

# Many Happy Returns

The Official Newsletter of the United States Boomerang Association  
No. 102 Fall 2011



dave hirsch photo

**Tournament scores and stories  
begin on pg. 6**

## USBA INFORMATION

*The USBA is a non-profit, volunteer organization. Our mission is to promote the sport, craft and science of boomerangs in the United States. Contact the USBA through a member of the Board of Directors, or by joining our Yahoo group:*

### USBA\_info

#### Board of Directors

<b>President – David Hirsch</b>	<b>duckhead@airmail.net</b>
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**Send commentary, photos, articles, tournament results, news items to MHR Editor, Bob Foresi: Raforesiassoc@verizon.net**  
**The MHR NEEDS YOU TO CONTRIBUTE MATERIAL TO KEEP IT THE TOP NEWSLETTER AROUND!**

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#### **JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP**

**USBA Membership, 3351 236<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Brier, WA 98036**

#### **USBA MEMBERSHIP INFO**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Membership Type**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Electronic \$15.00**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **E Plus \$ 20.00**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Family \$ 35.00**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Internat'l \$ 25.00**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Lifetime \$ 250.00**

\_\_\_\_\_ **New** \_\_\_\_\_ **Renewal**

**Please note this is an ANNUAL membership organization. All members without a lifetime membership expire on December 31 of each calendar year. Your membership will be due for renewal at end of 2011. THIS INCLUDES ALL DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS.**

**Don't let your membership in the USA Boomerang Movement Lapse!**

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## **ATTENTION USBA MEMBERS**

*Good day everyone. USBA President Dave Hirsch asked us to write with ideas to take the USBA from its current 90+ members back to the glory days of over 400 and beyond! To do this we have to build from the bottom up. I think it would be a great first step for the organization to put together a local club promotional packet for distribution to all active members. We could then follow up with a contest between members. Winners would be chosen based on doing teaching/demonstration events and getting out thereafter to host a series of follow up throwing sessions in the community during the throwing season (loosely May – September in most parts of the country). Here are some of my thoughts of what we would include in this packet:*

- 1. The USBA brochures;*
- 2. How to run a teaching and demonstration outline.*
- 3. The USBA Super Novice (ie beginner) tournament format rules;*
- 4. Plans for a cut out boom and at least one basic beginner boom with a how to make it from someone like Chet or Gary or Doug or the Bowers or Kendall whomever;*
- 5. A sample press release to the local paper announcing the demonstration and community/club throwing schedule thereafter;*
- 6. Coupons for money off boomerangs from whatever boom sellers are willing to participate in the program to hand out to those who try throwing to encourage folks to buy booms.*

*Two questions to you all – who would participate if we do this, and what else would you include in the packet!*

*Betsylew Miale-Gix, USBA Treasurer*

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## **How Far Would You Go for a Favorite Boomerang ??**

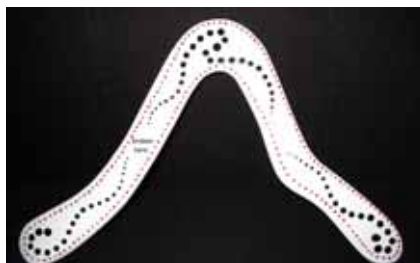
*by Art Rentz*

*I have a 12" Boomerang Fever shape I made from Home Depot ¼" 5-ply, that has traveled to Europe and the islands of the Caribbean with me on vacation. I've recorded the dates and places it's been thrown on the back.*

*While on a cruise to Nassau in the Bahamas, I decided to take my 'World Traveler' to Cable Beach for an outing. It was breezy as you'd expect on the island, but not too bad. My wife and I took the bus to the end of the line and walked over to a deserted stretch of nice, white sandy beach. The beach wasn't very deep, maybe 25 yards to the water's edge. I was throwing towards the road, and the wind should have brought the boom back along the length of the beach to me. Yep, you guessed it, the wind shifted, and the boom went past me and dropped at the water's edge. 'No problem' I thought, a quick dash to pick it up – oops, a wave grabbed it and took it out of reach..... I'm fully dressed, not expecting to get into the water, but I can't let that boom get away. The wave brings it back, and I run into the water to get it. While reaching down for it, another wave came in behind me, and the backwash pulled my feet right out from under me. So now I'm face down in the surf. I scrambled up and spotted the boom only a step away.*

