that corresponds to the artist's original role in our primitive past. I find my new art form, like some ancient magical artifact, imbued with new life, uniquely fulfilling." - Patrick Cardiff; Athens, Georgia.

## Into the Future

by Rich Kline

I've been meaning to write the mover and shaker types for some time to propose the following: How about establishing a Boomerang Officials program? Seems to me that with the sport rapidly heading toward bureaucratization, with qualifying tournaments, point systems, sponsors, team jerseys, etc., etc., it is only a matter of time before TV gets it into its sports-insatiable maw, and then where would we be? Just can't envision Team Gel endlessly arguing the finer points of the foot catch with assorted Ruhfs

and Ruhes as being quite right for the Prime Ticket, can you? No, there needs to be a hierarchy of authoritarian types, frustrated, out of shape, non-competitive, past their prime, to rule and reign. (Rangerees?, Boompies?)

They should keep things moving at tournaments (always a problem), mediate, meditate, certify, rectify, proctify, analyze, nasalize, do urinalysis (and my analysis), toss out the first 'rang, dust off the plate, check ID, eject coaches, detect roaches, check for scuffed balls, blow whistles, sound horns, fire guns, wave flags, step off penalties, and just generally have a hel-

lofagoodtime! Wear hats too! I volunteer!

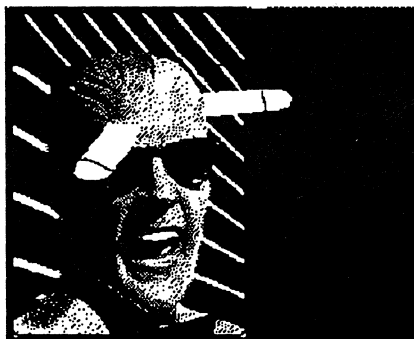
But really — if I may switch over to the left brain for a while — don't we need trained officials? Each tournament would be under the direction of certified officials, trained and briefed, who would agree not to compete in that tournament (or any tournament that year) (or whatever).

No tournament could count for qualifying unless there was such an animal in charge. Of course, this would require some prep.

And some seed money. And someone to train the officials, etc. Maybe, just maybe, a voluntary tax on USBA-approved rangs (10 percent?) to finance a two- or three-day school just before the Nationals to form a nucleus of officials?

Sorry, can't detail this... experiencing right-brain meltdown... Officials School? Tax? Circuit overload... wi-wi- wind shift... Maturity Alert! Orderly adult behavior detected! No catch! N-n-no catch! Gotta go!

R-R-Rich  
Headboom



## MORE FAIRY TALES COME TRUE

by Ted Bailey

Reports keep pouring in on special things that happen to our readers during their throwing session.

In the last issue it was reported that the 19 second fast catch barrier was broken several times in practice. Only John Flynn has ever done this in competition. Doug DuFresne reports that he timed Michael Girvin at an unbelievable 17.58 seconds using one of the hot new strip laminated fast catch boomerangs that Doug markets (See page 19). The way fast catch scores plummeted in 1987, it is likely that sub 19 second or even sub 18 second scores will make their appearance in 1988 tournaments.

Remember last issue's mention of Jens Behrman and his fabulous throw that resulted in the loss of his favorite LH MTA boomerang. Well the photo shows a smiling Jens with his recovered boomerang.

Eckhard Mawick, co-editor of the German publication "Bumerang Welt" writes that he has figured out MTA tuning and it makes all the difference. He immediately broke the MTA 1 minute barrier with 1:04 and is now aiming at the clouds.

Torsten Grundel, who is also from West Germany, writes about a recent flight of 1 min. 32 sec. using a Bailey Midi-MTA.

Torsten Frederich narrowly missed the SuperCatch using a Bailey Midi-MTA and his own Fast Catch model.

Robbie Croll of Melbourne, Australia, did a Super-Catch with no less than *seven* fast-



*West Germany's Jens Behrman managed to retrieve a 3-minute-plus MTA that he thought he'd never see again.*

catches under the MTA.

