

# Manuscript Returns



# On the Cover...

## Nominations for the USBA Board of Directors

### THE TOP THREE

By M. Mohr

The illustration on the cover of this issue was created as a result of an email poll. The question was as simple as it was complicated. I had asked who were the top ten most influential boomerang throwers in the United States.

The responses were very interesting as most of the responders listed reasons as to why they had placed each person in the order submitted. Little did I know the information contained in these responses would be the basis for two issues of the MHR! This issue features at least one article on each of the individuals with secondary and tertiary articles that relate to them.

There were 41 responses total with more than half of those offering a testimony justifying each person on their list. By now I'm sure you all have figured out the three persons as Ben Ruhe, Eric Darnell and Michael "Gel" Girvin.

Ben Ruhe, was heralded as the Father of the modern boomerang era in the United States on most lists and he was also dubbed the father of the USBA on others.

Eric Darnell was put on nearly every list and was the top vote getter. Most of the replies about Eric's contributions were short and to the point, stating that Eric has simply done it all!

Michael Girvin made the top three due to his sheer exuberance and his ability to stay "RAD" (according to the testimonies submitted on the lists). As you read through the entire newsletter many of the other articles will trace back to Michael and his enthusiasm.

Also, I feel it necessary to mention the fourth and fifth vote getters as there were two big steps in the final vote tally. The first separating the top three persons. And secondly, the fourth and fifth persons that were listed were clearly set apart from the rest of the vote getters.

These two have contributed countless hours to the boomerang community over the years in support, technology and service.

They are Ted Bailey and The B-Man or The Boomerang Man (the only person listed almost exclusively by his nickname, even over Michael "Gel" Girvin).



*Ted Bailey with one of his MTA's*



*Richard Harrison the one and only Boomerang Man.*

It's that time of year again! The USBA needs your nominations for all the USBA Board of Directors positions. You can even nominate yourself. You can also nominate someone else, but you will need his or her consent and willingness to do so.

The USBA Board of Directors consists of:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Board Member-At-Large (5 members)

All nine positions are open to nominations. The USBA needs individuals with energy, creative ideas, and a desire to see the USBA grow and prosper. The USBA bylaws give a description of the duties of all positions and can be found online at:

[http://www.usba.org/About\\_the\\_USBA/bylaws\\_of\\_the\\_usba.html](http://www.usba.org/About_the_USBA/bylaws_of_the_usba.html)

If you know someone with those qualities, please ask them to consider running for a position on the BOD, and submit your nomination.

All nominees will then need to draft and submit a statement of candidacy for the position desired.

The deadline for nominations submissions is August 14, 2006 (submissions need to be post-marked on or before this date). Please send your nominations to:

Andrew A. Cross  
28 14803 Miller Blvd.  
Edmonton Alberta Canada  
T5Y 3A4

or

Email your nominees to:  
[across@telusplanet.net](mailto:across@telusplanet.net)

# Letter from the Presidents

Dear USBA Member,

I've had the honor of being the USBA president for the past 2 years. I'm sad that I won't be president next year, but I'm looking forward to the new energy the next board brings forward. The slate of candidates is outstanding and brings new life to the USBA. I also look forward to focusing my boomerang time on what I love best about booms, the throwing, the catching, and the magic of the flight. I ask the whole membership to support the efforts of the next board, if even one of the ideas these folks bring forward are implemented fully our pastime will be totally revolutionized.

Yep, I'm jazzed about these ideas and the energy behind them!

See you on the field,  
Clay



Dear USBA Member,

My name is Matt Golenor and I am excited and proud to be your new United States Boomerang Association President. I live in Nashville, Tennessee with my wife Aimee. I am a high school mathematics teacher and I also coach football and baseball. I entered the world of boomerang throwing during the summer of 1999 most likely in a way similar to how most begin. A friend traveled to Australia and brought back an authentic "boomerang" for me to try. I spent the next afternoon attempting to make it fly, but to no avail. Frustrated, but not beaten, I found an online catalog and instructions and ordered an "Alpine" and "Delicate Arch." From there, I began to experience the excitement, thrill, wonder and magic of boomerangs. Soon I found my way to the National Expo in Virginia Beach and became engrossed with the spirit and camaraderie of the boomerang community. From that point on I was hooked! Now I am a regular on the competition circuit and a member of the US Team. I love boomerangs for their magnificence and amazing attributes, not just physically, but how they bring incredible people together. We truly have one of the most wonderfully unique fraternities in the world!

We've certainly had a big summer planned with events from coast-to-coast! Seattle put up some great tournaments and who can forget the fun of the 19th Gateway Classic in Waterloo, Illinois? Congratulations go to both Chet Snouffer and Larry Ruhf for maintaining two of the longest running tournaments (I'll let you argue who's first!); Tournament Director of the Year must be Jason Smucker for hosting both the Southeastern Classic and the

USBA Expo! With the boys down in Texas holding a Long Distance event in October there's been plenty of sore arms this summer!

As President of the USBA I will strive towards improved consistency and quality of the MHR. I believe that we are already taking the proper steps. I want to help improve the number and ease of running boomerang-related events. I don't want just an increase in tournaments, but workshops and craftsmanship opportunities as well. With these two goals in mind a natural result will be an increased awareness and interest in the field of boomerangs. I know that together we can make all this and more possible!

Rang it up!  
Gogo



# Boomerang Clubs

Contact Information For Boomerang Throwers Around The USA  
Including Online forums

## ARIZONA

Desert Ranglers  
Mark Weary & Don Monroe  
4026 East Cholla Canyon Dr.  
Phoenix, AZ 85044  
602.759.3973

## CALIFORNIA

S.C.O.R.E.  
(Southern California Organizations of  
Rang Enthusiasts)  
SCORE has a bi-monthly throwing  
session. Morri Mohr, John Villagrana  
& Kris Kemp  
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254  
310.493.7100

## COLORADO

Richard Pollack-Nelson  
Colorado Boomerangs  
2530 S. Ouray Way  
Aurora, CO 80013-1576  
303.368.5933

## CONNECTICUT

The Wandering Nutmeg  
Boomerang Society  
Paul D. Sprague  
782 Boston Post Rd.  
Madison, CT 06443  
203.245.8211

## FLORIDA

The Orlando Boomerang Club  
Meets every Saturday morning at 9:00  
am to throw boomerangs at Memorial  
Middle School. For more information  
please contact Cookie  
(teamgel@cfl.rr.com) or  
Mike Hudkins (fatfinger@cfl.rr.com)

## Flite Stix Boom Slingers

Rich Surace  
855 E. Crisafulli Rd.  
Merritt Island, FL  
407.452.3963

## ILLINOIS

Rock Island  
Kendall Davis has a fully stocked  
boomerang shop with several materi-  
als to choose from and virtually any  
crafting tool you may need (if you  
make it, you take it). There is also a  
guest bedroom for use and the great-  
est cook in the Midwest prepares the  
meals (317.793.9885).

## INDIANA

Indianapolis Boomerang Club  
Tony Brazelton  
1184 Barrington Dr.  
Greenwood, IN 46143  
317.883.2334  
brazelami@yahoo.com  
[http://www.usba.org/chapters/  
indyboomclub](http://www.usba.org/chapters/indyboomclub)

## MINNESOTA

Minneapolis/St Paul - Boomerang  
Organization Of Minnesota (BOOM)  
<http://www.uboomerang.org>  
current record-holder for the tourna-  
ments hosted in a season!  
Contact Stuart Jones  
circlestixstuk@webtv.net  
651.228.1393  
The Twin Cities Summer Series of  
Boomerang Competition runs weekly  
through October on Saturdays at 3:00  
pm, at Como Park (softball fields across  
from the pool, on Horton) in St. Paul  
MN. - the 1st Saturday in May

## NEW MEXICO

Sandia Boomerang Club  
Steve Sanders  
10408 Woodland, NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87111  
505.294.8842  
<http://homepage.mac.com/boomerangs>

## OHIO

Canton  
Gary Broadbent's boom shop and field  
next door. One of the most prestigious  
shops in the country, fully outfitted with  
materials for making all types of  
boomerangs. Featuring prolonged  
boomerang-making sessions followed by  
3:00 am grilled cheese sandwiches, sur-  
rounded by one of the world's most  
extensive collections of boomerangs.  
Call Gary at 330.492.RANG to inform  
of your arrival.

## Delaware

Gregg's Boom shop and field down the  
road. Stop in, make and throw some  
booms and sign the guest book.  
Nightly drink specials. Call Greg at  
704.363.4414 or e-mail at  
[boomerang@columbus.rr.com](mailto:boomerang@columbus.rr.com)

## TEXAS

Republic of Texas Boomerang  
Society  
(TexBoom Yahoo! Group)  
Dave Hughes  
1818 Cotton Mill Ct.  
Richmond, TX 77469  
281.341.0934  
[dlhughes001@juno.com](mailto:dlhughes001@juno.com)

Boomerang Association of  
Dallas (B.A.D.)  
David Hirsch  
8925 Rosecliff Dr.  
Dallas, Texas 75217  
(214) 398-4567  
[duckhead@airmail.net](mailto:duckhead@airmail.net)

## PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown  
Dave Hendricks  
"P/NJ Boomerang Group"  
1086 E. Gordon Street  
Allentown, PA 18103-2208  
610.434.7305

## Vermont

Vermont Boomerang Association  
Paul Gustafson  
South Burlington, VT  
802.859.3430  
[paul@vermontboomerang.org](mailto:paul@vermontboomerang.org)  
<http://www.vermontboomerang.org>

## ONLINE GROUPS

### Boomerang Talk

Your one-stop, non-stop online  
boomerang club. Stay up to date on the  
latest info and chatter from the  
boomerang community. You can join at:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BoomerangTalk/join>

### USBA\_info

This is a USBA members only group for  
the online discussion of issues. The  
group is closely monitored by the Board  
which makes for an "open door" policy  
for complaints, props or concerns. You  
can join at:  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/USBA\\_in  
fo/join](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/USBA_info/join)

### LD Boomerangs

This group is for all those interested in  
Long Distance Boomerangs.  
Information on making LD's, materials,  
plans, techniques, throwing, and upcom-  
ing LD competitions is all in here!  
[http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/LD  
Boomerangs/](http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/LDBoomerangs/)



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## 3rd Annual 2006 LD Texas Shoot-Out

The Shoot-Out will be held again this year in Houston Texas. The dates are October 6, 7, 8 at George Bush Park.

At last years event there were 15 or more throwers, some who traveled from Canada, Pennsylvania, Arizona and California.

We suggest you arrive Thur. night. the park is ours for warm ups on Fri. and most enjoyed that as much as the actual competition. Visiting, friendly tossing culminating with margaritas and Tex-Mex in the evening. And if you're flying out Sun. evening, go for a later flight as awards are not generally over until about 3pm and the airport is across town.

David Hirsch or Stuart Jones can be contacted for more information: duckhead@airmail.net (David)

# Boomerang News

Current events and tournament news for around the U.S.

## 2006 US Boomerang National Championships and Exposition, September 1st thru the 4th

The 2006 US Boomerang National Championships and Expo will feature boomerang throwers and crafters from around the country, from novice throwers to world class members of the US boomerang team. Public exhibitions and learning sessions will be mixed in with the National Championship events of Accuracy, Australian Round, Trick Catch, Endurance, Fast Catch, and Maximum Time Aloft (MTA). This event is located at the Georgia International Horse Park (GIHP) and is a free admission event for spectators.

The horse park is located 28 miles east of downtown Atlanta in the city of Conyers, GA. The park played a large role in the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games, hosting portions of the modern pentathlon, the mountain bike competition, and all of the equestrian events. More information about the horse park can be found at: <http://www.georgiahorsepark.com/> (including directions to the park).

The horse park is a large facility and will most likely host additional events during the boomerang nationals and expo. This makes for good exposure to the public. Currently, a hunter/jumper horse show is also scheduled for Labor Day weekend. There is an additional possibility of a local festival that could potentially bring plenty of spectators to the boomerang field.

The tentative schedule of events is as follows:

- 9/1 Fri. 10am - 6pm, US National Long Distance Championships
- 9/2 Sat. 10am - 6pm, Individual Competition Day 1
- 9/3 Sun. 10am - 6pm, Individual Competition Day 2
- 9/4 Mon. 9am - 1pm, Exhibitions, Team Gel games, and fun

The following will provide more information about the facilities available for use at the horse park and in the city of Conyers. You may also check-out this web page for more information:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~jesmucker/expo/>

Steeplechase track - The proposed boomerang field: 200 by 260 meters of open space.

The Legacy Room - A meeting room available at the horse park

The Glen - A back-up field (uneven terrain, subject to flooding)

Accommodations:

Hawthorn Suites - For those who really like convenience: It is right across the street from the Steeplechase track. We're working on getting promotional rates. More info to come.

-RV Parking is available

-Tent Camping is available on the field for a nominal fee.