*I did retrieve the boom, and spent the next half-hour wringing the water out of my clothes, followed by an uncomfortable ride back in the bus and a long walk to the ship, but I still have my favorite 'World Traveler', none the worse for wear.*

*I know someone is going to claim they had to jump into a gorilla's pen to retrieve a favorite boom. Well, if that's what it takes, do it. My wife says I'm an old fool to go into the water after a piece of wood. It just shows how much she knows about a boy and his toys.*



## **Collectables just want to be thrown**

*It can be a dilemma whether to risk throwing valuable collectable booms or not. Vermonter John Flynn relates an experience where collectable boomerangs sitting in a closet literally jumped off the shelves to be thrown, and wouldn't take no for an answer.*

***My throwing sessions are usually somewhat planned in advance; there's a certain weather/wind and some booms I want to throw. Recently though I had an unplanned and interesting weekend session. It started with The Boxes, four plastic bins that contain nearly 30 years of boomerangs, t-shirts, and other boomerang-related "stuff". When I grabbed the top t-shirt bin to move it, the bottom snagged the cover of the second bin that was filled with booms and pulled it over until I stopped the fall with my hip, but a few booms fell out. Surveying the eclectic mess on the floor, and narrowly averted huge mess, it seemed obvious that the only logical action before repacking the entire bin ("as contents may shift in flight...") was to acknowledge these rogue escapees with a throw at Sachem Field. I also grabbed a Toucan-decorated rang, on loan from Eric Darnell, because it was one of the first rangs I recall seeing when I visited Eric's home in 1981, and I wanted to see it fly.***



**The 'escapees' pose for group photo**

*j.flynn*

**(Left Column, top-bottom): (1) Lorin Hawes large traditional with copper flashing glued on as weight, c.1968 and had never been thrown. This boomerang is featured in Hawes's book All About Boomerangs published in 1975; (2) Carl Naylor large hook, c.late 1970's. Judging by the dings and dents on the bottom of this boom, it must have been one of Carl's favorites for throwing in Brooklyn; (3) Michael Gel Girvin Rad German fast catch, c.1989, a boom I had never thrown in a serious manner; (4) Gel Bellen Jugglers. I used these booms to set the world Juggling record (136) in September 1990, the first to exceed 100 catches in a scheduled event. Alas, that record didn't hold up, but lasted long enough to gain mention in the Guinness Book of Records.**

**(Middle column, top-bottom): (5) Random triblader made by me in 1999 using an odd piece of scrap 10-ply 5mm, with a paint job to match; (6) Fridolin Frost made a series of beautiful veneer strip laminates in the late 1980's. This one is based on an Al Gerhards hook and has small brass weights; (7) Another JF boom inspired by scrap wood, this one from 1986.**

**(Right column, top-bottom): (8) Dennis Joyce traditional shape from the mid-1980s. Not many Dennis booms out there but my old teammate was nice enough to part with this one from the Old School; (9) Les and Arthur Janetzki "The Admiral", c.1978, a big omega with some fine Janetzki art detail; (10) Janetzki Skippy, c. late 1970's, signed PINTUBI on the back, indicating an earlier model, so I'm told, (11) Lesta Bertioia Toucan face decorated, c. late 1970's. I've seen many toucan-style rangs, but none earlier than this one and subtle shaping to lend authenticity to the simple decoration; (12) JF Black Diamond, a poly Aussie Round rang based on a wood model I'd used to score a perfect 80 (five 30m bulls-eyes) at the 1987 ITBC opening event in Amherst, MA. This poly boom (40-50m range) was made in 1988 and used to score 80 pts in Aussie Round at Test #2 of the June 1989 ITBC in Gaithersburg, MD.**

