

Many Happy Returns

The Official Newsletter of the United States Boomerang Association



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MHR is back!

A letter from the USBA President

Fellow boomers,

Thank you for your continued support of the [United States Boomerang Association](#). This community brings an incredible amount of joy and fulfillment to so many across the U.S. and abroad. In an effort to stay connected to, and newly engage with, more boomerang enthusiasts, we are pleased to reintroduce a long-lost tradition of our sport, the *Many Happy Returns* newsletter (MHR)! Prior to the advent of social media, this newsletter was the gold standard for all things boomerang and boomerang-related news coverage. You could find unique stories, one-on-one interviews, boom design plans, tournament recaps, hard-hitting investigations (ok, that last one may be an exaggeration) and more!

If you enjoy the newsletter and are excited to see its return, you have one couple to thank, Dean and Shelly Helfer of Channel Craft toys. For many years Dean and Shelly Helfer have been ardent supporters of the sport of boomerangs and the USBA. Every boomerang that Channel Craft ships out includes information about the USBA and a link to our webpage.

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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. Your input is welcome. You can contact the USBA through a member of the board of directors, listed below.

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logan@usba.org

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A letter from the USBA President

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Several weeks ago, Dean and Shelly met with several board members (Tom Luczycki, Jason Smucker, and Logan Broadbent) and explained the role MHR played in his boomerang career. While social media had allowed the sport to reach a wider audience, Dean felt that it didn't fill the gap left by the absence of MHR. Social media, while useful, only captured snapshots of our community that could easily be buried in the mix. Many Happy Returns was something you could count on to see what was happening in the boomerang community all in one place. Its regular installments made it something that all 'rangers anticipated and looked forward to. The Helfer's extended a generous offer: If the USBA could revive and revitalize Many Happy Returns they would sponsor the U.S. National Boomerang Championship. Your USBA board agreed unanimously.

We intend to release a new MHR each quarter. If you would like to contribute to the publication, please reach out to any member of the USBA board to submit your requests. This is a publication for hobbyists, athletes, craftsmen, artists, curious bystanders, and friends. We welcome your contributions and feedback as we work to ensure this publication provides entertainment and value to all readers. Thank you in advance for your continued support and thank you to the following individuals for making this edition possible:

John "Moleman" Anthony
Richard Bower
Logan Broadbent
Aidan Curley
Brian Curley

John Flynn
Betsy Miale-Gix
Dean Helfer
Shelly Helfer
David Hirsch

Mark Legg
Tom Luczycki
Jacques Sabrie
Chet Snouffer
Jason Smucker

On behalf of the board, we wish everyone a safe and fun-filled season. We hope to see many of you at upcoming boomerang tournaments and events.

Many happy returns,

Logan Broadbent
[United States Boomerang Association](#)
President



Your Letters to *MHR*

Greetings all my fellow 'rangers!

By way of introduction, my name is Tom Luczycki, and I have been a boomerang target since the early 90's. After grad school, I happened to land in the Detroit metro area and was introduced to the sport by the likes of Norn Kern, Jim Sprague, Ted Bailey, Bill Glover, Bud Pell, Gary Broadbent and several others. I took over Norm's club *Boomerangs Etc.* for a bit before I headed to Oklahoma for a career opportunity in 2005.

I have never stopped throwing or teaching others the world's oldest and yet most modern sport. Only recently did I decide to get involved with the USBA, gaining a member-at-large position in a stunning unopposed victory in the last election. It is my hope to help the USBA generate enough interest in both the sport and the organization that I will never run unopposed again. While I may not have as storied a background in boomerangs as many of my fellow board members, I believe that I can serve in other ways, like assisting in the editing and design of the renewed *Many Happy Returns*.

To reiterate some of Logan's points, this is not just a magazine about tournaments and competition. It is about all aspects of boomerangs, and ultimately it is YOUR magazine. Please submit your plans, art poetry, club news, photos, and letters. If you are interested in it, odds are there are others that will want to see it too. I know that I do! Many thanks!

Tom L.
Norman OK

***Many Happy Returns* is a quarterly publication.
Issues are scheduled to be published digitally on:
February 1, May 1, August 1, November 1**

**Please submit any materials to to Tom@USBA.org
The deadline for materials to be considered is 1 month before the
publication date, but sooner is better of course!**

**If you send photos, please include "Photo by" and a caption .
Include who appears in the photo if possible.**

Remembering Larry Ruhf



Our boomerang community lost a beloved friend in 2021, Larry Ruhf.

Larry was one of the founding fathers of our sport in the U.S. He touched the lives of everyone he encountered and will be sorely missed. In the next

issue of *Many Happy Returns* we would like to honor Larry and give everyone the opportunity to share stories, memories, photos, videos, and more.