For those who want to do more than throw boomerangs there is a nice Mountain Bike Course, the Big Haynes Creek Nature Center and Cherokee Run Golf Course.

# International News

What's Happening Around The World and Information about the IFBA

## 2006 World Boomerang Championships Asahikawa, Japan

On the north island of Hokkaido, near the city of Sapporo. This is July 7th to 16th, 2006, with Team Events being contested the 9th to 12th. Reigning champs Germany face strong competition from Switzerland, France, and the USA. Don't be surprised if the ever-improving home team Japanese make their first appearance on the podium.

USA Boomerang Team Selection Process took a radical change for the 2006 WBC, highlighted by a 5 team showdown in Delaware, OH in October of 2005. The top two finishing teams will represent the USA in Asahikawa.

The rosters are:

Team A: Richard Bower,  
Billy Brazelton,  
Betsylew Miale-Gix  
Will Gix  
Wilson Lawrence  
Mole Man

Team B: Daniel Bower  
John Flynn  
Matt Golenor  
Steve Kavanaugh  
Casey Larrance  
Gregg Snouffer

GEL DAY including GLORP World Championships is on July 13th. On the 14th and 15th, look for Switzerland's Manuel Schutz to make a run at an unprecedented 4th consecutive World Individual Championship. He will have to make no mistakes, and will be pursued by Germany's Fridolin Frost, Japan's Nobu Iizuka, and the Americans Matt Golenor and the super-stoked Bower twins.

## IFBA News:

The International Federation of Boomerang Associations hosts it's General Meeting at each WBC, this year on the evening of July 10th, 2006. As a member nation of the IFBA, the USBA gets to nominate proposals and officers to the Directive Committee of the IFBA; the USBA has an equal vote on all issues and elections at the General Meeting.

As the supreme voice of the IFBA, decisions at the General Meeting, where the actual IFBA members (the national boomerang associations) vote, can override any actions of the

Directive Committee (officers of the Directive Committee, such as myself, do not represent nations, but act in what they feel is best for the IFBA and boomerangs internationally, rather than in what is in the best interest of the nation from which they happen to have been issued a passport).

Check out the newly updated IFBA website hosted by Tibor:  
<http://www.ifbaonline.com>

## New WR in Aussie Round!

Fridolin Frost of Germany's B-Motions has broken the long standing world record previously held by John "Moleman" Anthony. Fridolin hung a 96 to top the previous WR by two points.

The picture below was taken from the record setting round. This throw scored a perfect 20 as he jumped it onto the Bullseye.



# THE TOP THREE

*Most Influential Boomerang Throwers In the United States*

As voted on by the boomerang community. The following three articles will feature some aspect from each of their lives. One is current, and the other two are retrospective.

## Gel Makes the Ultimate Catch!

Collected below are some thoughts, observations, and memories of Mike Gel and Hien Loung's wedding.

Michael Gel Girvin and Hien Loung Pham wedded in matrimonial fluffiness September 4-5, 2004.  
... Suzanne

It was all a blur ... some twisted mix between a gel tournament, a picnic, a spiritual revival-fest, and the eternal bonding of two beautiful beings...  
... Stevie K.

I laughed, I cried, now I truly know that Michael should not be a drag queen since he cannot sing Madonna songs.  
... Sponge



*Michael O'Conner and Steve Kavanaugh*



*The happy newlyweds Michael Gel Girvin & Hien Loung with friends. .*

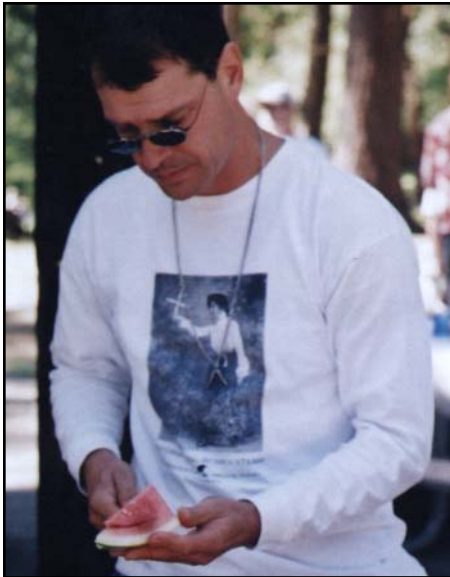




*Sponge and Adam Ruhf*



*Chilton Thomas Kerns*



*Kim Galeazzi*

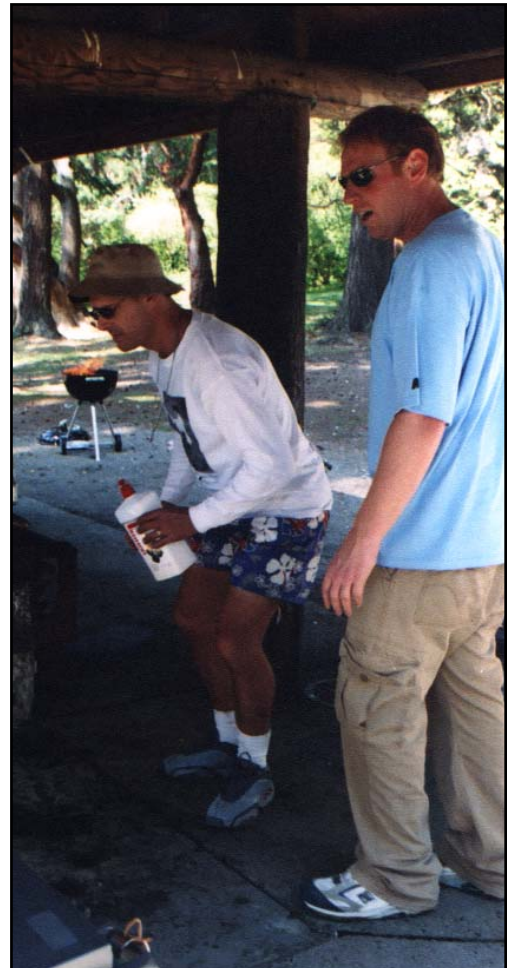
My Gel wedding memory is that it was really 2 weddings in one. Sadly I was unable to attend the Buddhist part of the wedding because of previous family commitments (something Gelly is going to understand all too well in the next 9 months). The second wedding was a blessing of the couple by Mike's boomerang family. We gathered in a local park, threw air dancers, ate grilled meats, drank stuff, threw more booms, and played Ben Ruhe Has a Posse. Sam and Oscar can tell you their Gel Wedding boom number. Most amazing of all was that with all the guests around and so many people to visit, Gel and Hien Loung found time to throw booms with Oscar and Sam who were throwing from a tree with Big D. My advice to Gel and Hien Loung is that being married is working together and compromise to grow together more strongly. It is the most satisfying "work" I've ever done. ... Clay



*Tara Whelan*



*Suzanne hanging out.*



*Kim Galeazzi and Jimmy Youngblood*



Dear Boomerang Man, ①

Thank you sooooo much for the prizes. It helped us out alot. We did MOOMBA. The Boomtest was a huge success. Boomerangs are Magic. There were people who have thrown 15 years to people who just learned the day of the contest, we all throw together in the contest and it was wonderful. Everyone did great. The Boom scene out here is young and growing very fast. People are stoked\* on Boomerangs in the Bay Area.

② warm feeling inside - very extremely happy

ABOUT 5 of us are coming <sup>(2)</sup>  
to the Nationals. I have thrown  
for 1 year and all the others  
coming have only been throwing  
a couple months. We have  
a team - Team Gel. The  
Nationals will be great fun.  
We will all get Rad, and  
be stoked! THANKS B-MAN!

LIVE TO BOOM.

- MICHAEL GIRVIN

# inclosed are ① results to  
each event ② overall results  
③ special award for coolest  
sponsor

P.S. Half the contest was mellow,  
the other half was windy

# Ben Ruhe

By M. Mohr

## Benjamin Ruhe Talks About The Early Days at the Smithsonian

In 1956 Ben Ruhe took one of several trips around the world which included a stay in Australia. This was the time in our aviation history when the 747 jumbo Jet began to fly which opened up the world down under to a great number of travelers. And on this trip the person who could be considered the father of boomerang throwing in the United States was introduced to the returning boomerang.

This was a time in Australian history when the Aboriginal culture was suppressed. The “White” Australian wanted little or no contact with the native Aborigines so many of the customs and symbols of the Aboriginal culture were ignored by the main stream “White-Australian”. This would include the boomerang.

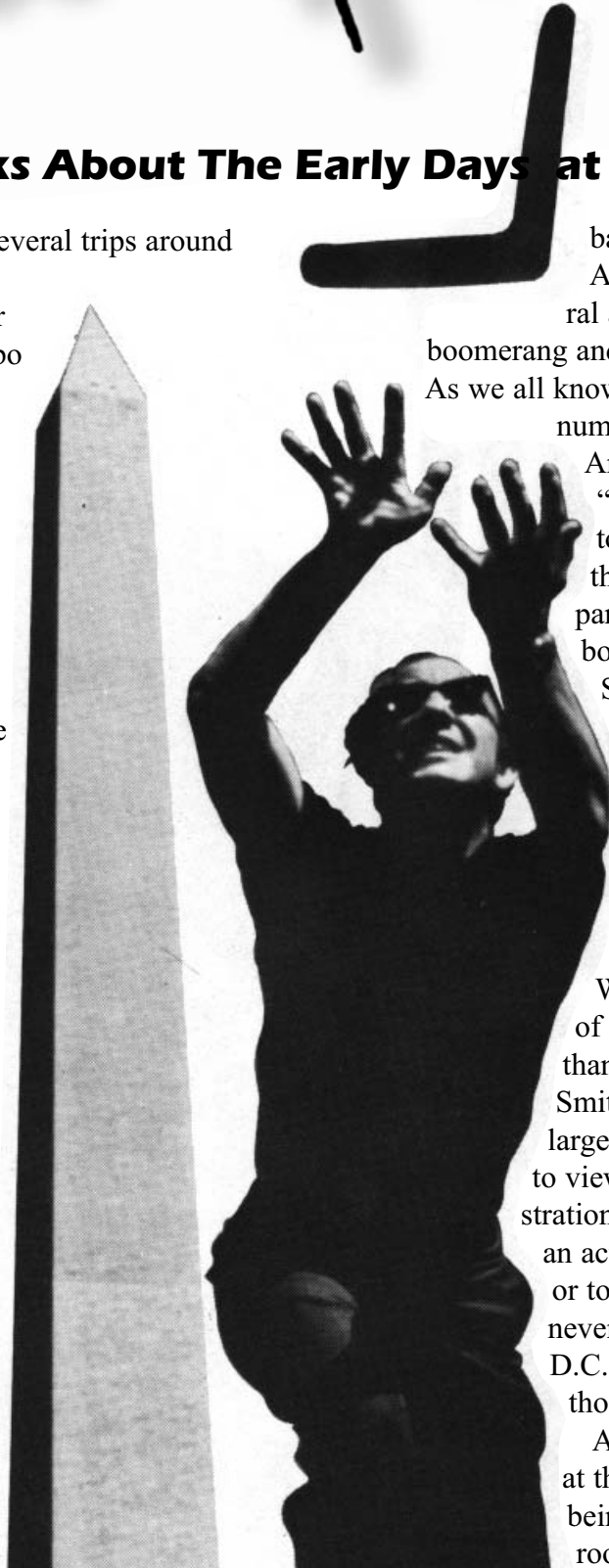
Ben became aware of the boomerang on this trip to Australia and sought to find a true returning Aboriginal boomerang. This proved to be somewhat difficult due to the fact that Aboriginal customs were not widely embraced at the time. But finally in the town of Botany Bay, Ben discovered a famous maker and thrower named Joe Timberey (feature article in MHR issue 93). A number of boomerangs were purchased from Joe and brought

back to the United States. According to Ben, he had “natural ability” in throwing the boomerang and his skills developed quickly. As we all know each boomerang has a certain number of throws until it breaks.

And again as Ben described, “Once I broke all of them I had to make my own”. And this is the foundation that would prepare Ben to eventually start a boomerang craze in the United States that lives to this day.

In the late 1960’s Ben took a job at the Smithsonian. This was a time at the Smithsonian when folk-art from various countries was put on display including many active demonstrations. Washington D.C. was a Mecca of International travelers, more so than it is today. And the Smithsonian benefited from these large international crowds gathered to view the various outdoor demonstrations. Whether it was to witness an activity from their own country or to just see something we may never know. But as Ben described D.C. was a different place back in those days.

At the time Ben began to work at the Smithsonian, kite flying was being demonstrated tracing its roots back *(continued on next page)*





to the countries of origin. This prompted a suggestion from Ben to have boomerangs demonstrated as well. They had strong international roots and boomerangs were already on display at the Smithsonian and the Natural History Museum. Ben's supervisor at the time was very sports oriented and liked the idea of a boomerang workshop/demonstration which would include the opportunity to make your own boomerang.