\* \* \*

**So, a lot of memories and history fell onto the floor that morning. The light wind at the field suited some rangs better than others, but the grass was soft and everything worked. The Frost hook had some trouble getting home as did the big Hawes and Naylor booms, but all were caught at least once, with the Hawes boom presenting an especially massive catching challenge. The Naylor boom spun slowly during its orbit, or appeared to due to its size, and the easiest, maybe only, catching method was one-handed. The Dennis boom: similar attentiveness required for fast-spinning tips, but not nearly as threatening as the Hawes. The 2 Bellens were missing their lead arm penny weights from the early 90's but still flew nicely as a matched set. Not surprisingly, the Janetzki's flew like butter, quiet and perfect, with the Skippy getting some bullseyes, as did the free-from shaped plywood boom (7). The Black Diamond showed flashes of its earlier dominance but it clearly prefers the steadier winds of Gaithersburg or other flatter locales. The Toucan boom had much more range than I expected, nearly 40m, with a low flight path that kicked up at the very end for a hovering backdoor catch when thrown 45 deg off the wind.**

**But the revelation of the day, by far, was the Rad German. While we now attach flaps and coins and bands, this boom, unadorned, is totally and perfectly geared for wind FC, with 21-23sec potential. Certainly a belated nod to the rad cleverness of Mike Gel for devising a boomerang for a need and without any design inhibition whatsoever. I'd seen him throw it in the 80's but had competed adequately with my own stuff, so never fully explored it until now. What a treat to discover a 20+ year old boomerang that I could have easily rolled out in Rome for Super Catch or Endurance Relay!!**

**One thing was for sure after the session: I won't be stuffing The Boxes back into the closet until the snow flies.**

*Note: To minimize possibility of breakage when throwing collectables, remember to throw on calm days, easy at first, and on soft grass. Avoid cold temperatures and check for warpage first. Negative warps can cause diving into the turf before the rang slows spin on return, and positive, upward warps can cause high flyers that come down just as fast.*

## **US Nationals at Canton, Ohio Aug. 4-7**



**Overall Winner Rad Richard**



**Harald Steck – 2<sup>nd</sup> overall**

**Richard Bower of Kenmore, WA topped a field of 44 to win his first Nationals title. The 2010 Rad Revolution squad member tied for 1<sup>st</sup> in Endurance , got 2<sup>nd</sup> in Accuracy 100, and tied for 3<sup>rd</sup> in TrickCatch/Doubling . Two-time US Nationals winner Harald Steck from New Jersey placed second. Rising star Takeshi Honda of Japan won the FastCatch and MTA events.**

*All tournament photos by Tom Brausch*



**Patrick Surdam of N.H. won Aussie Round (and got Rad points for tri-blader impression)**



**Takeshi Honda**



**Logan Broadbent, tied for 1st in Trick Catch/Doubling**

<u>Overall</u>	<u>Pts</u>
1)Rich. Bower	34.0
2)H.Steck	36.0
3)Dan Bower	43.0
4)S.Kavanaugh	45.5
4)T. Honda	45.5
6)Ty Beaujon	54.5
7)Mark Legg	64.0
8)Chet Snouffer	66.5
9)Will Gix	69.5
10)Pat Surdam	71.0

<u>MTA</u>	<u>Sec.</u>
1)T. Honda	119.68
2)Dan Bower	108.05
3)H. Steck	104.91
4)L.Broadbent	100.62
5)Ron Rupert	96.64
6) Will Gix	95.97
7)Rich. Bower	95.03
8)Adam Stankiewicz	93.98
9)Mark Legg	91.36
10)B. Miale-Gix	74.5

<u>Trick Catch</u>	<u>Pts.</u>
1)Logan Broadbent	94
1)Harald Steck	94
3)R. Bower	88
3)D. Bower	88
5)T. Honda	87
6)Mark Legg	80
7)Nick Citoli	79
8)Eduardo Mirties	77
9)Jason Smucker	75
10)Steve Kavanaugh	73
10)Ty Beaujon	73