Gerhard Bertling of Berlin, West Germany made the gorgeous strip laminated boomerang that was auctioned in the last issue of MHR. He is applying this technology to the fast catch event with incredible success. His technique is to make a strip laminated tri-blader. He is also seeking to improve upon the MTA using his engineering training. Another project that Gerhard is working on is a flight simulation program much like that of Felix Hess' program from the 1970's.

Roger Perry of Australia has been doing well at MTA with a flight of 1 min and 32 sec at a public



*Strip-laminated boomerangs by Gerhard Bertling*

demonstration. The catch was only 90 meters away.

Earl Kamber of Columbia, South Carolina lost a Bailey Mini-MTA to the Jet Stream God in 4-6 mph winds. After throwing for an hour with 25-30 sec. flights, he hit one just right. He chased it for half a mile until it came to the forest at the end of the field. At last sight it was 50 meters above the trees and still climbing.

John Koehler, who holds the world record in ENDURANCE with a count of 60 has set a new personal best in practice with a marvelous count of 64.

# Boomerangs in Television Land

by Ted Bailey

The boomerang is an amazingly popular artifact of television land. Over the past couple of months, I have noted several boomerangs on the tube. Here are some of the things to keep an eye out for:

FOR OUR TIMES "The Fringe People" is one of those Sunday morning religious shows. This one has a documentary format and when I noticed the Australian theme, I decided to watch. The show was a little depressing as it dealt with old Aborigines in Convalescent Hospitals in the Outback of Australia. A very interesting and unusual practice of the Christian Aborigines is the integration of the boomerang into the sign of the cross.

The Monkees are a television based rock group that many of the readers grew up with. As I turned on the set one afternoon, I was greeted with a scene of a Monkee trying to toss a boomerang out the window of an office building. Twice the boomerang was thrown out a window only to return to a different Monkee (with a catch) through an alternate window. The second time this occurred the window pane was closed.

The Facts of Life Down Under is a special television movie based upon the television show with the same name. The girls from the boarding school take a trip down under and get tangled up with some jewel thieves. One of the girls learns to throw a natural elbow which looks suspiciously like one of the beautiful boomerangs from Duncan MacLennan's shop in Kings Cross. In the concluding scene, the bad guy is getting away in a power boat with the goods when the star lets go from more than 100 yards away and beans the bad guy in the back of the head to knock him out cold.

MATILDA BAY WINE COOLER advertised the silliest boomerang commercial ever during the World Series. These chaps

throw their boomerangs (a la suicide) and then go and get plastered while their 'rangs do the MTA. Hours later, someone yells "Here they come" and they all run out and make one handed catches. I'm certainly going to try some of that grog if it improves my MTA like that. HOW TO STEAL A MILLION is one of my favorite movies from the 1960s with Peter O'Toole and Audrey Hepburn. They steal a statue valued at a million bucks by throwing a cross stick boomerang through the protective light columns surrounding the statue in a museum in the middle of the night. The alarm would go off as Peter O'Toole caught the boomerang and jumped in a closet to hide. After two apparent false alarms, the guards shut off the alarm system and they grabbed the goods and ran. Don't miss this one.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES is the famous game show we all used to watch years ago. Apparently it disappeared off of TV for a few years and returned with some kind of tie in with an Aussie producer. As the show opens, abstract boomerang shapes are integrated into the logo and also make up the "C" and "U" characters in the name. You may say that this is only a product of my imagination until you watch the closing credits. A simulated sunrise gives way to a scene of tranquility with Ayers Rock in the background. All of a sudden a large silver boomerang flies out of the background, circles the rock, swoops back and freezes within the credits. This reminds me of the scene from ROAD WARRIOR which has several scenes of a young boy with a metal boomerang that is used to do unspeakable things to the bad guys. If you haven't seen ROAD WARRIOR, do so on an empty stomach.