Once Ben had received the green light and the workshops were underway the popularity began to grow. As Ben described it was a gradual build-up at first but soon these clinics became extremely popular. In the first two days they attracted over 600 registrants and it was clear that interest in boomerangs had been tapped. For a few years this continued but as time went by it became too difficult to manage the number of throwers and all the tools required to manufacture boomerangs on the spot. Coincidentally, an American thrower Lauren Hawes, who had moved to Queensland had put the first mass produced boomerang on the market around this time. It was called the M-17 and was readily available filling the gap for those who needed a boomerang.

As the numbers of visitors and returning throwers began to grow some serious decisions had to be made related to safety. In a way the number of throwers that would show up helped to develop some of the earliest rules. Initially one would attend a workshop, make a boomerang, go practice and then come back in a week for some light-hearted competition. They would do consecutive catch or trick catches (made-up on the spot) until one thrower remained. Ben described suicide throwing as a safety precaution because everyone



*Naylor, Ben Ruhe, Flynn, Foresi, Eric Darnell and one other unknown thrower.*

would be watching their own boomerang, at times having 100 boomerangs in the air. It would also keep all the spectator's and television crew's attention!

And during this time "other" established throwers throughout the U.S. would read in the newspaper or see on television what was happening at the Smithsonian. Ben conveyed the mass of television stations that would come to a throwing session to witness boomerangs in action. So much so, that at times it would be difficult to see your incoming boomerang because of all the cameras present. Some where present to view the majesty of a boomerang's flight and others, including international stations would report on the wacky things American do for fun. The end result was a lot of coverage in print and on television. By Ben's account, he's done over 50 live interviews in front of the camera.

These established U.S. throwers came out of the woodwork and began to slowly gather at the throwing sessions. By Ben's account this is when things really started to take off. Ben described thousands of spectators present to watch some of the light hearted competitions. No

one was actually counting but he estimates numbers to be somewhere around 4 to 6 thousand at times!

This went on for twelve years starting with the first Smithsonian workshop in 1969 and ending with the last one in 1981. And the only reason the clinics and the competitions stopped at the Smithsonian was because the events outgrew the guidelines for what the Smithsonian was about. These competitions grew bigger and started to have an international appeal.

In 1981 the USBA was ready to take over managing the competitions (USBA established in 1979) which made for a natural transition to the governing body for boomerangs in the United States.

Ben was still very active in the sport after his work at the Smithsonian. He, along with Ali Fugino, became the major promoters of boomerang throwing and competition for years to come. In 1981 Ben and Ali organized the first International competition with Australia. Ben contacted Marjorie Gerrish, wife of Colonel John Gerrish then deceased, who was one of the first Americans to bring boomerangs to the States in

*(see Ruhe page 29)*

# Eric Darnell

By M. Mohr

## Eric Gives an Account of the Day He Set the MTA 100 World Record

For fifteen years in a row beginning in 1983 Doug Dufrense held a tournament on the last Sunday of Summer. The tournament was called “Summers Final Fling” and it was usually the last USBA tournament each year during its tenure.

The last year of this tournament was 1997 and it was on this eventful day that Eric Darnell set the MTA world Record at one minute forty four seconds and 87 hundredths (1:44:87). I talked with Eric about this day in an attempt to capture the essence of the moment. We talked about the tournament in general and what decisions he made that lead up to this record-setting throw. There were a many notable throwers at this tournament such as Steve Kavanaugh, Betsylew Miale-Gix and Erik Fields (the current U.S. long distance record holder) just to name a few.

The wind was blowing from an unusual direction this day which passed through a row of trees just outside the 50 meter ring. The winds where gusty at times which created some pretty trashy conditions. Eric was doing well in the overall as he was leading the tournament prior to the start of MTA (second to last event). As Eric stated, “I was having an exceptional day, everything just worked”.

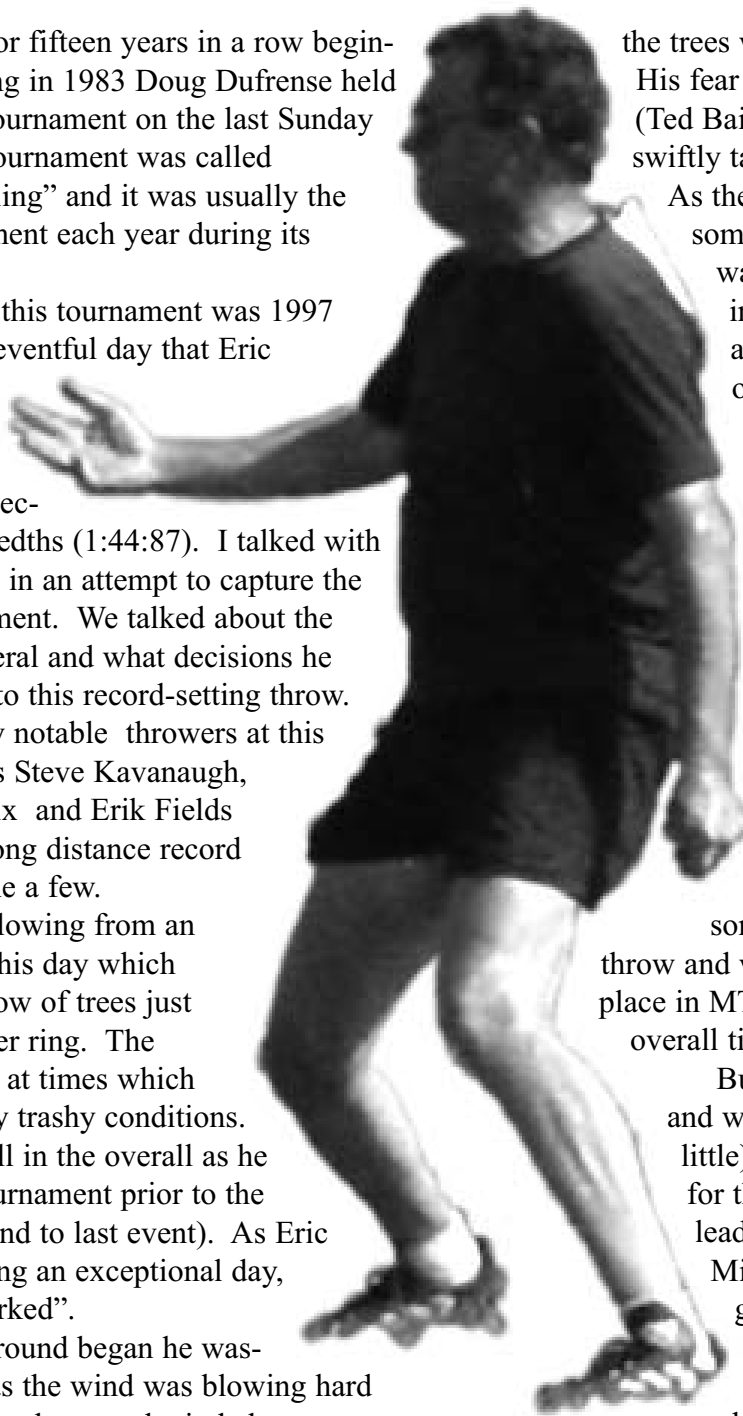
As Eric’s MTA round began he wasn’t too optimistic as the wind was blowing hard and he feared the unobstructed wind above

the trees would make for a challenging round. His fear proved to be right as the boomerang (Ted Bailey Midi) cleared the trees and was swiftly taken down range about 200 meters!

As the round progressed the wind tapered some but was still shifty and trashy. Eric was following Betsylew in the throwing order and gained valuable insight as to what the wind was doing based on her throws (as told by Eric).

On the second throw an undetected wind shift took the Midi in an entirely different direction and this time it came down only 100 meters outside the 50, near a parking lot. With nothing on the board as of yet and since he was doing so well in the overall standings, Eric made a strategic decision for his third throw. He went to one of his TriFly’s, modified for wind in an attempt to get a score on the board. This decision proved to be a good one as he posted something around 18 seconds with that throw and would’ve given him a fourth or fifth place in MTA and keeping him in the run for the overall title.

But with two more throws remaining and with the conditions still improving (a little) Eric decided to go back to the Midi for these throws. Following Betsylew’s lead-in, Eric did some de-tuning of the Midi by taking out a lot of dihedral. His goal was to have the boom climb slower and not go as high in hopes of avoiding the stronger winds above the trees. *(continued on next page)*



He laid the boomerang over more and the throw did what he wanted. The Midi still came down out of bounds but not by much and Eric was optimistic that he was going in the right direction.

On the fifth and final throw Eric brought it all together. He made this throw from the 30 or 40 meter line instead of the 50 so the Midi would circle in front of the trees. He picked a gap in the trees to throw at in hopes the Midi would bounce around in some of the turbulence created at that spot. His throw would be softer than the last one because he wanted the boom to stay below the tree-tops and just hang in the bumpy air around the gap in the trees and drift back into the circle.

To Eric's excitement the boomerang did just what he wanted and drifted all the way back to the center circle. It hung over the bulls-eye for a moment or two and then began to rise! It went up and up to a height of approximately 100 feet where it became subject to the stronger winds above the tree-tops. To his surprise the Midi started to drift north which was 90° to the wind he was feeling at ground level. The boom went as far as the 30 meter line and changed directions again, this time heading east. And with each shift in directions Eric was thinking his boomerang, that has now been in the air over a minute, would be blown out of bounds just like his first two throws. But to his surprise the Midi kept changing directions keeping well within the 50 meter ring. This time on its easterly track it set-up over the 20 meter line before taking its final track to the southwest. The Midi was subject to perfectly shifting upper winds that carved a squarish pattern over the heart of the throwing field. But all of a sudden Eric



*Eric throwing at the 2002 USBA Expo near Seattle.*

noticed the Midi starting to sink and sink fast! There was a lot of hooting and hollering going on as all present were watching something special. As Eric stated to me, he wasn't thinking about time or World Records but staying focused on a hovering boomerang that he felt was sure to be blown out of bounds at any time.

Well, the boomerang didn't go out of bounds, but it was coming down rapidly at this point. So much so that Eric had to really hustle to get into position for the catch. He caught the boomerang shoulder high while on the run and the only thing he remembers after that was complete silence. All eyes were on the three stop-watches rapidly being checked by Doug Dufrense. And after a careful comparison of the three times the official time was announced at 1:44:87! A new world record was set and it has held up for eight years.

In the aftermath of this record Eric had discovered that the previous world record in MTA was broken only a week prior by David Hesse, a European thrower who took the title from Fridolin Frost. Any world record in our sport is noteworthy but one that stands for this long is

especially noteworthy. And we all know that a certain amount of luck is involved to set a world record in MTA. But Eric's approach to the conditions of the day put him into a position to let luck do its thing. And in this day and age when composite boomerangs rule the MTA sky, there's something refreshing to know that a good old wooden Ted Bailey Midi stands at the top of Maximum Time Aloft.

In closing, Eric went on to win the overall in this tournament to go with his world record. And ironically, Eric was overheard talking to Doug prior to this MTA round, stating that "MTA is only luck". But now we know that luck was only a part of MTA. **-end**



*2001 Emmaus - Barnaby, Peter Ruhf and Eric*



# The Sporting News

Featuring Individuals and Events Related to Sport Boomerang Throwing and Crafting

Featured Thrower and Boomsmith:

## Pat Steigman of Tyler, Texas

*As told by*

*Pat Steigman*

I'm thinking I was about 12 when I was first introduced to boomerangs by The Boomerang Man, in Monroe Louisiana. That would be about 1971. In those days I was racing HO scale slot cars at The Hobby House in Monroe. Rich was the owner of the establishment and was selling a few booms at the store. I remember going to Forsythe Park with Rich on a couple of occasions to throw. He was selling traditional sticks, Hawes, Bruce, and Sport Comeback 22 come to mind. Through some adolescent arm twisting I coerced my mother into buying a Bruce Boomerang for me.

Shortly thereafter I moved to Texas and threw a little, but not regularly. I loaned my only boom to a kid at school who broke it and tried to mend it. So, back to Rich for a couple more booms. Once I got to college, the booms went into the closet and I got into working, getting married, and raising a family. Jill has always been supportive of my eccentricities, her word for my hobbies. My kids, Brian and Lauren, think boomerangs are interesting, but probably question my mental stability. Somewhere in there I did six years in the Navy, doing my sea duty on submarines. For the last 18 years I've serviced medical imaging equipment to earn money to buy boomerangs.

It was in April of '97 that I searched for boomerangs on the internet and found a world of knowledge



Pat Lets one go at the 2005 Shoot-Out in Houston Texas, he hit 114 meters.

that restarted my passion for boomerangs. I wanted to make boomerangs. If primitive people can make functional boomerangs with stone age tools, surely I can make something in my garage with power tools. The first site I found on making boomerangs was Gerhard Bertling's site on making strip laminated booms. These lit a fire in my imagination. I felt I had to make booms like that. They were so beautiful. But I needed to learn how to make a simple boom first. For that, I found a wonderful site by Heikki Niskanen. Heikki had clear instructions and beautiful plans.