<u>Fast Catch</u>	<u>Sec.</u>
1)T.Honda	19.25
2)S.Kavanaugh	20.0
3)D. Bower	21.84
4)Eduardo Mirties	21.9
5)B.Miale-Gix	22.41
6)Will Gix	22.54
7)George Essig	22.93
8)C. Snouffer	23.10
9)Chris Kalfa	23.85
10)Ty Beaujon	24.05



<u>Aussie Round</u>	<u>Pts.</u>
1)Pat Surdam	84
2)Harald Steck	82
3)Steve Kavanaugh	81
4)Ty Beaujon	79
5)Richard Bower	78
6)John Flynn	77
7)Dennis Joyce	73
8)Tim Howman	72
8)Dan Johnson	72
10)Chet Snouffer	67

<u>Endurance</u>	<u>Catches</u>
1)Richard Bower	58
1)H. Steck	58
3)Mark Legg	56
4)Pat Surdam	55
5)Will Gix	54
6)S. Kavanaugh	53
7)Ty Beaujon	51
8)Takeshi Honda	49
9)Chet Snouffer	48
10)Ricardo Marx	47

<u>Accuracy 100</u>	<u>Pts.</u>
1) Harald Steck	94
2)Rich. Bower	89
3)Mark Legg	88
4)S. Kavanaugh	87
5)Daniel Bower	85
6)Ty Beaujon	84
7)Chet Snouffer	83
7)Will Gix	83
9)Betsylew Miale-Gix	82
10)Laura Smucker	80
10)Dan Johnson	80
10)Pat Surdam	80

Complete scores at: [www.usba.org/scores/usba\\_ch\\_2011.xls](http://www.usba.org/scores/usba_ch_2011.xls)

Explanation of Events/Scores: Maximum Time Aloft (MTA) :combined flight time for best 3 of 5 throws with catch. Trick Catch: total points/100 for series of increasingly difficult catches. Fast Catch: time for making 5 throws and catches of 20m min. Aussie:total points/100 for 5 throws, combining distance, accuracy & catching. Endurance: no. of catches in 5 min., 20m range.Accuracy 100: points/100 for 10 throws, no catch. Complete rules at: [usba.org/Rules/index.html](http://usba.org/Rules/index.html)

## Aesthetics Competition

The Aesthetics Competition was very well represented. From Tourn. Director Gary Broadbent. Gary knows of what he speaks. Has more collectable booms in his house than most people have molecules (and a fine compound it is) : "I want to congratulate the winners of the Aesthetics Competition. In the Design Competition 1<sup>st</sup> place went to David Fantone. His four bladed strip laminates were AWESOME!!!! 2<sup>nd</sup> place went to Chris Kalfa and his artistic "Duck Boom".



3<sup>rd</sup> Place went to David Hirsch with his collapsible Century Plant Boomerang that was very innovative. The 2<sup>nd</sup> category was decoration. In 1<sup>st</sup> place was Moleman with an awesome quilt (opp. page) made from his old boom shirts over the past 20 years, made by his Mom. 2<sup>nd</sup> was Art Rentz with a set of 4 Boomerangs with incredible dot art painting. 3<sup>rd</sup> place went to Peter Hansch and class, out of New Jersey, with a class project dot painted boomerang that everyone contributed to.

The Craftsmanship Awards : 1<sup>st</sup> place was Kenny Barr with a beautiful Lap joint made of Bamboo, Mahogany, Oak and Tiger wood (pg.7). It was exquisite!!! Worthy of my wall!!!! (photo pg.7) 2<sup>nd</sup> place went to John Flynn and his usual exquisite crafted Cherry Lap joint. 3<sup>rd</sup> place went to Ben Dehner from Atchison, Kansas with his commemorative Walnut and Maple Strip Laminated Rusty Harding Hurricane Hook. What a Master!!!!