Have you watched Saturday morning cartoons lately? There are several shows with characters that throw boomerangs. One of the best

is a Japanese/American production called "Visionaries" with men that have 3-D holograms attached to their chests. One of them always has a metal boomerang in his hand, and he uses it too! You can also buy these figures in toy stores, including the character with the boomerang.

Jan McMillan of Arnold, Md. is currently creating a story on the boomerang for Walt Disney Productions.

Let us know when you see boomerang goodies so we can share this information with the other readers.

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Carmen Snouffer

### Membership Renewal

We have been rather hit and miss lately with a consistent method of notifying members of their expiration dates. The system we will implement from now on will be similar to that used for magazine subscriptions. The date of your membership expiration will be listed on your mailing label. Please check your label and be sure to renew *prior* to your expiration date in order to avoid any delay in receiving your newsletter. In addition, we will work on highlighting your expiration when you receive your last issue through use of a stamp or some other means of drawing attention to your label.

### World Cup

The Australians received a financial boost toward sponsoring 5 to 8 international teams this May in Alice Springs for the World Cup '88. Chet has been talking with Dennis Maxwell by phone and through the mail and the word is



# BOOMERANG OF THE YEAR



The Doug DuFresne strip-laminated blazing Fast-Catch has revolutionized the event. There has never been a boomerang that has made more impact on fast-catch than this Outback hook. Throwers' FC scores have plummeted by an average of five seconds due to this hot new boomerang. Thanks, Doug, for the kind of design innovation that keeps boomeranging alive.



that all systems are Go for May.

Based on the team selection process, the USBA has selected the three-man team which will represent us Down Under at the World Cup. (See President's Column, MHR #30) The USBA team will consist of Barnaby Ruhe, Eric Darnell, and Chet Snouffer. Dennis Joyce is the alternate in case of illness or inability of one of the team members to attend. More on the World Cup on page 14. Right now, one concern we have is seeking a sponsor to assist with air fare there and back, as well as housing for part of the tour. Expenses for the teams during the 10 days in Alice Springs is covered by the Australians. If you have any contacts with potential sponsors,

please notify me c/o USBA, P.O. Box 182, Delaware, OH 43015.

### International Team Cup

While final details have yet to be firmed up, plans continue overseas to host the second International Team Cup this summer in Europe. The three sites would include Paris, Stuttgart, and Geneva. The U.S. would send two six-man teams to participate. Team members would be selected as follows: Each of the five teams from the '87 Cup would be allowed to vote and select from their ranks. This would give 10 of the best throwers a spot on the international teams. Two additional throwers would be selected at large, from those who perhaps did not participate in '87. Larry Ruhf, as U.S. Coordinator, will be contacting captains from last years' teams with further details.

### '88 Nationals

We do not yet have any firm commitments from potential hosts for this year's Nationals. We are looking towards a September date, late in the season due to the enormous number of tournaments and events already scheduled for August. We have received one proposal from the west coast, but we need further options to select the best possible

site with all things considered. Contact Dennis Joyce immediately if you have the facilities and the desire to host this prestigious event. 819 Olive Drive, Newport News, VA 23601.

### General

I have some exciting proposals to the Board toward refining our regional and national tournaments so as to lend greater credence and ensure better organization and control in those events. A system of safety certification and tournament director certification will help us attain and keep down the cost of liability insurance; establish a stronger public image and acceptance as a legitimate sporting event, and give greater across-the-board consistency from one event to the next. Such a system would also lend its strength to our ratings system and team selection process. I envision the Nationals as becoming a true National championship, with top-notch individual competition among regional qualifiers taking a smaller portion of the weekend. Team events, workshops, safety and tournament director courses will take the bulk of the time.

## Booms and Boards - *Bob Simmons Remembered*

by John Elwell

Bob Simmons has been unanimously acclaimed in surfing history as the person who has contributed the most to modern surfing. It is a surprise to many that his other great love was designing, constructing, and throwing boomerangs. It was his combined knowledge of boomerangs and aerodynamics that radically launched high performance surfing to the point where it is today.