My goal then was to make Heikki's Wind God. Still too complicated for a first boom, but I was getting somewhere.

From my searches on the net, I learned that there were a ton of great booms out there and that I'd never have the money to buy them all. The only way I was going to be able to enjoy the vast array of boomerang technology was to learn to make them myself. I figured it would be great to be able to produce boomerangs with my own hands so that if I ever lost or broke one, I could make another.

*(see Pat page 28)*

Steve Kavanaugh current USBA board member talks about his boomerang roots.

*By Dave Hughes*

**DH:** How and when did you get into boomerangs, how old were you, and who, if anyone, introduced you to them?

**Stevie:** I was at the Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA, September of 1986 and I was 18 years old. One day while tripping around campus in an altered state, along with a guy named Paul who I did not know very well, we aimlessly wandered to the modular housing units where we had been at a party the night before.

During that party the beer ran out, and Mike Krausser drove his old Volvo to the bar to transport back a fresh keg. Apparently the car full of people and the heavy keg were a bit much for some part of the 1963 Volvo's engine, because after successfully delivering the fresh keg of beer to the party in the Mod of Doom, this heroic car spontaneously engulfed itself in flames. So after examining the remains of the dead Volvo the next morning, we wandered out to the athletic fields, and that is when I saw Team Gel for the first time.

It was surreal, all these people would wait for the one guy to yell, "Alright, this time catch it under your leg, unless you don't want to!". And then, they would all throw their booms at one time, what a sight, and then they ran around in a frenzied pack until the booms landed, or some were actually caught. The imagery burned itself into my brain. It turns out the guy yelling out the catches was, or course, Michael 'Gel' Girvin.



*Steve getting rad and laying back for a "lap-catch" with his "Gel Quad".*

Gel had learned to throw booms from Peter Ruhf in Berkeley CA, and started a boomerang club at Evergreen in 1985.

I never actually threw a boomerang until almost a month later when I ended up moving into the aforementioned Mod of Doom where Mike Krausser and Ed Love lived. One day soon after moving in, they took me out to the field and Ed let me throw his Madonna. It didn't come back, but Ed said it was a good throw. I started hanging out with Team Gel on Friday afternoons for Boomerang Class. I think it took me over 3 weeks before I ever caught my first boomerang. By the time the Valentine's Day tournament came around, I was hooked.

**DH:** There seems to be a very common thread here, that of Gel having taught many of those who've gone on to become some of the best throwers in the country. In that first tournament you entered, how well did you do? What events did you do best at?

**Stevie:** Gel has taught many great throwers about boomerangs first hand, but even more if second hand counts. I think I bombed every event during that first Valentine's Day contest, but it was all team events, so personal scores did not matter as much as having fun and getting rad. I remember the first USBA contest that I competed in was Doug DuFresne's Summer's Final Fling, circa 1987 and did OK in most of the events but not great in anything. My initial strengths were Trick Catch and Aussie Round, and my worst event, Juggling, was still an official USBA event.

**DH:** Obviously, you're darned good at all the competition events, but what are your favorites and least favorites, and what do you feel is your best event at the present time?

**Stevie:** My favorite event is GLORP, my least favorite event is Accuracy.



I should add that I am in favor of the USBA switching to Accuracy 100, (10 throws vs. 5 throws) which may seem odd since it increases the amount of accuracy throwing, but there you go. I am not sure what my best event at present is. Maybe Trick Catch, maybe Fast Catch or Endurance. Does GLORP count? I am still not 100% after spraining and straining my right shoulder in France.

This is way off topic, Dave, but I just wanted to get this out there. It was at the WBC, during the 3rd event, Super Catch, while I was throwing Fast Catch during our first MTA flight. My fourth throw was a bit high, soft and vertical, and the horn sounded once while it was in flight, indicating that the MTA had been caught successfully. So my Fast Catch was heading toward the ground, upwind and to my left. I ran to where I thought it would land and realized that I would not get to it in time. I clearly remember thinking to myself, "this is the World Cup, you have been training for 2 years for this, this is the time to hold back nothing". I was close, so I gave it the full-out headfirst dive, and managed to get my hands on it. I am not sure how I landed, but it hurt immediately, and I was looking at my Fast Catch on the ground. I knew I was hurt, but did not want to give this away to the competition, especially since we were tied for 1st place overall going into this event. I was up next to throw the MTA, so I left the fast catch circle and met up with Eric Darnell, the head coach, where the MTA throwers were lined up. It hurt like hell to even throw a hacky-sack back and forth with James Stickney, assistant coach and new (but not yet at that point) World Champion of GLORP. I am proud to say that despite my injury that was the last boom not caught by me on that day. My MTA throw

was weak and unstable, but I managed to run that Jonas down and made another full out headfirst dive, but this time I caught the MTA, but it was weak nevertheless. I managed to get all the rest of my Fast Catch throws as well, but sat out the rest of the day, and only managed to throw 3 other events the rest of the WBC, and probably should not have gone in those. My shoulder was black and blue for the next 3 weeks, so I threw left handed at the GLORP world championships. I am much better now, and back to throwing sub-20 Fast Catch and such, but turning 37 on April 2, I am afraid that I will never get back to where I was before the injury.

**DH:** Ouch! Hope you get all better! Tell us, if you will, what's in your competition kit? If you have any 'secrets', that's cool, but give us an idea of what you throw in each event & in different conditions.

**Stevie:** My first boomerang was a Gel 'Live to Boom', I received it as a prize boom from one of the many Gel tournaments that Michael hosted at the Evergreen State College. That thing went an easy 30m in a big teardrop flight pattern and was not very accurate, nor easy to catch. I actually still have that one. It hangs on a wall in my old room at my parents' house. It was later on that I had my real boomerang epiphany, when I acquired what is still my favorite model of boomerang ever, the 5 ply 'Sunshine'. Wow, even to this day that is the first boom that I throw each day. I am still entranced by the beauty and perfection of its flight pattern. It is a real shame that it is no longer being produced.

So this is the segue to my comp bag. First one out is the 5-ply 'Sunshine' for warming up, or as the first boom in flight for a demo. I guess I will just go thru the events and tell which booms I use, and for what conditions.

Trick Catch and Doubling: Gel's phenolic 'Carlota'. I have some that are original by Gel and others that are "authorized copies". In my case the copies were produced by Richard and Daniel Bower. The original Gels I have had the longest, and are therefore the ones that I know the best. It was the original Gel that I used at Barnaby Ruhe's tourney in 2001 when I set the World Record at 279. This has since been shattered by Alex Opri and Manuel Schutz, but I still have the U.S. record, although the Bowers have me in their gun-sights, and either one of them could take it. I have a singles mellow to mid-wind 'Carlota' and another one that is "doped up" for higher winds, but in extreme winds I still fall back to my 2 blade Gel 'Bellen Wind Dancer'. Doublers, especially a really great outside doubler, are the keys to great trickcatch scores. My original Gels are getting old and physically weakening, but in mellow winds it is that pair that I look to first, even though the outsider's tuning is becoming inconsistent. I now have a good pair of 'Bowerbuilt Carlotas', which I use in higher winds, and just picked up a second pair, but need to work on the outsider to achieve a better hover.

Fast Catch, Endurance and Accuracy: I am pretty much an Eric Darnell modified TriFly freak, but then, who isn't? Word from Eric is that the reinforced Nylon is great, but I have yet to try them out. I like red or white ABS and PET materials and have a variety of shapes for different wind conditions and score situations. What is so nice about these booms is that they are easy to tune and adjust. There are three basic elements to tuning a plastic fast catch: adding weight, adding drag, and carving the wings. I like to use my Swiss Army knife to carve the wings, especially the leading edges.

(continued on next page)



Carving usually comes down to adding "undercut" (positive angle of attack on the underside) to the leading edge, makes it faster, shorter range and often more 'floaty'.

Opposite of that is what we refer to as "overbite" (negative angle of attack on the topside) which will increase spin rate, increase range, and keep that sucker staying low in flight and not fly over your head. The fastest and most dangerous low wind fastie is red ABS, with enlarged wingtip holes, and this baby flies quick. I call it 'Zoink'. It requires a catching glove, and I am still trying to get over my fears of catching it. This is a boom for mellow or no wind, and pretty much only for a second round after putting up a decent 20second first round. Other than that it is just an ego trip to throw something that fast (17.25 in practice). For a more stable first round my mainstay is called 'Mule' and is a great 20-second fastcatch that can go under 20 if the transfers are just right. I am currently re-working my mid-wind fastcatch quiver after breaking my 2 most reliable mid wind fast/accuracy booms. Around 22 seconds, I have a red ABS with a bit of dope on it, and it can handle a pretty good wind. For a larger wind I am trying to replace another one I broke this winter.

Moving into extreme winds I have a white ABS with blunted leading edges and a bunch of weight and drag that can barely get under 30 seconds, it's name is 'Money'. It is very reliable I used many times in competition when everyone else is trying to go too fast and blowing out. When all else fails I am never too proud to bust out the old 'Bellen Wind Dancer', but that is for a serious hurricane. 'Money' is a great accuracy boom as well. But for more mellow wind accuracy, I am still trying to replace this one reliable stubby, white ABS, that I called "Gregg".

MTA: If you have Jonas Romblad, be careful with it, they cannot be

replaced. Manuel Schutz currently produces an incredible carbon fibre 2-blade MTA, one of which holds the world record. You can get these directly from Manuel, depending on the exchange rate with Swiss Francs, for about a hundred bucks. The cutting edge of MTA is reliable stable 3-bladers, especially for SuperCatch. I wish I had one of these like the B-Motions used in France. They hit 40seconds with phenolic 3-bladers sometimes in really tough winds. Word on the street about phenolic 3-bladers is that about 1 in 10 are any good. Alex Opri allegedly made 400 of these 'Palm' 3 blades for his team, selling off all but the very best ones. Mark Legg and Gregg Snouffer are



supposed to be making some good ones, and I need their help.

GLORP: You absolutely want to use a Gel 'Quad'. In HUGE winds I will utilize the 'Bellen Wind Dancer'. Are you beginning to see a trend here?

30-Meter: Relay is about boom speed in the air and foot speed on the ground. I have a Lexan Darnell that is called the 'Fuzzy Buster', and recently picked up an old-school Bowerbuilt 'Sprint'. Both of these can be used for Aussie Round as well if the conditions dictate to not go 50m.

50m Aussie Round: in low winds, I have a wooden Gel 'Sunset' with weight and drag added to it. If the wind gets big enough I have a few nice phenolic Gel 'Sunshine's'. These are honestly 1992 technology, but I still use them because I have yet to find something that can really replace them. Mine are all for bigger to extreme winds.

My tuning kit includes: electrical tape for weighting-(non drag), hockey tape for adhesion with drag, coins for weight, lead tape for weight, rubber bands for drag, and of course, a pocket knife for carving, sand paper for shaving and rounding, plus a lot of people have a few files or rasps. It is also a good idea to have a Sharpie marking pen to write things onto the booms, as well as a note pad for making observations and notes about boom flights and tuning techniques.

**DH**: You mentioned a record that you hold in TC/DBLG. Are there any others that you hold or have held, and have you ever won any Individual Championships in either the US or the World?

**Stevie**: That is held, in the past tense, Dave. I had the honor(?) of watching Alex Opri shatter my best score in Trick Catch and Doubling during the World Individual Championships in France, 2004. Perhaps it was karmic backlash for spraying Alex down with champagne after the Team Awards Ceremony. I have to admit, I was more than a bit frustrated with events, having sprained my shoulder and experienced the team meltdown. Besides, I owed Herr Opri for the champagne spraying he gave us in Kiel (2002). So I popped my cork and let out my aggressions, but I guess I got him in his last set of clean clothes,

and I felt bad about it afterwards. Regardless of my digression, Alex Opri set a new World Record the next day eclipsing my former World and current US Record of 279. With the first 3 perfect rounds ever, and then a fourth perfect singles round, Alex finally missed something (one hand behind the back?), and stopped at 372. Since then, Manuel Schutz broke Alex's record with a heart breaking 390. That means he was one foot catch away from four perfect rounds and almost certainly would have gone past 420.

Way back in 1991, in Perth, at Roger Perry's WBC, I took the Australian Round title on Individuals day. I think that is my only one. 1996 in Christchurch, New Zealand, I was second place overall and missed winning the World Individual Overall by one zero accuracy throw- und wenn der hünd nicht geschissen hätte, wäre er geplatzt. I have two World GLORP titles, ten years apart, both during German-hosted WBCs while drinking more than a couple beers, 1992 Hamburg and 2002 Kiel. Just last year I set a new US Record in perhaps the most boring event ever, Consecutive Catch. I squeaked past Mike Gel's 816 with 826. The World Record is 1201, Yannick Charles of France I think. I know I have won events at more than one US National Championships, for sure at least a couple of Trick Catch and Doubling, plus several GLORP titles, and I have to think at least one each for Fastcatch, Endurance and Aussie Round, but I can't swear to it. I do know for a fact that I had the smallest margin of victory ever, 4/10,000 of a placing point over Rob Parkins, to win the 1997 USBA National Championships when Chet Snouffer hosted it in Delaware OH. That is the only US Overall Title for me.