If you would like to contribute a piece in memory of Larry, please email Logan and Tom at the following addresses:

logan@usba.org

tom@usba.org

30TH ANNUAL EMMAUS HURRICANE PATROL

9/3 - 9/4 2021

This is not your regular USBA event! It is a Boomerang Happening with fun extra events and fellowship. There is nothing in our season that compares. This is about the joy of throwing together and not hardcore competition.

2 Tourneys, 2 Nights!

Community Park, Emmaus, Pa 18049

1st tourney starts Friday 9/3 at 5 pm. 2nd tourney starts Saturday 9/4 at 4 pm.

Order of events:

- MTA
- Aussie Round
- Trick -Catch
- 2 - Minute Juggle
- Accuracy
- Position / Sprinkler-Head
- Endurance / Fast-catch

Hang out at the Ruhe farm before and/or after this unique day/night boomerang event.

Bring mats and sleeping bags. Potluck and crash at Ruhe farm. Bring extra stopwatches and paint boomerangs with white stripes for visibility under the lights.

Dinner is provided on the field at 7pm. Bring gnoshes and fruits and power bars. Dress warmly for the 48 degree nights, and bring a lawnchair for spotting.

\$25 donation to cover costs of the field.

RSVP barnabyruhe@gmail.com or text (917) 721-2541

2021 USBA NATIONALS



October 2nd, 3rd

Lorain County Community College 1005 Abbe Rd N, Elyria, OH 44035
(North-West Parking Lot)



Sponsored by:

Channel Craft

***Creating Quality-Crafted fun
here in the USA since 1983***

See following article by David Hirsch for complete details on this event!



BROCKVILLE BOOMERANG CLUB PRESENTS OUR

3RD ANNUAL BOOMERANG TOURNAMENT

**ACCURACY, ENDURANCE, TRICK CATCHES AND MORE. NOVICE
AND ADVANCED LEVELS**

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 11 2021 AT DANA STREET PARK

WARM UP 12 NOON

TOURNAMENT STARTS AT 12:30

TROPHIES, MEDALS AND PRIZES FOR EVERYONE



2021 USBA Nationals October 2nd and 3rd, Elyria Ohio

by David Hirsch

Hey, folks, the 2021 USBA Nationals are a go! Mark your calendar for the first weekend in October, Oct. 2nd & 3rd, for the once again awesome experience of meeting, competing, and hobnobbing with the best boomerang people in the nation! Myself, Kenny Barr, and Logan Broadbent look forward to seeing your smiling faces on the beautiful campus of Lorain County Community College in Elyria, Ohio. Kenny and I are co-Tournament Directors and Logan is Head Judge.

The weekend will comprise a host of experiences and we hope all of you will plan for the entire event. Saturday will be the six standard events in the following order:

1. MTA,
2. Accuracy
3. Trick Catch/Doubling
4. lunch
5. Fast Catch
6. Endurance
7. Aussie Round



All start times are prompt as we have dinner reservations that evening. General warmup at 8 am with rules and circle assignments at 8:30. The competition begins at 9 am. Saturday evening will be loads of fun as well, with dinner (included in your entry fee), USBA General Meeting, Awards, and Auction. The USBA can really use your help if you have a QUALITY item to donate for the auction. This year all Auction items sold will benefit the USBA. We will also have an Aesthetics competition. If you want to enter the Aesthetics Competition you must get your item to Kenny and arrange for pickup (email me for more details). Sunday will be Long Distance with a general warmup at 8:30, rules and group assignments at 9 and throwing begins at 9:30. For those with a little extra time, we will “paint the field” Friday afternoon, and help is always appreciated.

The tournament fee will be \$40 and as mentioned, this will include a buffet Sat. evening. The tournament is free to spectators. The main cost of this year’s tournament is being generously underwritten by Dean Helfer with Channel Craft. Please register in advance by emailing me at duckhead@airmail.net. Payment is through PayPal at the same address.

Some accommodations will be available with Kenny or Logan but these are limited and must be arranged directly with them. There are several hotels nearby including a Courtyard and Hampton but because of our limited participation, a group rate is unlikely. So warm up those arms and prepare for some fun!

2021 USBA Nationals Aesthetic Rules Overview

by David Hirsch

A maximum of five entries per person, no more than two in any category.

The categories are:

1. Boomerang Decoration
2. Boomerang Craftsmanship
3. Boomerang Natural Elbow
4. Throw Stick (Kylie)
5. Boomerang Related Object

Three selections for the category Best of Show will be chosen by the judges from the five categories and the order of first, second and third will be voted on by all in attendance at the awards ceremony.