Before Simmons' time,



surfboards were thick, large, heavy and slow. They had flat decks, rounded rails into flat bottoms like heavy displacement boats. The centers of gravity were often misplaced rather than being precisely set, causing perilous nose dives with very little control

During World War II, naval architecture recognized for the first time that aeronautical equations were applicable to planing hulls. Simmons picked up on this immediately as a mathematician, boomerang designer and employee at Douglas Aircraft Corporation.

Air and denser water are recognized to have similar flow qualities. Felix Hess in 1970 tested

metal boomerangs under water to check theoretical results. Recent America Cup sailing contenders applied computer programs developed by NASA.

It was Simmons who was the first to recognize and apply aerodynamics and hydrodynamics to surfboard design. In 1946, Simmons caused a sensation at Malibu when he surfed with a light-weight, convex-deck, flatbottom, air-foiled, railed surfboard.

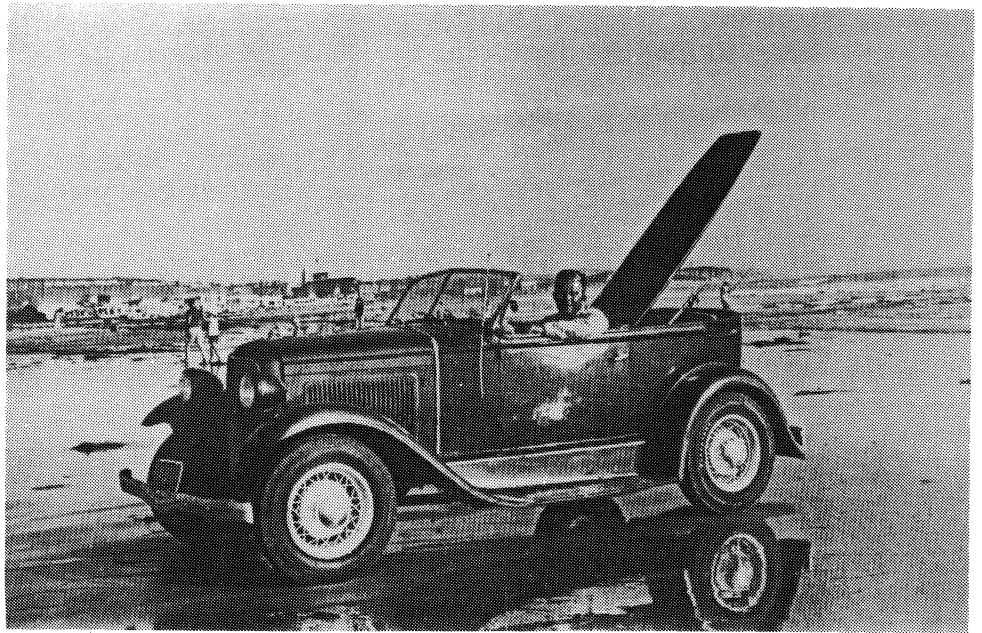
The results were astounding. His new boards made a quick transition to plane. The tapered foiled rails greatly increased early lifts, combined with a thin tail that was submerged at takeoff, giving the board an attack angle like today's aircraft. The boards attained speeds that have not been surpassed today, and maneuverability was quick and easy. Only other short designs and foam construction have added to better turning, but do not equal the speed or sustained plane for distance of the early Simmons boards.

Simmons constantly experimented with different lengths, weights and rail designs, just as he

did with his boomerangs. The profiles of his surfboards were like his boomerangs. He also is credited as the first to use fiberglass, allowing protection to lightweight soft balsa and thin tails and nose sections. Some of his boomerangs during this era had fiberglass on them also.

Simmons was a real fox about all this. He explained little about what he actually did. He was constantly being spied upon and copied. He was getting the best rides, and jealous rivalry occurred. Simmons was a genius, and didn't fit in with a lot of beach types. He had a sharp tongue and rode aggressively into and over other surfers when they violated the right-away rule. Surfers clamored for his boards, and only the best surfers got one. He quickly dropped out of mass production of boards, and developed higher tech models just for himself.