**DH:** Do you make any of your own booms? You didn't list any self-made booms in your competition kit (Q.#3), but I was wondering if you perhaps make any of your own 'recreational' booms.

**Stevie:** I make one model, called the 'Spangler'. There are few made and not often, I have varied the design to make both a fast catch model and a 40-50m Aussie Round boom. Adam Ruhf had one that I made, not sure if he still has it, but he scored a 91 with it for our team in Kiel. That sure made me proud. Richard Bower has one that he made for himself, and it is sweet. Other than the Spangler, I don't make booms. However, I consider myself a master of tuning boomerangs, which is almost more important than making booms when it comes to competition. I have been known to sell boomerangs at demos and to friends as well.

**DH:** I can testify to your tuning skills, Steve. In Houston in 2003, I was absolutely amazed by your booms' abilities to function in those stiff breezes, especially in FC! Well, before we turn away from strictly competition topics, do you have any tips or advice for budding young boomerangers to help them realize their competitive boomerang aspirations?

**Stevie:** Practice, practice, practice. Practice does not have to be work, it can be FUN!! Remember young kiddies, this is an old man's sport. Learn from everyone you can! Most people don't get very good without at least 5 years training and practice, it just takes time and competition experience.

**DH:** Are there any particular skills that you feel are most important to concentrate on when practicing? I mean, are there certain things that one should always work on, regardless of which event he or she is practicing on, i.e., a common thread that runs thru all the

competition events?

**Stevie:** Positive visualization is the key to good scores in boomerang competition events. You need to see the right throw, the right flight and making the catch, all before you even throw the boomerang. Doesn't matter what event it is, when it comes down to it, boomerangs are a very mental sport.

**DH:** Tell us more about yourself, if you would; where you live, occupation, other hobbies or interests you may have, etc. Other than a boomeranger, who is Steve Kavanaugh?

**Stevie:** Steven J Kavanaugh, born in 1968, Seattle WA. I grew up here and have lived here almost all of my life graduating from Seattle Public Schools in 1986, and the Evergreen State College in 1990. I am the youngest of five kids and have four older sisters. I live alone, but have a son named Caden who is one year old, he is here on some weekday afternoons and weekends. I work for Essential Baking Co. as a distribution manager; I have also been a wholesale florist and a yo-yo salesman. I love to travel, but have to admit that almost every trip involves boomerangs in some way. I am working on a home expansion project in 2005.

*(See Stevie page 29)*





# Competition Corner

Comprehensive Coverage of Tournaments, Upcoming Events and Techniques Related to Competition

## A Rundown of the 2005 National Championships

By John Flynn

Skies were blue and winds were light (but a little shifty to make it challenging) as over 40 competitors and hundreds of spectators converged on Sachem Field in Lebanon, NH July 29-31 for the 2005 US National Championships and Expo. Matt Golenor of Nashville, TN defended his 2004 title with a dominant wire-to-wire victory.

Friday was Team and Fun Day, and turned into Media Day as well. Two TV stations from Burlington, VT and one from Boston came to the event and the first events, Team Position and Team Relay were combined with interviews and demonstrations. Everyone was patient as we attempted to give the media what they needed and the resulting broadcasts were seen by audiences totaling nearly one million viewers throughout New England!

Five teams formed for the Team events, which always epitomize the fun essence of boomerangs, and the winners were: **Position** - Team Unintelligent Design (Mole Man, Steve Kavanaugh, Jason Smucker, Zach, Kyle, and Zoe Pezzano); **Relay** - Team Joe Cool (John Gaston, Paul Sprague, Larry Ruhf, Kris Johansson, Will Gix, and Betsylew Miale-Gix); **Accuracy** - Team Martha (Dan Johnson, Steve Cook, Eric Darnell, Mike Darnell, Joe Rader, Emmanuel Dumont, and Louis Poirier); **Sprinklerhead** - Joe Cool once again.

Six groups were formed of (approximately) one team member each for Sprinklerhead, with the first two throwers in each group to reach 10 points then advancing to the "finals" round, which was contested as an individual event. 12 throwers, some old, some new, staged a spirited



Sprinklerhead action and at the National Championships, Team Joe Cool won the event.

battle but Mole Man prevailed on the strength of the only 3 pt. "sprinklerhead" bullseye in the round. The event was great fun in both team and individual phases, and hopefully it can become a staple at future nationals and provide a compelling bridge from the team to individual events.

Day one concluded with GLORP, the freestyle catching game, which featured a fine duel between Mole Man, Jason, Wilson Lawrence, Matt Golenor, and Stevie K. Matt and Stevie finally shook off Wilson and embarked on a riveting mano-a-mano exhibition of unabashed trick catch radness. After nearly a dozen rounds, Stevie finally prevailed to earn (emphasis on earn, since Matt didn't give an inch) yet another national GLORP title.

Saturday again arrived with blue skies and light, tricky breezes. Just right for a nationals test. Juggling, carried over from Day 1, started things early with Mole Man and Barnaby Ruhe tying for first with 12 catches, and Matt third with 9. Then it was time to start the formal individual events.

Matt Golenor then started off Trick Catch/Doubling in grand

style with a perfect 100/100, plus 14 bonus points, followed by the fine German thrower Harald Steck with 89, and Stevie K with 82.

On the strength and good fortune of a beautiful 1:11.19 flight w/catch, MTA-100 went to Larry Ruhf with 2 minutes, 17.2 seconds total for his best 3 throws, with Steve Cook (2 min, 1 sec) and Jason Smucker and Stevie (1 min, 51 sec) with the next best scores. Other throwers with flights over 40 seconds: Mole Man, Dennis Joyce, and Matt Golenor.



Matt Golenor defended his US title



**Fast Catch** went to Betsylew Miale-Gix, who cut through tricky winds with ease to take both rounds in 19.75 and 19.47, brilliant throwing. Second went to Matt with 20.48, third to Harald at 20.97, followed by John Flynn (21.91) and Mike Dickson (22.97).

**Endurance** saw the winds come up a bit, and a winning score of 52 catches by John Flynn, just nipping Matt with 51 (in trickier winds, I admit), Stevie at 50, John Koehler at 47, and Harald with 46.

During the lunch break on Saturday, the annual USBA Craftsmanship Contest was judged, with some excellent entries submitted. Mark Zaitlin won the Woodworking category with an impressive checkerboard/strip laminate tri-blader. Newcomer Louis Poirier, from Canada, won the Decoration category with a fiberglass MTA hand-colored in concentric circles. In the Design/Technology category, Axel Heckner's new injection molded "Renner" won first place.

See more of the Renner at [www.bumerangschule.de](http://www.bumerangschule.de).

John Gaston and Don Monroe from Tucson also had fine entries. Award natural elbow booms were graciously donated by Bob Foresi, who also helped with the judging (thanks Bob).

Saturday concluded with food and drinks, and Team and Individual event awards, at Everything But Anchovies Pizza house in Hanover. Matt had a commanding lead over the field after 4 events, but with Accuracy and Australian Round coming up on Sunday, a few thought they still might have an outside chance to snag the title.

Sunday started unexpectedly with a very brief shower, then it slowly cleared with a light breeze now coming in from the east rather than the southwest direction of the previous days, but everyone warmed up with big thoughts for Accuracy. Laura Smucker alternated her throws with looking after her daughter Emma. Clearly, the double duty was not a distraction, as Laura became the first US thrower to achieve a perfect



John Flynn and Larry Ruhf, Larry won MTA, and I'm not going to ask what John's doing back there?!

50/50 score, then following with a 7 on the bonus for a 57!

Congratulations Laura! Lost in the shadows of Laura's new record were fine rounds such as 46 by Senior Division winner Peter Ruhf, 44 by Harald Steck, and 42 by Matt, Mole Man, and Betsylew, as well as a 40 by newcomer Sammy Richards. Any hopes to catch Matt were quickly fading away following the fine score in Accuracy.

In the last event, Australian Round, the wind gods decided to have some fun. With 2 minutes left in practice, a brisk new wind hit from the east, throwing all game plans into disarray. Those who went first simply got hammered by the tumbling shifting gusts. Scores between 15 and 30 points were commonplace among veteran throwers with only a couple getting into the 40-50 point range in the early groups. The gusts abated a bit as the round progressed and those

who went last faced a less daunting task. Steve Kavanaugh took the prize with 67/100, followed by Matt with 66, thereby cementing his overall title, then Steve Cook at 61.

Awards for the days events, and the overall awards in all categories followed, and people either began their trips home, went for a tour of the area, or stayed on at the field for casual throwing and visiting. Special thanks to Paul Gustafson for hosting all of the event info on his [www.vermontboomerang.org](http://www.vermontboomerang.org) website, Justin Beaudry for taking photos, Sam and Seth Richards for entering the scores, and Kirky Flynn for holding the fort. All in all, a great weekend of boomerang fun, great performance by Matt Golenor, and thanks to the exceptional press coverage, lots of spectators and boomerang sales!

*(continued on next page)*



## Scores for the Overall Winners per Division At U.S. Nationals

**Novice Overall:** 1. Kyle Pezzano, 12.5; 2. Zach Pezzano, 14.5; 3. Louis Poitier, 17.5, 4. Zoe Pezzano, 21.5, 5. Ira Clark, 24 points.

**Senior (50+) Overall:** 1. Peter Ruhf, 11; 2. Larry Ruhf, 14; 3. Barnaby Ruhf, 16; 4. Eric Darnell, 20; 5. John Gaston, 29 points.

**Junior (16 and under) Overall:** 1. Adam Dickson, 11; 2. Sammy Richards, 14.5; 3. Bart Flynn, 17; 4. George Flynn, 21.5; 5. Kyle Pezzano, 31.5 points.

**Intermediate Overall:** 1. Laura Smucker, 23 pts, 2. Emmanuel Dumont, 23.5; 3. Adam Dickson, 30; 4. Joe Rader, 32; 5. Don Monroe, 32.5 points.

**Advanced Overall:** 1. Matt Golenor, 14; 2. Steve Kavanaugh, 25.5; 3. Harald Steck, 26.5; 4. John Flynn, 29; 5. Betsy Lew Miale-Gix, 35; 6. Will Gix, 45; 7. Steve Cook, 49; 8. Mole Man, 52; 9. John Koehler, 55; 10. Jason Smucker, 57.5 points.



Louis Poitier, won the Decoration category

# '05 U.S. Team Trials Team USA is Chosen for WBC in Japan

Laura Smucker receives her Accuracy medal for her record setting throw of 57.



On October 14th, 15th, and 16th USA Boomerang Team hopefuls gathered in Delaware, OH to battle it out to determine who will represent the USA at the World Boomerang Championships next August in Japan. The "Team Trials" were the final step in an arduous and sometimes controversial team selection process that began a year ago. All who participated, even the ardent skeptics of the process, agreed that this meeting of throwers in a full simulation of WBC competition was very successful not only in choosing teams but in building team unity, in sharing technology, discovering holes in the USA's boomerang skills, and scoping out the talent.

The selection process consisted of the Selection Committee, the throwers, Team Camps, and the Team Trials. The Committee hosted four Team Camps throughout the US. Players who wished to be considered by the Committee had to attend a Team Camp. The Committee then put together two squads, the Select and Victor squads. Select and Victor consisted of the top 12 players identified by the Committee. The Committee then divided the top 12 into squads based on complimentary boomerang skills and taking into consideration the personalities of the players involved. Once the Committee had made their selections the squads could act as a group to swap players, drop players, or bring players up.



# John Flynn Ties the World Record In Aussie-Round at Team Trials with 96!



Back row: Dan Wilson, Alex Opri, Wilson Larrance, Larry Brown, Casey Larrance, Clay Dawson, Steve Cook, Will Gix, Daniel Bower, Billy Brazelton, Betsylew Miale-Gix, Richard Bower, Gregg Snouffer. Front Row: Barnaby Ruhe, John Flynn (new co-world record holder for AR at 96), Jason&Emma Smucker, Mole Man, Steve Kavanaugh, Matt Gogo Golenor.

The final step in the process, the Team Trials, was a check & balance against the Committee's decision. At the Team Trials any squad could challenge Select and Victor to represent the USA. Shortly (like minutes) after the Select and Victor squads were announced the "shafted", "over-looked", and plain old angry insurgency started to form. In fact, the insurgency gathered players from those who didn't make the cut and those who didn't attend a Team Camp to form squads. Victor had 2 players drop so they made selections from the other players available and formed a strong team.