Aesthetic Rules Details

A Judging Panel, appointed by the Tournament Director, must consist of three judges who are active USBA members. Judges shall not have entries in the Competition.

In the event a group (such as students) wishes to enter a collaborative object, one person must be a registered USBA member. If a person enters a series or a puzzle made of several boomerangs or parts, then the whole series, puzzle, or spatial composition will be accepted and judged as one entry. Only one of the two entries per person per category can be a series.

The five main categories for Awards will consist of:

1. Decoration

- a. Decoration: paint, appliqué, or attached materials applied to the boomerang.

2. Craftsmanship

- a. Craftsmanship: Strip lamination, lap joint, or other construction processes that emphasize technique and manufacturing prowess.

3. Natural Elbow

- a. Natural Elbow: Boomerangs constructed from roots or limbs of trees or other organic structures where the curve of the boomerang is already in existence.

4. Throw Sticks

- a. Throw sticks (Kylies): Any object constructed from natural or man-made substances that are designed for non-returning flight.

5. Boomerang Related Objects, such as bullroarers, t-shirts, etc.

- a. Boomerang Related Objects (Bull Roarers, t-shirts, etc.): Any objet d'art that incorporates boomerangs or is related to boomerangs by culture or that has a boomerang theme.

2021 USBA Nationals Aesthetic Rules Overview

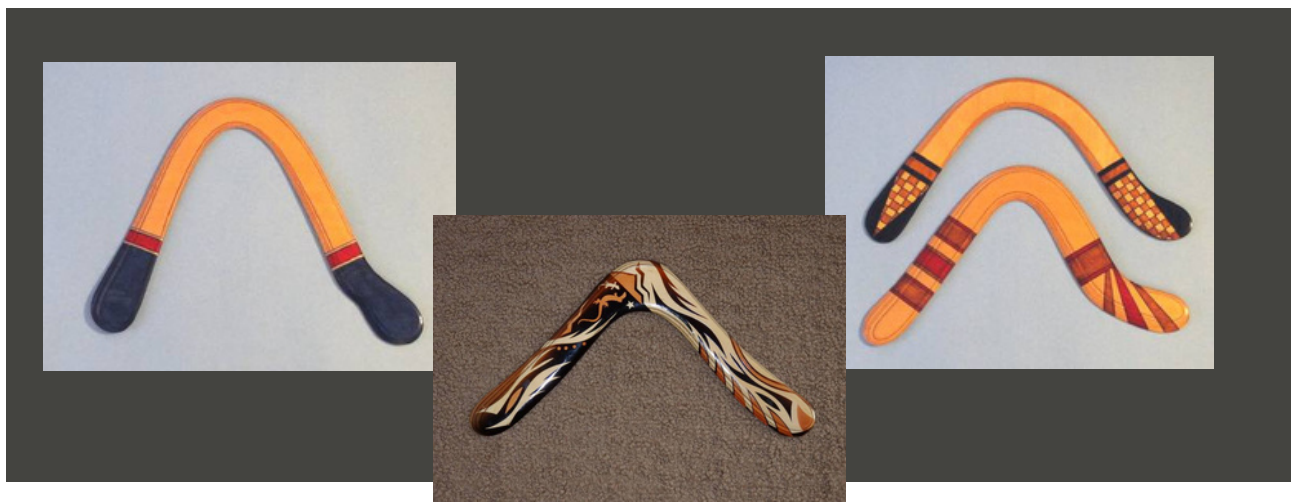
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Each category will have a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place. An award will be presented for Best of Show and will be selected from the entries in the first five categories. Three entries from the five main categories will be selected by the Judges for Best of Show. The order of winners for Best of Show, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd will be decided by a vote of those in attendance at the awards ceremony.

All objects entered in the competition must have clear designation whether inscribed on the object or affixed to it with the creator's name, name of the entry, and category entered. The separation of Aesthetic entries into categories may be changed by the judges and any change of this sort may not be disputed. Any boomerang entered into the competition is attested to be a flying returning boomerang. If the judges feel there is credible evidence that an entry is in fact not capable of returning, then the judges can ask permission to test the entry or if a test may harm the entry, the judges may place the entry in the Boomerang Related Object category.

There is a limit of two entries per category or five entries total from any individual. Objects entered into the competition are understood to be the property and work of the person entering them. If a person enters someone else's work, whether on another person's behalf or as the owner of said object, the judges may require documentation that the person entering the object has the permission of the creator to do so. Any collaborative object that wins or places will be noted as a win or place for the group responsible for the work, not just the individual who entered the object. Any entry that receives an award is ineligible to be entered into any future USBA Aesthetics competition. However, objects that do not receive an award may be re-entered in another USBA aesthetics competition.