Congratulations to all the people who won, and to those that entered booms. It truly added to one of the most important parts of our wonderful sport!!!! Many Happy Returns.” Gary

**The Nationals Tournament was missing a familiar face, except in spirit for always. It was reported that Karen Jones, Stuart’s wife, sadly passed away August 28, 2011.**

**Stuart wanted to let everyone know that Karen enjoyed the country and the world knowing she had a boomerang family everywhere.**

**Richard Bower and brother Daniel have accounted for the past 3 US Nationals titles. The bros and Harald have accounted for the last 6 .**

**George Reitbauer of PA returned to the tourney scene after a 20+ year absence. A World Cup team member in 1984, his throwing skills can be overshadowed by his fine crafted boomerangs, 2nd to none.**

**Dennis “Juice” Joyce has thrown in every US Nationals, beginning 1981. He nailed down 7<sup>th</sup> place in the always prestigious Aussie Round event at this year’s Nationals tournament.**

**Gary Broadbent’s high energy level served him well for the role of T.D. Not for the faint of heart.**

**Thanks to Tom Brausch for the huge number of great photos taken. See USBA web site for more.**

## **Other Tournament Results**

**7/16/11 New Hampshire/Vermont Tournament – by John Flynn**

**Sunny skies and very light but shifting wind greeted 15 throwers at Sagem Field in Hanover/Lebanon, NH on July 16. Many of the usual Northeast throwers made it as well as Mark Legg from Ohio and Adam Ruhf, newly re-transplanted from the West Coast. Paul Gustafson snuck down from northern VT, and 9-year-old Bennett Sprague was the lone Junior competitor, and slowly gathering a cache of useful left-handed boomerangs that may serve him well someday soon. Larry and Peter Ruhf represented the other end of the spectrum, and Peter kindly shared a lefty Gel Sunshine with Bennett.**

**- Pat Surdam scored his first event victories in Accuracy with 85/100pts, nipping Peter Ruhf’s fine 82, and Australian Round 73/100, something of a mystery event with the ultra-calm conditions keeping the booms out of the accuracy circles time and again.**

**- MTA went big to Adam Ruhf with 117.60 seconds, nearly 30 seconds above Mark. The shifty currents confounded several, including the TD.**

**- Fast Catch was textbook Adam with a ridiculously safe 21-second round #1, putting him just behind Mark and MoleMan going into round #2, where he posted an 18.17. Only Mark challenged seriously, going just as fast, but one bobbled catch put him 2nd with 18.56. Two fine FC efforts – and, pardon the editorial comment, why is this event not in the World Team Cup anymore?? Endurance was a case of “could have” for several, including Adam, the winner with 56 catches in 5 minutes. Adam could have had more catches, and Mark, John, Mole, Rick Saldenberg, and Tyler Beaujon “could have” beaten 56 without much difficulty given the conditions, but it did not happen this day. (to pg.10)**





Moleman quilt made from collectable T-shirts

**Trick Catch Doubling** went easily to **Mark**, who took a perfect 50 into the **Doubling** round and finished with 87/100 points. The final event, counting for **Overall** honors, was **Sprinkler Head**. With the air dead still, throwers continually brought the booms back to the center point, creating maneuvering challenges and moments of mayhem, as boomerangs converged on hopeful catchers. **Adam** reached 10 points first, followed by **Rick**, then **Mark**. **Peter Ruhf** had an impressive 9 points for 4th and skillfully working the uncluttered LH flight path. 18-year-old **Adam Stankewicz** impressed with 7 points, as well as in MTA and other events.

Pizza, beverages, and awards followed in **Hanover**. All in all, a fine day of throwing. Thanks to those who could make it, and hopefully those that couldn't can do it next time!!