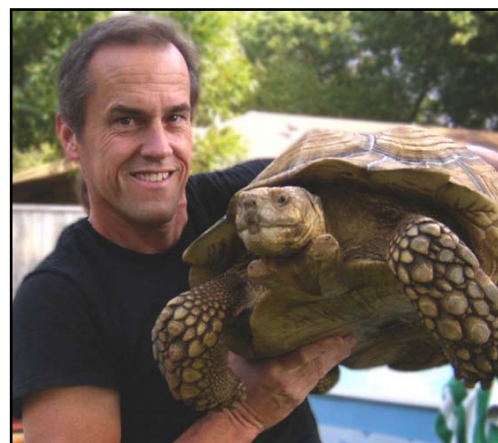
Alex Opri and Barnaby Ruhe at Trials



## Established the '05 National LD Champion

*By Dave Hughes*

We almost had a Texas sweep of the Texas LD Shootout this year, with David Hirsch of Dallas taking the win with 126M and a new Texas LD Record. Dave Hughes comes in second with 118M, and there was a 3-way tie for 3rd between Andy Cross, Pat Steigman of Tyler, Texas, and Tom Wythes from Arizona, all at 114M. Andy was awarded 3rd place by virtue of the highest next-best distance from among the three.



David Hirsch '05 National LD champion and World Record holder for men over fifty with his throw of 126 meters. Shown here with his brother George who is a couple years his elder.



# 1st Annual Beach Boom Tournament in So. Cal.

April 8th 2006 in Playa Del Rey, CA.

By M. Mohr

It was a beautiful day to kick-off our first annual beach tournament. The weather was perfect with light winds in the morning for MTA and slowly building to 8-10 mph by the end of the day for Aussie Round.

We had a number of first-time competitors like Dan Heff, David Johnson, Michael Martin, John V., Randy Anderson, Joe Curran, and Kris Kemp. We also had some great veteran throwers like Don Monroe and John Gaston from Arizona, along with Adam Ruhf, who drove down from Humbolt Ca. (about a ten hour drive).

We all had a great time as we spent 9 hours on the beach this day throwing booms. The more experience throwers helped the less experienced throwers with Don Monroe winning the "Gel" award for most helpful and encouraging participant. We look forward to next year!



L to R, Dan Heff, Don Monroe, John Gaston, Tom Cruse, David Johnson, Michael Martin, John Villagrana, Kris Kemp and Adam Ruhf.



Kris, Styrose (our swiveling head wind indicator) and John V., who are new MHR editors.



New competitor Dan Heff makes the catch inside the Bull during AR, Scoring an impressive 61.

## The Top Three Hurlers From The '05 Shoot-Out



David and his "Lone Star" Voyager take the win.



Dave Hughes, AKA lefty, takes second.



Andy Cross represented well for third.

# GLORP

## The Official History of This Spontaneous Game

by Chris Walcott

It all started sometime in 1991 with our band called Project 6. We rehearsed in an East Oakland, CA warehouse called "The Bindery". During breaks we would shoot hoops in an indoor court. The court was your basic backboard and hoop put up on a catwalk between two rooms in the main hallway. The game of choice was HORSE because of all the crazy shots that were possible in the room. In keeping with the mythology we created around the planet Glorp we decided to play the game using the letters GLORP instead of HORSE.

One day, we came in to rehearse and found that the backboard and hoop was gone. One of the residents got tired of midnight games and ripped it down. After we finished rehearsing, we headed out to Billy Martin field to throw booms.

Being the only ones out that day, we started practicing various freestyle catches. One of us (I can't remember who) suggested we play GLORP, boomerang style. We collectively made up the rules right there. The basic idea (which has evolved over time) is explained below.

by Michael Gel Girvin

The game GLORP was invented by Joe Miller, Dave Chavez and Chris Walcott, the band members of the rock band Project Six. They performed a song

about the planet GLORP where aliens rode boomerangs instead of cars. One day, Joe, Dave and Chris taught me how to play. I loved the spontaneous creativity of it so much that I then taught the game to the rest of the boomerang world, by running G-L-O-R-P at the National and the International tournaments and every other tournament I ever went to. Throwers saw the rad,



Wilson Larrance does a "Flamingo" during the Glorp National Championships in Vermont.

creative elements and enjoyed playing.

Broadly defined, the significant essence of GLORP, as a game and event, is that it allows complete creativity. It also was one of the first head-to-head games. With GLORP, the dominator can do any throw or catch that the throwers imagination can think up, and that is the magic. Really

amazing catches

have been done. Really hard catches such as foot hacky to knee hacky to fist hacky to head hacky to one-handed, or foot hacky to hand-plant head catch, or two feet on the ground Pink Flamingo; and really simple, beautiful catches such as over the head behind the back, and two feet on the ground one-handed clean. Sometimes you see flowing combinations, or graceful spinning catches, or gutsy flipping snags! And when the game narrows down to the last couple of "in the grove" throwers, who are sending catches back and forth without dropping, and the expected apex of catch difficulty is surpassed, then you see true spontaneous, creative radness, that's GLORP.



MTA – Competitive guide for new throwers - some serious and some not so serious do's and don'ts of competition MTA throwing.

## Do's-

1. Practice and know all your MTAs BEFORE going to competition.
2. Use the allotted warm-up time to make sure the MTA you have chosen to throw doesn't carry too much due to wind conditions.
3. Also pick and practice a couple throws with a lighter wind and a heavier wind MTA for standby just in case the wind conditions change just before your turn.
4. Attempt to throw in the "pocket"- Not too hard not too light with just the right spin for the throw. If you can get enough spin for a hard throw, go for it.
5. Move to the place in the circle that gives you the best opportunity for a long run and catch regardless of where the timers are standing.
6. Check the wind just before your throw and move accordingly.
7. Ask for a spotter if there is ANY question of needing one.
8. Encourage your competition.
9. Be flexible with your MTA selection.
10. Watch the MTA all the way into your hands.
11. Watch the competitor who throws before you to ascertain upper level wind direction.
12. Throw at an aiming point (cloud, tree in the distance, etc..)
13. Label your boomerangs. There are plenty of stories out there to back this one. Ask Gary B or Steve K.

## Don'ts-

1. Get attached to any one MTA unless it is your only one.
2. Attempt to get a longer time by attempting to jump in an MTA slowly drifting out of the circle. (unless you already have 3 really good throws with catches)
3. Be like Chet Snouffer and milk your MTAs so long that the back of your hand is actually on the ground. Remember only catches count.
4. Throw an MTA in competition you just bought that day from someone unless you didn't have one before the competition at all.

5. Be afraid to ask the timers and spotters where your boomerang is if you loose it in the clouds.
6. Call your boomerangs bad names using foul language. They don't like it and will bite you back with a death spiral or just fly away on a thermal to MTA heaven.
7. Attempt to change the tune of the MTA after warm up. If you have backups move to them.
8. Changing tuning during an event is bad for confidence and potentially disastrous.
9. Remember 3 short times beat a round with no catches.
10. Stall for minutes waiting for "the window" to throw by tying your shoes 5 times when the wind is obviously not subsiding.
11. Assume that the Jedi Mind Trick will keep your boomerang in the circle when you see every one else getting blown out.
12. Bend some one else's MTA when they let you "see" it, especially before an event. You might tune it for them and give them a 50 something throw for supercatch with a boomerang that typically goes 30 seconds at a nationals in Houston (uh maybe not so subtle)



Delaney Mohr throwing Aussie Round at the 2004 Nationals.



# here & there

SNAPSHOTS FROM AROUND THE  
**BOOMERANG**  
COMMUNITY



John Flynn and the boomerang he used to tie the World Record at 96.



The back to the record setting boomerang.



Gel teaching at the beach.



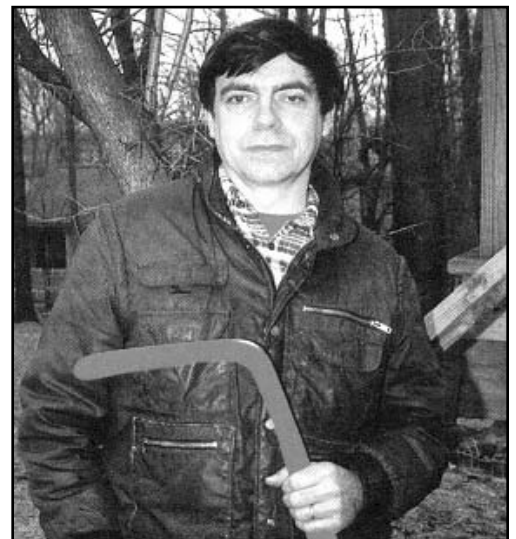
Stephanie, Cookie and Betsylew.



Gel in his prime.



More Sprinklerhead at the '05 Nationals.



Ted Bailey



## Pat...*(continued from page 15)*

I would effectively have an infinite supply of boomerangs.

All I needed was some wood to get started. I found some 8mm 6 ply Baltic Birch at a local lumber store. The guy there gave me a sheet and said if it worked for me, he'd sell me the rest. He even cut it in half so it would fit in my car. I traced out about a dozen Hawes traditional and started carving, painting, testing, etc. Soon I bought the Michael Siems book and started working on those designs. Then came some Finnish 5mm ply and I was making Heikki's Hunter and Windgods.

I bought several boomerangs from different makers around the country. These booms were like textbooks to me. From these I learned about shaping, making air foils, undercutting, weighting, and finishing. It's amazing how each maker creates their own distinctive and unique boomerang. I also bought all the books I could find and hunted down copies of all the boom articles in the bibliographies in the backs of those books.

After about a year of making plywood booms, I started doing more complicated stuff. My skills and confidence were finally developed enough to do lap joints and strip laminated booms. Both of these methods produce elegant booms, but should only be pursued for the pleasure of the journey. An elegant boomerang can enhance the throwing experience, but they don't throw any better than a good plywood boom and certainly don't perform technically as well as composite booms. But, there is nothing like throwing a boomerang made from gorgeous woods on a beautiful afternoon.

I've never been much of a competitive boomerang thrower. I'm a contemplative thrower and more of

a boomerang evangelist. Boomerangs have allowed me to do some fun stuff. Over the last decade I've been on the front page of the Tyler news paper, been inter-

I could make boomerangs for the market. It didn't take long before trying to make a product for profit sucked all the fun right out of making boomerangs at all. Then too, I felt I

## **I'm a contemplative thrower and more of a boomerang evangelist.**

viewed on live radio, and this summer had my first TV interview. How many people actually get to do a live throwing demo on radio? It was a hoot. The local library has allowed me to fill their display cases with booms for two months, three different times and I usually do a couple of talks/demos for after school groups during the summer.

My boom shop has been closed the last few years. I've made a few LD booms for the Shoot Outs in Houston, but that's about all. For a while there I let my ego get in the way and thought

needed to make even more complicated booms and was getting too critical of fit and finish. It simply wasn't fun any more. Some people can perform on demand, but I've always acted from inspiration. Making boomerangs is a magical creative process for me and these days I'm piddling with other things while that magic refills in my soul. There's nothing like a little throwing with friends to help the inspiration. I just had a great time down in Houston for this year's Shoot Out. Maybe I should start cleaning out the shop.

**-end**



Pat comes from a long line of throwers see inset photo of Grampa Steigman, note the resemblance.

**DH:** (Interviewer's note: When I asked Steve these last two questions, his response was to address them together, rather than separately. I really like what he says here.)

**DH:** "What can the USBA do better to meet the needs of its members, both the competitive and non-competitive?"

**DH:** was; "What can USBA members, both the competitive and the non- competitive, do to help the USBA meet its goals and challenges?"

**Stevie:** The USBA has a diverse membership, present, past and future. The diversity of the membership reflects the diversity of passions that are aroused by the boomerang. Different people love boomerangs for different reasons.

Personally, I love the beauty of the boomerang in flight, arc and pattern described, blurred flutter of wings bursting into rotating life, instant dormancy on perfect catch, and hurled forth yet again. I am fascinated by the ability to make the boomerang fly in different ways depending on the throw, the wind, or the tune. I love to challenge myself to perform, and the competition aspect of boomerangs has been a wonderful experience for me.

Comp throwers have been the mainstay of the USBA boards, and most of the board agenda items have been comp oriented. It follows that comp throwers know what they want the USBA to provide, and towards that goal, have organized tournament standards, insurance, ratings, and team selections, etc.

Other people love other aspects of boomerangs. I think there are many people who love the flight of boomerangs like I do, but do not want to have anything to do with

competition. They love booms, but don't like competition. I guess my question to the "non-comp" community would be, "What do you want the USBA to do for you?"

Honestly, I have never heard exactly what it is that USBA is not providing to those outside the comp world.