It is the responsibility of the person entering the contest to read and understand the rules. Judges' decisions are final.



Competition Corner

A regular column featuring training and throwing tips from World Champion Chet Snouffer



In this issue we are going to look at four of the easiest tips you can use in competition, starting now! As a coaching professional, these are the tips I relied on and reminded myself of constantly when on the field.

1 - LET THE BOOMERANG DO THE WORK!

By this I mean, do your practice and tuning during your practice sessions at home so your boomerang is ready to go in comp. I don't want to be strapping weights on-and-off in warm-up at the competition. I want to make sure I have already prepped my low wind, medium wind, and high wind Aussie, or Fast Catches or Trick Catches during my practice sessions at home. That way, when I get to the comp, I can just THROW it and let the boom(s) do the work. This also means, literally, if I can just THROW the boomerang the same each time and let the boomerang itself do the work by the tuning and weighting and drag I have attached, then I can focus ONLY on throwing it and not having to think, "back off the power, humpback this one, go more vertical, lay it out", or whatever. If I am having to finesse each throw depending on the wind, then I have a much higher risk of making a mistake as I am now thinking TWO things...I just want to be thinking one thing which is "throw it".

2 - MOVE YOUR FEET.

You do not want to be planted. Even when you think it's a dead bull's-eye. Move your feet. Ever watch a tennis player about to receive a serve? Exactly. Keep the bullseye BETWEEN you and the boomerang so you can be coming IN to the bullseye on the catch. If you are backing up desperately to make the catch as the boom rises past you, a) you can't see the bullseye and b) that boom is really hard to catch. You're in trouble.

3 - WATCH THE BOOMERANG INTO YOUR HAND.

Catch FIRST, get points second. Every world champion has dropped a boom in the bullseye trying to milk the 10 only to drop it in the 8. Or trying to slide the foot into the bullseye on throw number 5 in Fast Catch and dropping the 5th throw. It is all mental. By thinking about where the bullseye is, we distract ourselves from the single MOST IMPORTANT THING at that moment which is to CATCH THE BOOMERANG!

4 - THINK LESS.

The secret to a consistent throw is to THINK LESS. Rely on your instinct. Do you remember how in warm-up whether in the one-minute fast catch warm-up or the Aussie practice, you are tossing bulls-eyes and thinking, "Ohmigod! This is GREAT!!!": Then practice ends and you step up and throw the first boomerang into the ground, or right over your head! What just happened??? In warm-up, we are relaxed and relying on instinct. There are no real consequences for a good or bad throw. We're just tossing the boom. And we're on fire!! But as soon as it is real, we start to overthink because now there are real consequences to our actions and we forget instinct and tighten up and make all sorts of crazy throws.



The Top 5 Basic Boomerang Tools

by Richard Bower

Boomerang making is an interesting process. Depending on what you are trying to achieve there are hundreds or thousands of possible airfoil profiles, hole patterns you can drill, slots to cut, weights to embed, etc., not even mentioning doing truly artistic things like lap joints, strip lamination, “puzzle piece” ‘rangs and all that cool jazz. Likewise, to create your masterpieces, you can keep it simple or make it very complicated with larger and more expensive machinery and techniques. I won’t be getting into airfoil tech in this article, but I thought it would be fun to line out what I think are the top 5 basic tools for making a boomerang.

1 - The pencil: So, you’ve got your fresh sheet of aircraft-grade plywood, you’ve got a great shape you want to trace and create. What do you do without a simple pencil to draw it out with? You can also once your blank is cut out use your pencil to mark out your leading and trailing edge start and stopping points, hole/slot locations, etc. It is the most basic, and most important tool!

Upgrade option - A Sharpie: Because it can draw on materials like plastic, phenolic, and carbon fiber. Get multiple colors for drawing on different materials. I use silver and blue most often for the brightness and contrast.

2 - The hand rasp and files: In my younger days of throwing I made a lot of ‘rangs with just a few files. I used to spend time in the back of the family van carving down Tri-Flies by hand (Thanks Mom, I know that made a big mess!). At an hour+- per boomerang, it is time-consuming, but a very very accurate and proven way of making a good airfoil, at a low tooling cost.

Upgrade option #1 - A simple drum sander or belt sander: I am very fond of my 4x36” belt sander, I own two of them and with a 50 grit belt you can rough carve almost any shape in just a few minutes, and the disc sander is great for quickly modifying Tri-Fly shapes. The Harbor Freight model (sku 97181) is surprisingly good for the price point too! (\$90)

Upgrade option #2 - Flap Sander: The Flap sander is more of a finishing tool, but it is the bee's knees for fine sanding. It will cut your time spent over hand sanding by hours, and save your hands from carpal tunnel! And to be clear I am not speaking of the type of flap sanders commonly used on grinders. The Grizzly G8749 drum/flap sander is a great example.