**Overall (7 events): Adam R. 17pts, Mark 21, John F. 31, Pat 34, MoleMan 36.5, Rick 43, Ty 46, Adam S. 52, Peter 62, Larry 63, Paul Sprague 75, George Flynn 81, Paul G 88.5, Bennett 94, Zach Pickett (first time) 95.5.**

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### **7/15-7/16/2011 - European Boomerang Championship – Bordeaux, France**

62 Throwers competed. Manuel Schutz of Switzerland won the overall, with a 1st in Endurance (62 catches), and 2nds in Accuracy 100 and TrickCatch. Congrats to USA's Steve Kavanaugh for 7th overall among some incredible international competition and tough winds! Takeshi Honda of Japan took 2nd overall, with 1st in FastCatch (19.72 sec) and TrickCatch (92). Other event winners were vet David Hesse (Switz) in Accuracy (71), Arnaud Tribillon (Fr) in MTA (55.26sec- 1 throw) and Alessandro Benedetti (It) in Aussie Round (71).

1)	<b>Manuel Schutz</b>	<b>Swi</b>	9)	<b>Nicolas Rouland</b>	<b>Fra</b>
2)	<b>Takeshi Honda</b>	<b>Jap</b>	10)	<b>Alex Heckner</b>	<b>Ger</b>
3)	<b>Arnaud Tribillon</b>	<b>Fra</b>	11)	<b>Sebastien Guiheux</b>	<b>Fra</b>
4)	<b>Stephan Spirgi</b>	<b>Swi</b>	12)	<b>Loofy Boiteux</b>	<b>Fra</b>
5)	<b>Lars Overzee</b>	<b>Net</b>	13)	<b>Yves Caze</b>	<b>Fra</b>
6)	<b>Alessandro Benedetti</b>	<b>Ita</b>	14)	<b>Andrea Sgattoni</b>	<b>Ita</b>
7)	<b>Steve Kavanaugh</b>	<b>Usa</b>	15)	<b>Jerome Royo</b>	<b>Fra</b>
8)	<b>Fridolin Frost</b>	<b>Ger</b>	16)	<b>Laurent Blanchard</b>	<b>Fra</b>

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### **7/29-7/31/2011 – 32nd Annual Free Throwers Fling – Delaware, Ohio**

by Chet Snouffer 23 throwers came from Georgia, Texas, Massachusetts, Illinois, Saint Louis, and even the **Buckeye State** to the 32nd annual Free Throwers Fling. **Mark Legg** stormed out of the gate, winning the first two events, only to run into freaky light and variable winds which dumped his Enduro rangs, crashing him to 18th in the event. He roared back in every event left, making off with the most hardware, but it was **Dan Johnson** and his consistently excellent throwing that won the day. **Logan Broadbent** was on fire as well, but he and **DJ** and **Chet the Jet** (who was lingering in third) all threw in the 50's in **Trick Catch**, and then **Logan** won **Aussie** and **MTA** to make a strong run at **Dan Johnson**, who never folded and won the overall. **Top 5 were Dan Johnson, Logan Broadbent, Mark Legg, Chet Snouffer and Chicago Bob**. Temps topped out at 88 degrees, winds maxed out at 10! The average wind speed was under 5 mph all day, but the shifts and thermals made it trickier than you'd think.

Complete results at: [www.leadingedgeboomerangs.com](http://www.leadingedgeboomerangs.com)

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### **9/25/2011 – 9th Annual Seattle Fall Boomerang Tournament – Edmonds, WA**