Dale Velgy, another famous surfboard designer of Simmons' era who copied a lot of Bob's design features, said he saw piles of pages with mathematical equations that looked like Chinese. When Valgy asked Bob about them, Simmons pushed them



# USBA Store

The USBA's fund-raising store is in full operation under the stewardship of Dennis Joyce (P.O. Box 2996, Newport News, VA 23602). Some two dozen items are available, including the following:

USBA sew-on patches, \$3.50 ppd.

A beginner's packet, made up of a USBA membership, with a subscription to this newsletter included; an easy-to-throw Steve Glover "Rippa" boomerang from Queensland, Australia, with instructions; the 96-page book, *Boomerang* by Ben Ruhe; USBA competition rules; and a selection of interesting literature. A great gift idea! \$22 ppd.

A fascinating collection of selected boomerang patents 1890 - 1942. Many interesting ideas here on both boomerangs and boomerang launchers. \$11 ppd.

USBA competition rules 50¢ ppd.

Also available are other books, back issues of this newsletter, scholarly articles, mylar stickers, and USBA T-shirts. Write Dennis Joyce for list; P.O. Box 2996, Newport News, VA 23602.

## Many Happy Returns

Circulation 1,000 World-wide. Published by the United States Boomerang Association, P.O. Box 182, Delaware, OH 43015

**Editor:**

Ted Bailey

**Art Director/Publisher:**

Paul Sprague

**Advertising:**

John Flynn

**Mechanical Measurements:**

Image area: 9.5 deep by 7.5" wide; 3 columns to a page; width of column: 2.25."

**Advertising Rates:**

Full Page	\$200
2 columns	\$150
1/2 page	\$115
1 column	\$80
Per col. inch	\$10

10% discount for four consecutive issues. Camera-ready copy preferred. Composition billed at \$10 per hour. Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement or cancel a contract without reason.

away, and said "You wouldn't understand anyway." Simmons was correct, and surfboard design in many ways paralleled early boomerang development with a guild system of trial and error design and, as Hess said, with a lot of "amusing literature."

Today much of what Simmons did is applied and misapplied. His descriptive work, and boomerangs, have been lost. Boomerang science is far ahead of surfing because no in-depth scientific study has been done, or has been financially feasible. Related studies have been done on planing hulls to develop fast boats for military and racing purposes.

Simmons did give casual discussions on boomerangs, telling about the early Egyptian and Aus-

tralian history.

Another coincidence: Captain James Cook first brought back to the western world, after his voyages, detailed observations of surfing in Hawaii and boomerangs in Australia.

Surfing today coincidentally involves revolving movements, dealing with gravity, lift and drag. Simmons was ironically and tragically killed by his boomeranging surfboard in 1954.

Bob Simmons today is recognized as a legend and all-time surfing great. His boomerang connection has not been recognized as significant to the development of modern surfing and huge popularity until now.

**President**  
CARMEN SNOUFFER  
51 Troy Rd.  
Delaware, OH 43015

**Vice President**  
DENNIS JOYCE  
819 Olive Dr.  
Newport News, VA 23601

**Treasurer**  
JOHN FLYNN  
RR #2, Box 209-8  
White River Jct., VT 05001

**Secretary**  
TOM TUCKERMAN  
55 Barrett Rd. #333  
Berea, OH 44017

**Directors**  
JOHN KOEHLER  
37 Duffiel Ct.  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

GARRY LAMOTHE  
18 St. James Ave.  
Easthampton, MA 01027

BETSY MIALE  
8019 234th S.W. #214  
Edmonds, WA 98020

CHET SNOUFFER  
51 Troy Rd.  
Delaware, OH 43015

PAUL SPRAGUE  
18 Harkness Dr.  
Madison, CT 06443

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