3 - The Coping saw: Like the hand rasp, if you are on a budget and have time to kill, it’s hard to beat a simple coping saw for cutting out your traced-out creation. Get one with the deepest “throat” you can so that you minimize having to back your saw out when you get stuck in a corner.

Upgrade option #1 - The jigsaw: I started with a \$40 Skill brand jigsaw and while that jigsaw is long burnt out, to this day my current Jigsaw is the tool I use most often for cutting out blanks.

The Top 5 Basic Boomerang Tools

(Continued from page 13)

Upgrade option #2 - A band saw: If you are trying to cut multiple blanks out of sheet goods, or work out a hardwood natural elbow it's hard to beat a bandsaw. My opinion to to never get less than a 14" model, but to note that 17" models are much more ideal. The small 9 and 12" models don't give you any room to turn through corners without hitting the upright.

4 - The Power Drill: A Drill is a very versatile tool for boomerang making, its number one use is obviously to drill holes in your 'rangs for drag and wind control. But if you get one with a locking trigger, you can clamp it to a sawhorse or workbench and put a drum sander in the chuck for your airfoil carving as well.

Upgrade option - Drill Press: Because making accurate (and straight!) holes in boomerangs is so much easier and safer with a drill press.

5 - PPE - Personal Protective Equipment: Really PPE is its own sub-section as there are a few things you should have and use diligently.

Dust Mask: yes, a dust mask. Even if you are just making a simple wooden boomerang from plywood you don't want to inhale that dust. And if you are venturing into phenolics and carbon fiber this is the first thing you should reach for when you head to the shop.

Safety Glasses: Protect your eyes! The old adage is you only have two, and it doesn't take much to injure them. Speaking as someone who has been to the ER to have metal shards removed from an eyeball, which was terrifying, put them on!

Gloves and long sleeves: Keep dust from getting embedded in your skin. Carbon Fiber and Fiberglass in particular are bad news as those materials can't be dealt with by your body as easily as wood slivers can. Cover up and be safe!

Upgrade option: Well you should never skip using your PPE, but having a dust collection system, even if it's just a shop vacuum clamped in place next to your saw or sanding station does make it so your PPE isn't your only defense line and makes your end of job clean up much quicker and easier as well.

That's it, I hope this gives some of the more novice and aspiring boomerang makers out there an idea of where to start with tooling up. Anyone who would like to talk more in-depth is welcome to reach out to me personally through my USBA email address: Richard@usba.org

Thanks and Stay Rad!



Boomerangs Take Flight in Canada Thanks to the Brockville Boomerang Club!

by Logan Broadbent



L to R: Travis Mason, Isabella Espinosa, Alexis Gagnon, Cohen Cook, Aidan Curley, Griffin Ostler, Logan Bilow, Ronan Cholette

Imagine you are walking through a suburban neighborhood in a small Canadian town. You notice the warmth of the sun on your cheeks as the morning rays break through the branches of the tall trees lining the street. You think to yourself, “what could possibly make this morning any better?” Suddenly, you hear faint clapping and laughter in the distance and decide to investigate. After following the sound, you turn the next corner to find a large public park with open athletic fields. A diverse group of children, adolescents, adults, and seniors are playing their favorite sport across the field. You watch for a few minutes until a friendly face waves you down and invites you to jump in on the game. You think to yourself, “THIS can make my morning even better!”

As you imagined yourself in the park, what sport did you picture the group playing? If you are from most small towns, suburbs, or major cities in North America, you probably imagined baseball, soccer, flag-football, kickball, or dozens of other common games and sports, but you’d be wrong! In this small Canadian town of Brockville, Ontario the game of choice is boomerang throwing.

As boomerang throwers, we imagine a future where groups of people throwing boomerangs together in the park is as common as pickup football (or at least ultimate Frisbee). Thanks to a driven father/son duo, that vision is becoming a reality in Brockville.

Brockville Boomerang Club!

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Brian and Aidan Curley

Aidan Curley and his father Brian Curley started the [Brockville Boomerang Club](#) back in 2018. Since that time, Aidan and Brian have taught countless people how to throw, presented boomerang throwing to local schools, and have hosted several tournaments to introduce the competitive side of our sport. I sat down (via computer) with the Curleys to learn more about their passion for boomerangs.