by Betsylew Miale-Gix **Tourney day dawned** with an ominous forecast for big winds and rain – yet 14 throwers ventured forth to do battle at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Seattle Fall Boomerang Tournament in Edmonds, Washington on September 25, 2011. The **Seattle Times** newspaper piece brought out a couple dozen hardy spectators, who were entertained by **Will Herlan**. **Brian Wisner** brought down three new throwers from **WWU**: **Paige, Lizzy and Alex**. They declined to participate in the formal festivities but proved a spirited cheering section. **Michael Gel** and son **Isaac** came out with a family of friends to watch and play. Running a hurry up style tourney for the first 5 events due to **Matt Golenor's** need to leave before 1 PM, tourney director **Betsylew Miale-Gix** led everyone through some great throwing in challenging conditions. While the winds were as advertised, the rain was largely absent, with only a couple squalls blowing through to wet our whistles. There were some outstanding performances with **Matt** throwing a remarkable 19.46 to win FC, **Daniel** throwing over 82 seconds in MTA, **Richard** throwing down a 48 in Endurance and an 83 in Accuracy for first places, and **Daniel** taking Aussie with a 68, then tying **James Stickney** for 1<sup>st</sup> in TC/D with a 74. **Overall Order of finish was 1. Daniel Bower, 2. James Stickney, 3. Richard Bower, 4. Steve Kavanaugh, 5. Takeshi Honda, 6. Matt Golenor, 7. William Gix, 8. Brian Wisner, 9. Nick Citoli, 10. Carl, 11. Neethi Nagarajan, 12. Tyler Schortzman 13. Eric, and 14. Suzanne Ragan-Lentz.**

Following the USBA tournament **Michael GEL Girvin** ran a short 3 event Novice tournament for his newly boom happy friends, **Isaac and the WWU women**. They were assisted by **Carl and Stevie K.** to a totally rad time! Can't wait for next year's Seattle tournament installments – **you all come out and play with us!**

## John Wray and the NRBs

by Bob Foresi

The boomerang world lost another great friend from Britain. It has been reported that John Wray of Surrey, England passed away in March of 2011. His name may not be as familiar as Herb Smith or Mick Hanson or John Jordan, but his annual workshop and throw at an ethnographic museum near London was similar to the Smithsonian fling, in terms of spreading the word about boomerangs in Europe. He was very active from the late 1970s to early 90s. John was a charter member of the British Boomerang Society.

John Wray's particular area of interest was the same as mine: throw sticks. We tracked each other down by snail mail (when it was just called 'mail'), and the next year 12 letters crossed the Atlantic. What was the hot topic? Airfoils, specifically how to carve sticks so that they flew in a straight line, something which is usually regarded as more difficult to achieve than making sticks return. John always referred to them as nrb's, for 'non-returning boomerangs'. Neither of us called them 'kylies', though John was very interested in replicating Australian aboriginal sticks, as well as Navajo, Hopi and Egyptian ones. We were both disciples of Errett Callahan, who wrote a college thesis on nrb's, the summary of which forms a chapter in Ben Ruhe's book *Many Happy Returns – The Art and Sport of Boomeranging*. Errett had been happy to hand over copies of his thesis and move on to anthropological pursuits less mind-boggling.

The perfect airfoil we searched for is still out there. We found what worked at the time, which might not be what worked 2 months later. We got closer to the solution, that's all. Such is the lot of one who throws nrb's, I guess. John and I traded descriptions & photos of nrb's and the sticks themselves. Most importantly, we traded ideas.

What we exchanged hardly at all was personal info. It might have been a unique relationship, or just an extreme case of a common one among boomerangers. I know John was a teacher on some level by profession, and he was frequently taking trips to Spain to practice culinary arts. But I never actually spoke to John, and that to this day I don't know how old John was, or even what he looked like. That makes for a bit of regret now, looking back, and my fault more than his no doubt. But when first informed of his passing, I just found myself feeling sad for those who never met him.

### Throw sticks by John Wray, mid 1980s

Top: Katyaki, origin uncertain

Middle: 'ideal' shape, after Errett Callahan

Bot.: 'Rabbit Stick', 120m range



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### Upcoming Events:

11-11 to 11-13-2011

USBA Team Trials, Atlanta, GA

10-17 to 10-28-2012

World Boomerang Championships  
Sao Paulo, Brazil

### Next Issue of MHR :

Preview of 2012 World Cup in Brazil

Dave Hirsch's Column "Git it Out There" Returns, with 2011 NALDO Results

First 100 Yd. Distance Throw by Herb Smith – revisited 40 years later

Plus More! Don't Miss It !!



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**mark legg at u.s. nationals**  
**(tom brausch photo)**