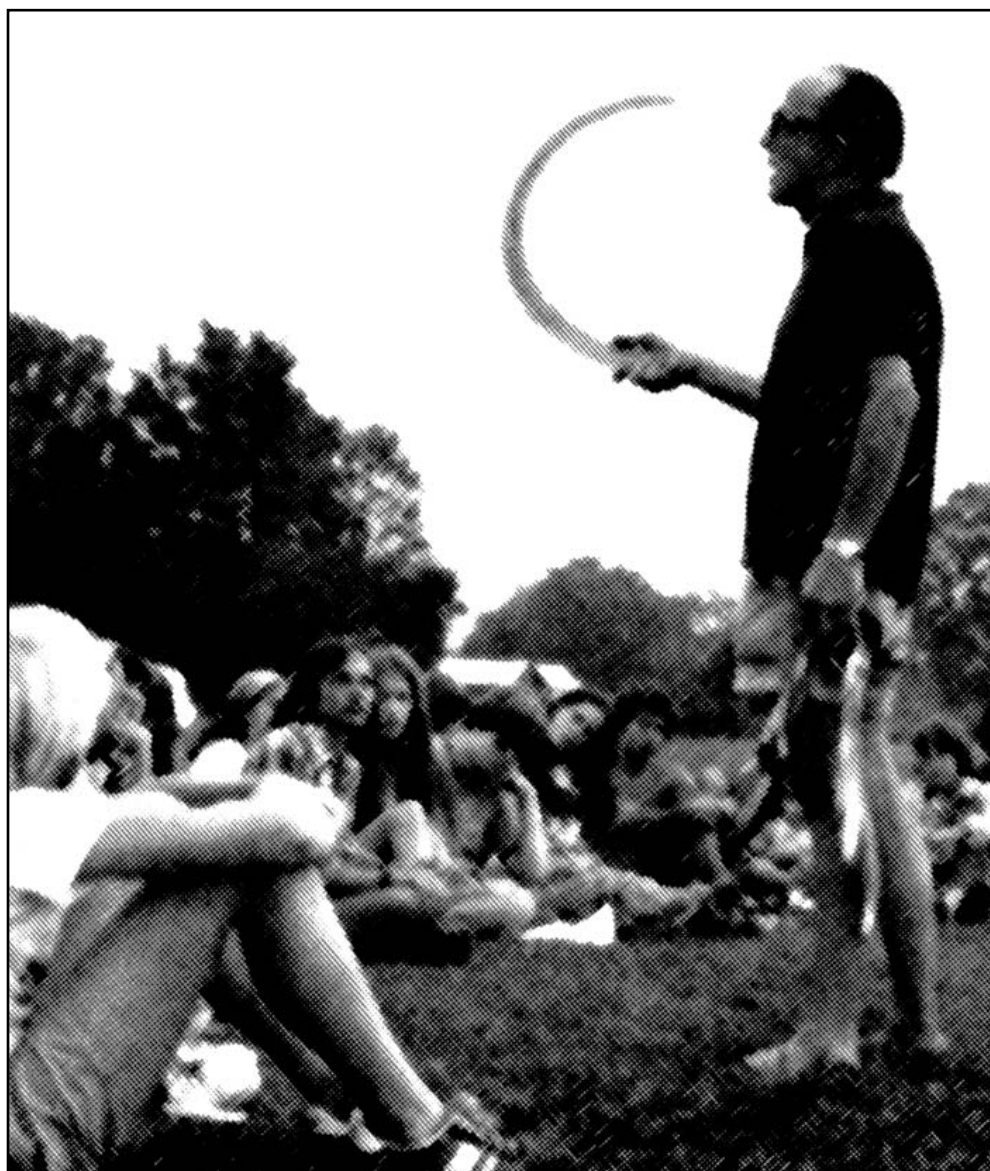
I would love to see a USBA board that more broadly represents others, besides comp throwers, but very, very few non-comp members ever seem to run, or even be interested in running for the board.

Hopefully that will soon change.

**-end**

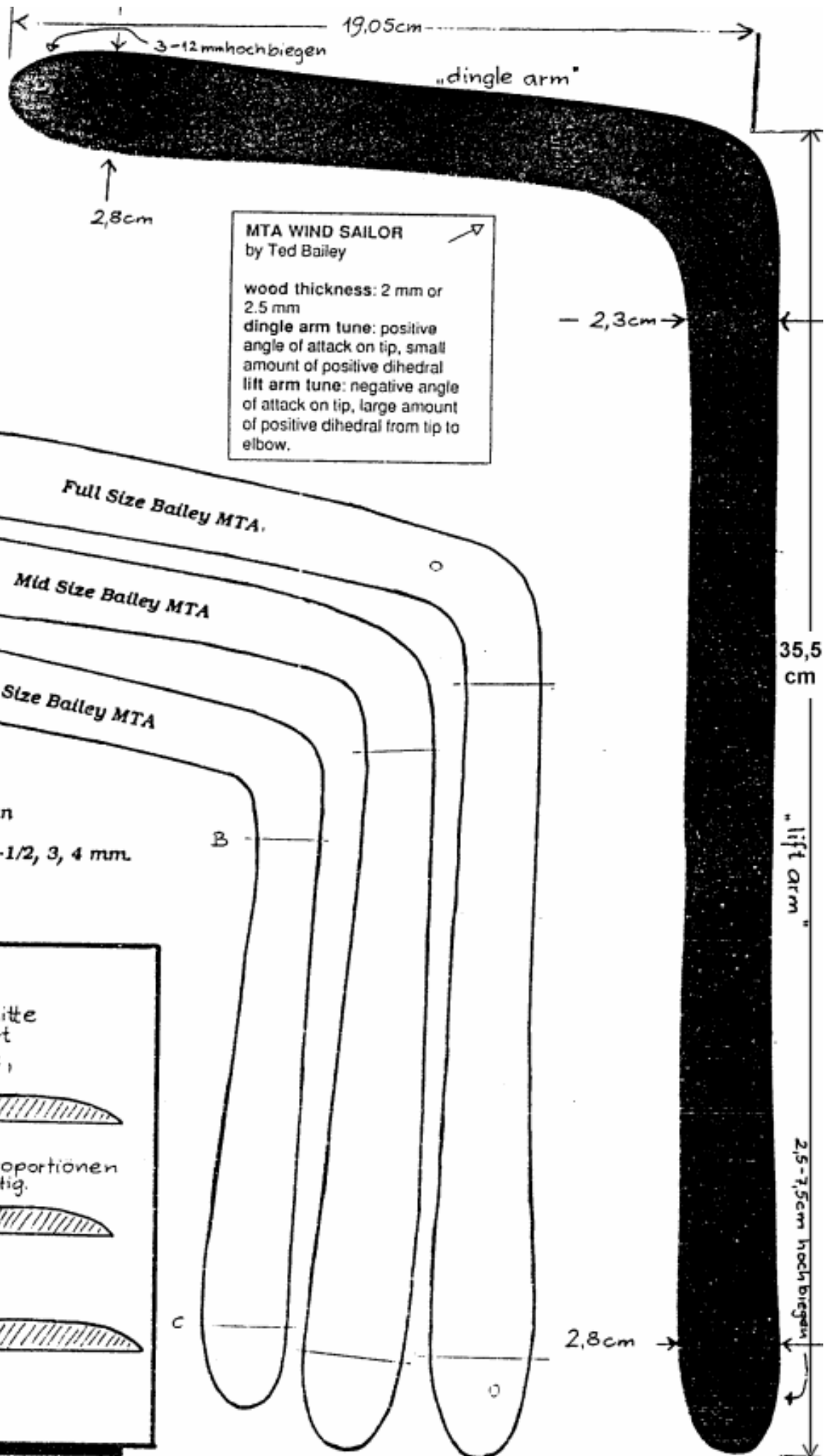
the early 1900's (circa 1920 to 1930). Colonel Garrish did well for himself in Australian real estate (he was originally from Oregon but moved to Australia). Ben knew of the Colonel's love of boomerangs and he contacted Marjorie seeking sponsorship for this international competition. She gladly paid the way for 16 American throwers to travel to Australia for this landmark competition. The U.S. would go on to win this legendary match bringing home the first ever Boomerang Cup and putting the Americans permanently on the map as serious boomerang throwers.

**-end**



Ben Ruhe instructing at one of the early workshops at the Smithsonian.

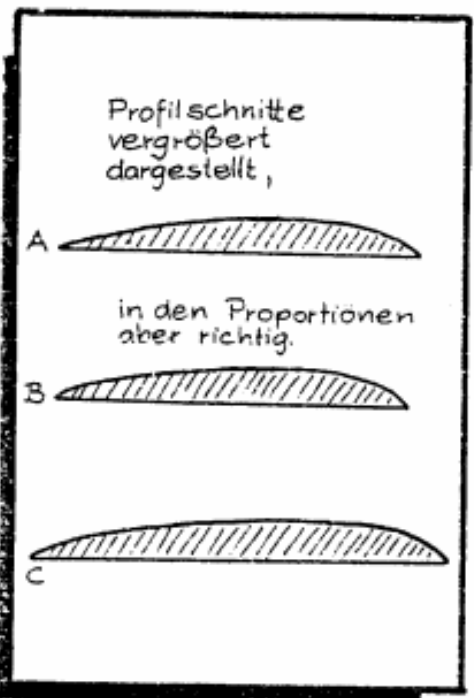


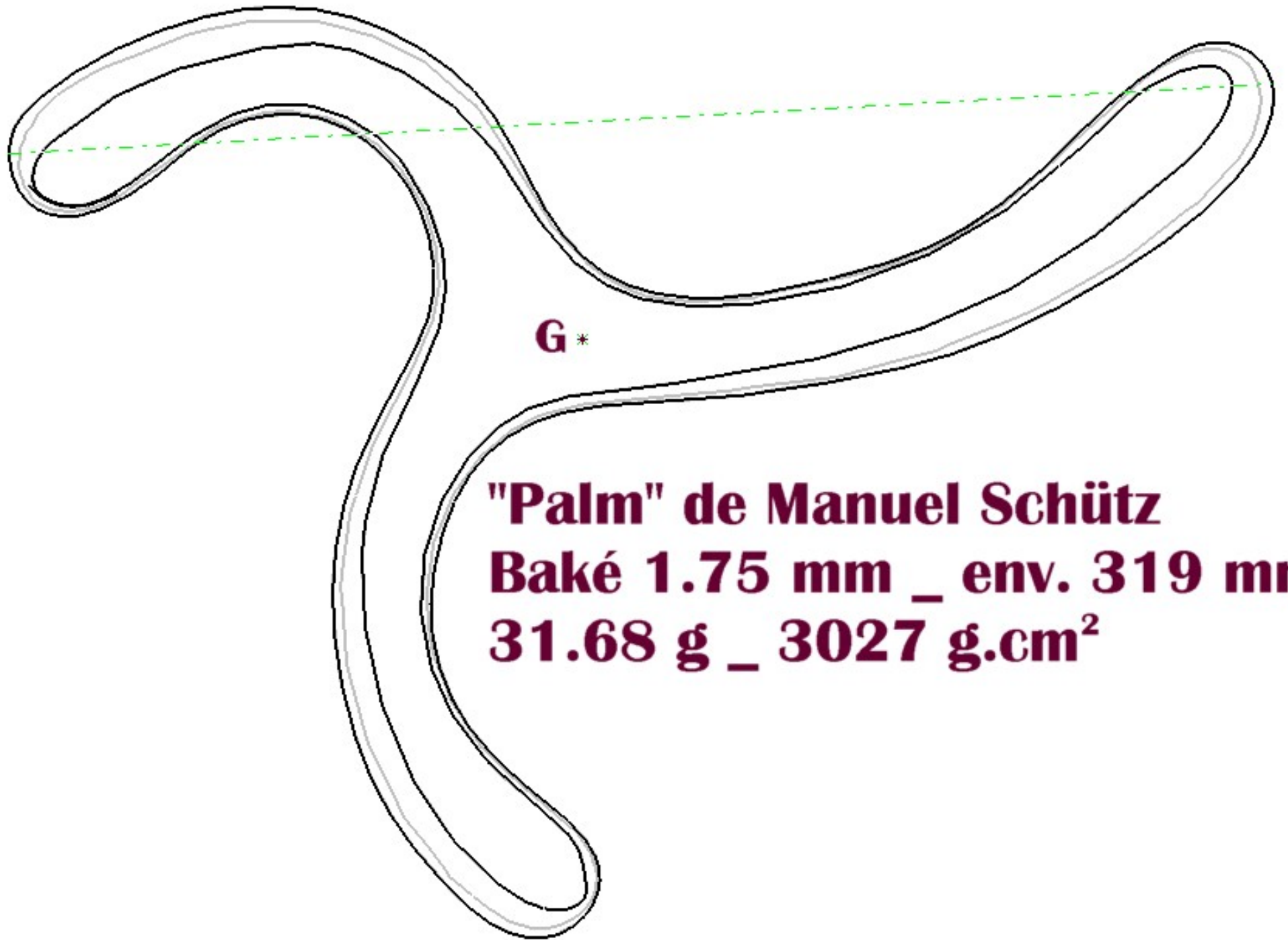


**MTA WIND SAILOR**  
 by Ted Bailey

wood thickness: 2 mm or 2.5 mm  
 dingle arm tune: positive angle of attack on tip, small amount of positive dihedral  
 lift arm tune: negative angle of attack on tip, large amount of positive dihedral from tip to elbow.