Aidan was the first to rediscover boomerangs. While perusing YouTube, Aidan came across a video called “Boomerang Trick Shots” with Dude Perfect. The video features U.S. Team member, Logan Broadbent, completing trick shots and catches with boomerangs. *[Author's note: I should have had someone else write this article, but I'm already in too deep!]* Aidan shared the video with his dad and they decided to

dig up the old foam Nerf boomerang they had in their closet. Brian describes their first throwing session in this way, “It was the winter and there were snowbanks outside. We took the boomerang out to the snowbanks. We didn’t know what direction to throw or how to factor in the wind. I don’t think we even knew not to throw it sidarm.” Brian concedes, while neither thrower had tremendous success, Aidan was the better thrower despite throwing a right-handed boomerang with his left hand.

For most beginners, that experience would have been enough to throw in the towel and pick up the video game controller, but not for Aidan and Brian! They googled “how to throw a boomerang” and found resources that provided the proper tips and tricks they needed to improve. With this newfound inspiration they decided to expand their boomerang collection and, by doing so, discovered why the boomerang community is so extraordinary.

In response to a seller message after ordering boomerangs from Logan, they received a long message back thanking the Curleys for reaching out and encouraging Aidan to work hard in school. Logan shared his personal cell phone so they could call and ask for advice during their upcoming throwing sessions. When the package arrived, they received additional boomerangs well beyond their initial order.

“Without a doubt, that’s what did it! We go out of our way now to be super nice to people who want to throw because it’s important. They’ll never forget it!” says Brian.

Brockville Boomerang Club!

(continued from page 16)

Aidan and Brian spent the next year honing their skills as a father/son team. Their sessions in the park yielded a lot of interest from onlookers. In a matter of months, Aidan was completing some of the more challenging catches in the sport including hackey-catch and foot-catch! In May of 2019 Aidan and Brian took a road trip to Cornell University in Ithaca, New York where Logan was scheduled to speak and perform. Little did they know, they would become an integral part of the performance. During the teaching portion of the event, Aidan was put in charge of teaching the left-handed participants how to throw. He didn't miss a beat! After the show, Aidan and Brian discussed the possibility of starting the Brockville Boomerang Club. Logan enthusiastically assured them they were ready!

They knew to begin a club they would need more boomerangs. The duo began acquiring additional boomerangs from around the world. Brian and Aidan proceeded to highlight a handful of boomerang throwers and manufacturers who went out of their way to help the Brockville Boomerang Club. Adam Carroll was an early supporter of the club. Each time they ordered boomerangs from Adam he would triple their order. They purchased great boomerangs from Dana Larrabee. Dave Hendricks jumped in and sent extra boomerangs with each of his orders. John Winn sent an entire box of boomerangs to Brockville. Pat Steigman shipped a pile of boomerangs along with boomerang blanks which allowed Brian and Aidan to start making boomerangs. Former U.S. Team member and past USBA President, Tony Brazelton, sent dozens and dozens of high-quality competition boomerangs to the Curley team. Brian and Aidan were amazed to see tournament records, throwing tips, and wind speeds on the back of these boomerangs. Clearly, these boomerangs had traveled the world and been used in national and international competitions!

Attracting media attention was an initial hurdle, it took a full season of building the organization before the Brockville Boomerang Club gained traction. In November of 2019, they interviewed with a local sports magazine. In 2020 they landed segments with CTV News Edmonton and CBC Ottawa. However, despite the media coverage, the Brockville team credits most of their growth and success to grassroots efforts. They started by creating a Facebook group, sharing their events on local community forums, and relying heavily on word-of-mouth to promote their club. "The key is consistency! Make sure you are there when you say you will be there," says Brian.

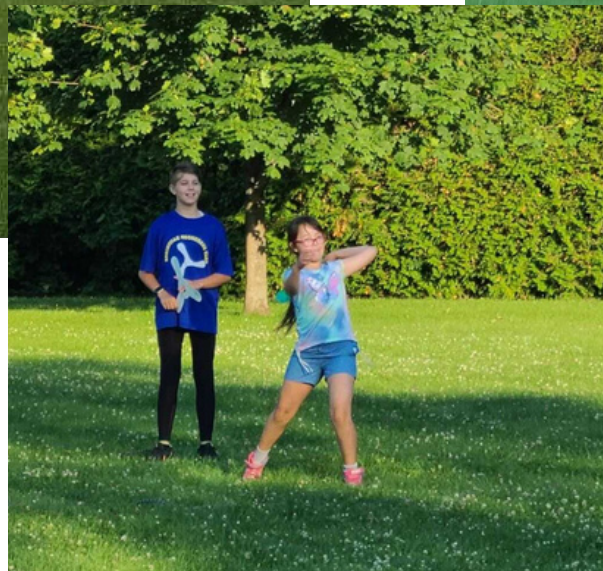
Each week members of the Brockville Boomerang Club get together for throwing sessions (rain or shine or snow). Since starting the club, they have been approached by other boomerang enthusiasts from Toronto and other parts of Canada with questions about how to start their own local boomerang club. Inspired by the generosity of the boomerang community, they sent their first home-built boomerang to another Canadian thrower (after a few prototypes, of course). As any boom maker knows, its truly a breakthrough when you are confident enough in your boom making ability to send your creation to someone else.