**Bailey MTA Plan**  
 Maßstab 1:2  
 Holzstärke: 2, 2-1/2, 3, 4 mm.





**G\***

**"Palm" de Manuel Schütz**  
**Baké 1.75 mm \_ env. 319 mm**  
**31.68 g \_ 3027 g.cm<sup>2</sup>**



# Flying Frogs

These two plan sets were sent by Tom Conally of Flying Frog Boomerangs. Tom recently announced that he will be closing his boomerang shop because they moved into a smaller home with no room for a boomshop. These two plans were new in 2005 and they may be the last designs we see from Tom for some time.

[www.theboomerangman.com](http://www.theboomerangman.com)



## THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A BOOK OF THIS QUALITY

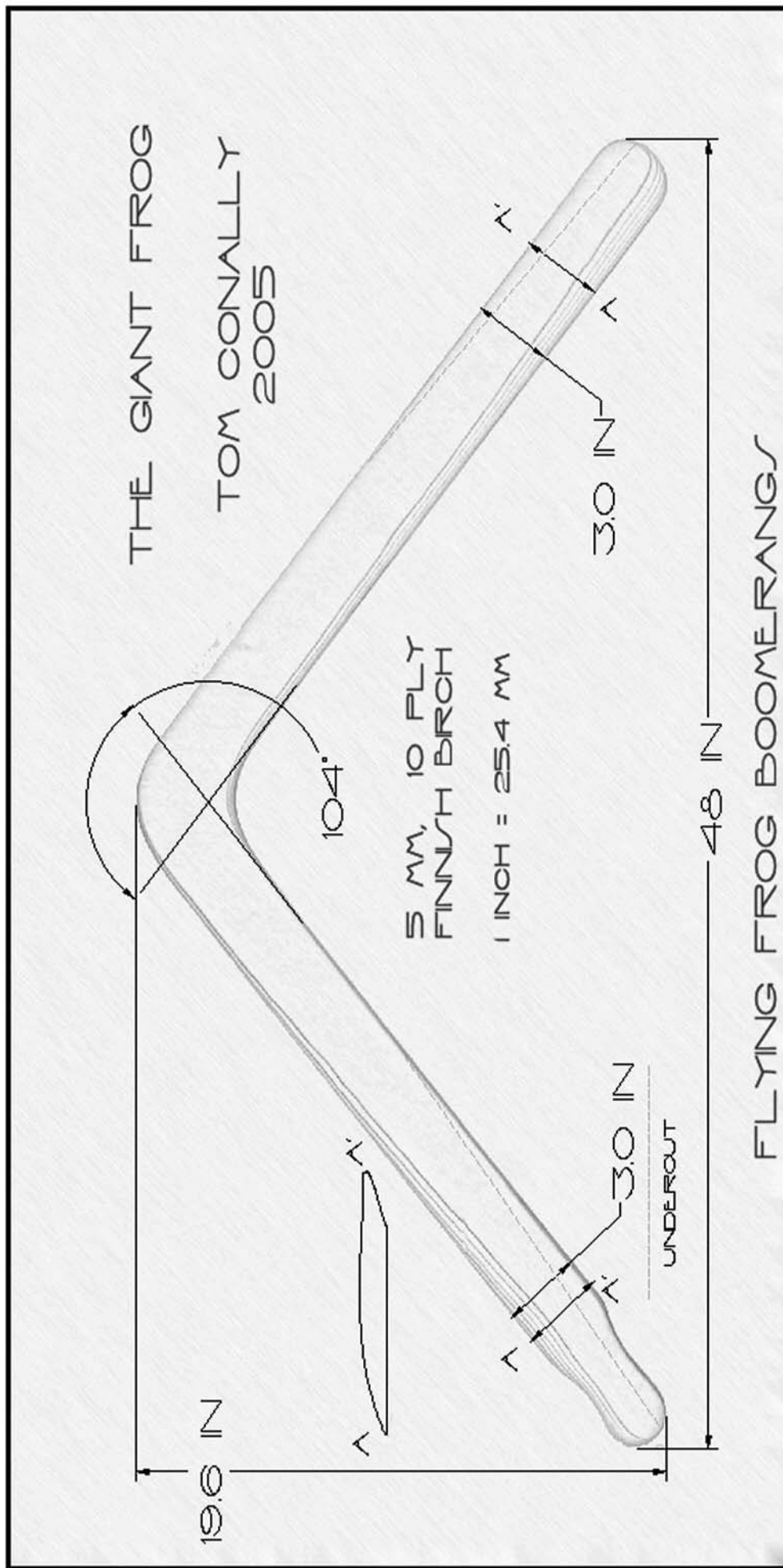
covering the contest-side of boomerangs. Unfortunately, very few throwers know of this book. Because the text is in French and he felt that non-french readers would not buy it, the publisher, LMI/FOX, never promoted the book. It's almost like being at the WBC '04.

The book is 150 pages of throwers from many nations, competing at the WBC 2004, Charleville-Mezieres, France. Full-Color Sharp/clear Photos by Christophe Dautriche

Not only will you see World Record Distance holder Manu Schutz, but also, Eric Darnell, Roger Perry, Step Margurite, Doug Dufrene, Barnaby Ruhe, Jason Smucker, Mark Weary, Betsylew Miale-Gix, and many others, Brazelton, Bower, Kavanaugh.

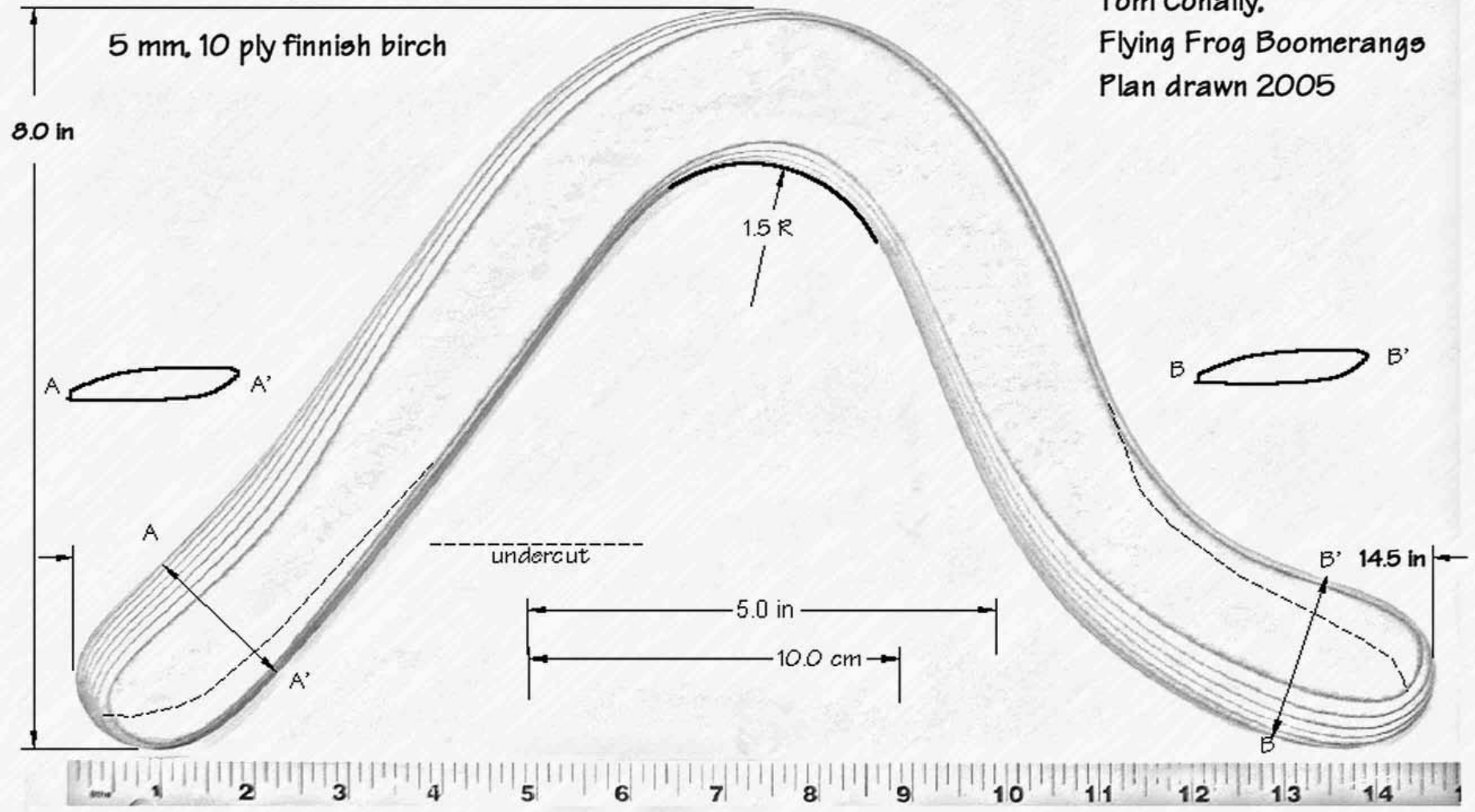
Examine throwing styles, spy on rans (you'll see how a thrower has modified his rang at the very moment of competition) Photographs are art-book quality.

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# The Lazy Frog

Tom Conally,  
Flying Frog Boomerangs  
Plan drawn 2005





## USBA Membership Information

USBA Membership benefits:

- MHR Newsletter subscription
- Access to the USBA info web group for USBA related discussions.
- Discounts at Anderson International Trading Co.
- Participation in all USBA tournaments and events

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Morri Mohr  
Mohr41@yahoo.com

Publishing Director:  
Clay Dawson  
clayton.dawson@  
honeywell.com

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August 1 for the Summer issue;  
October 1 for the Fall issue;  
December 1 for the Winter issue.

## USBA INFORMATION

The USBA is a non-profit  
volunteer organization.

Our mission is to promote the  
sport, craft, history and  
science of boomerangs in  
the United States.

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betwil@att.net

## Letter From the Editor:

Dear USBA Members,

I would like to take a moment to officially introduce myself and the new MHR editorial staff.

My Name is Morri Mohr and along with John Villagrana and Kris Kemp, we will be responsible for the design, content and production of future issues of the MHR.

I want to apologize for the lack of MHR production since last Summer. This past year has been a rough one with family deaths, and workload increases, all my extra time was gone! And as each month went by I would attempt to work on the MHR but something always came up to distract me.

If we fast forward to January of this year I was reorganizing things and making a real effort to start MHR production again. But this time I suffered a personal set-back in the form of an acute heart attack. I am completely fine now as my particular affliction was due to a rapidly forming blood clot in my LAD artery (the main artery in the front of the heart), which if not treated within a very short time is not survivable.

Those of you in which I have met know that I was over-weight by about 100 lbs. I could still move well for someone as heavy as I was which in part lead to my type of heart attack. But without going into all the details, simply put I ate bad food which lead to high cholesterol and didn't have a "regular" exercise routine.

The reason I'm sharing all this is twofold. First, I want any of you who are in a similar situation as I

was to use me as an example and not wait to until something like this happens before you make some lifestyle changes. Because, trust me NOTHING tastes that good! And secondly, I want to convey the MHR is more than a one man or even a three man job. I estimate that each issue takes roughly 40 to 60 hours from start to finish. So to help insure we do not have any lapses in production like we had recently. I want to solicit all of your help. For starters we can all submit something about your boomerang experience, a cool photo, a quick personal note about a great throwing day or a boomerang plan (get the idea). And all tournament directors need to send me some pictures and a brief outline of your event (notice the lack of regional tournament coverage in this issue), and I will include your tournament in the next MHR (my email address is on the previous page). Simply put, John, Kris and I the need the help of the boomerang community to make the MHR well rounded and informative for all of the USBA members, not just the competitors.

Having said all that, I'm personally excited about this issue and the upcoming issues with John and Kris. We live a short distance from each other and share the love of boomerangs in a diverse but complementary manner. We sponsored our first beach tournament together this year and hope to do so annually.

In upcoming issues we want to include a "letters to the editors" section. So please let us know what you think. Our objective is to produce a newsletter that appeals to the entire USBA community. We will gladly take any complements but we are also open to constructive criticism as well.

## Next Issue:

Due by the end of September '06

...Coverage of the WBC in Japan

...U.S. Exposition and National Championships.

...A comprehensive look into the "Time-line" of boomerang throwing in the U.S.A.

...Another great interview by Dave Hughes.

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