Brockville Boomerang Club!

(continued from page 17)

When asked why they love boomerangs, their answers were simple. “It’s amazing to throw something and have it come back in a completely different direction. Every boomerang has its own personality... I learn something new every week and there’s always more to learn,” says Brian. Aidan loves the uniqueness of the sport; he loves being one of the few boomerang throwers in Canada.

While he is too humble to admit it, I’ve been tracking Aidan’s progress for the past 3+ years and can definitively say Aidan has quickly become a high-caliber boomerang competitor. With continued practice and the right equipment, Aidan will soon challenge other world-class athletes in the sport. He is awaiting his chance to compete in international competition and has his eyes set on attending the 2022 World Boomerang Championships in Bordeaux, France if school, schedules, and finances permit. Ultimately, Brian and Aidan would love to see a Canadian national team representing the sport in the coming years. They’ve started laying a strong foundation from which other national teams have developed in the past. In the meantime, they’re content to continue sharing their love of boomerangs and developing the sport in Brockville, Ontario. If history is any indication, it takes focused, reliable, generous individuals like Aidan and Brian Curley to create these clubs and grow the sport for years to come.





2021 St. Louis Gateway Classic

by Jason Smucker

The boomerang community began to regather in 2021 at the 33rd Gateway Classic in Waterloo, Illinois on Sunday, May 30th. For many, it was the first boomerang event since 2019. It was great to see throwers in the bullseye again!

A dozen throwers gathered at Konarcik Park with tournament director Chicago Bob [Leifeld] to begin rebuilding the boomerang community after more than a year apart. The camaraderie was familiar, but the atmosphere was inclusive of new experiences as well. In particular, a brave new competitor stepped into the circle with nothing more than her enthusiasm, her parents' boomerangs, and her competitive spirit.

Meet Rachel Smucker, the USBA's youngest competitor so far in 2021. At age 11 she has already been to dozens of boomerang tournaments as her parents drug her around the country in pursuit of many happy returns. She has rubbed elbows with the likes of Chet Snouffer, Gary Broadbent, Barnaby Ruhe, Eric Darnell, Roger Perry, Rob Croll, and Matt Golenor. ...many boomerang greats of yesteryear. She's quite athletic, plays fastpitch softball, and even enjoys throwing Air Dancers in the cul-de-sac at home.

And yet in spite of her familiarity with the boomerang community and her natural athleticism, Rachel had never competed in a sanctioned USBA tournament. She had always preferred to engage playgrounds, bicycle rides, chalk art, and puppy dogs as ways to pass the time while her parents played in the boomerang tournaments.

After a pandemic break and almost 2 years without being at a tournament, this time Rachel expressed interest in participating in the 2021 Gateway Classic. It might be a better way to pass the time.

With mild encouragement from her parents, Rachel stepped into the circle to try a crazy event called Trick Catch. She had some success with lightweight and thin (German or Japanese?) paper phenolic doublers and made some catches!

The positive encouragement from the other competitors, combined with the modest success of securing some catches and earning points in the Novice division, propelled her to try the Australian Round event. There she made some catches and scored 26 points with a plastic Rangs Australian Geographic Hornet boomerang straight from her mother's throwing kit. Rachel had similar success in the Accuracy event using a Broadbent Invertible boomerang weighted up with lead tape to score 18 points. The morning was full of success, fun, and positive feedback for Rachel!

2021 St. Louis Gateway Classic

(continued from page 19)

But the afternoon got off to a rocky start. Rachel borrowed a Manu Tri-blader from her dad and made a few catches during the Maximum Time Aloft (MTA) warmup time. But successful catches eluded her during the actual MTA event. She answered each of the 5 throws with valiant tracking and catching attempts, but much to her frustration the tri-bladder always eluded her grasp. From her shouts, cries, and body language, Rachel clearly indicated that she was passionate about trying to catch her MTA throws. Rev Jim [Schramm] mentioned on the field how much Rachel cared about trying to throw and catch a boomerang. The tears and frustration showed passion, emotion, and engagement. Rev Jim said his daughter would have shrugged her shoulders and walked away, back to the tent for shade and relaxation. It was evident that Rachel cared.

Undaunted and after a break for snacks and a sports drink, Rachel enthusiastically went out for the Fast Catch event and quickly determined that the phenolic inside trick catch boomerang still set up nicely for her and offered the best opportunity to make 5 catches. [Indeed, Rachel made her 5 catches in 53.53 seconds and managed to beat out a few of the more experienced adults!](#) Using the same strategy in Endurance, she again found success with 11 catches in 5 minutes.

In the end, Rachel completed her first tournament and won the Novice category!



Rachel with her 1st Place Novice award.
Stephanie Frisch: "This is the photo I was waiting for!! Congratulations, Rachel!! Welcome to Team boomHERang!"

Post tournament interview :

After the tournament, the MHR publication team caught up with Rachel and asked a few questions:

What will you remember about your first tournament?

The fact that this was my first tournament. I didn't know what was going on. When you guys [mom and dad] did it [competed] at previous tournaments, I didn't pay attention to what was going on and didn't understand the different events. But now I began to understand. I kept asking mommy, 'where are we going next and what are we doing?' Most of the time [at previous tournaments,] I was trying to stay hydrated in the shade and trying to find something to pass the time and keep my mind off the day.

Gateway Post-Tournament Interview

(continued from page 20)

It was actually a good day to throw, the weather felt nice. [...compared to some of the super hot or super windy tournaments that we've been to.]”

What did you experience?

“Frustration. Mainly the fact that in warmups, I caught like 6 out of my 10 MTA throws, but then I didn't catch a single one in the actual event [MTA]. I knew I was physically able to do it because I had done it [made catches in the warmups]. But when the time came when it mattered, I just couldn't do it.”

What else did you experience?

“Experienced sportsmanship. They [the other throwers] were supportive when I started crying. Sometimes when people try to cheer me up, it makes it worse in a way. Sometimes when people have a positive mindset when you are upset, they are trying to help and be supportive, but it's not always [helpful]? I kind of overheard them asking mommy if I was ok. And if there was any way to help. They helped by not helping.”

What were you feeling when you were not upset?

“I was thinking: ‘What am I doing? How do I do this [event]?’ I was a little bit confused, but I was trying to learn. Then I got excited as I learned.”

How did you experience excitement?

“Because it was my first tournament. And I actually got to do events and understand how the events work. [The goals and objectives and the rules.] I learned what some of the trick catch phrases mean; different kinds of catches like leg hackey.”

Give me an example of excitement.

“In doubling I almost caught one [the insider] and the other one [the outsider] hit my head and I almost caught it. We joked around with calling it a head hackey. That's a really good throw, isn't it, if they almost land together, right?”

What else do you remember from the weekend?

“Throwing boomerangs really does pass the time!”

Rachel's competition boomerangs





2021 St. Louis Gateway Classic Wrap-Up and Results

by Jason Smucker

Results:

It was a close race for the top spots! The overall standings looked like this.

Novice:

Won by Rachel Smucker throwing in her first tournament!

The main event:

1. Steve Kavanaugh (14 pts)
2. Jason Smucker (15 pts)
3. Kenny Barr (18 pts)
4. George Essig (19.5 pts)
5. Chicago Bob (25 pts)
6. Laura Smucker (40.5 pts)
7. Isaac Syler (47.5)
8. Tommy Ferguson (49.5)
9. Stuart Jones (55 pts)
9. Roger Armstrong (55 pts)
11. Rev. Jim (57 pts)



*The four members of USA Radnoceros that placed in the top five!
Chicago Bob (Leifeld), Jason Smucker, Steve (Stevie K) Kavanaugh, and Kenny Barr*

2021 Gateway Classic, 30 May 2021

Final		Name	Trick Catch		Accuracy 100		Aussie Round		MTA		Fast Catch		Endurance	
Place	Points		Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points
1	14	Steve Kavanaugh	65	2	64	1	79	1	70.82	4	27.8	5	49	1
2	15	Jason Smucker	61	3	57	2	75	2	95.25	2	22.39	1	35	5
3	18	Kenny Barr	67	1	55	4.5	52	4	120.62	1	27.06	4	37	3.5
4	19.5	George Essig	42	5	55	4.5	67	3	84.98	3	24.34	2	43	2
5	25	Chicago Bob	50	4	56	3	31	6.5	53.88	5	24.85	3	37	3.5
6	40.5	Laura Smucker	21	8	49	6	31	6.5	45.1	7	28.99	6	27	7
7	47.5	Isaac Syler	29	6	38	8.5	13	11	18.77	9	29.49	7	33	6
8	49.5	Tommy Ferguson	24	7	27	11	16	9.5	46.07	6	31.4	8	24	8
9	55	Roger Armstrong	6	9	37	10	27	8	41.16	8	65.08	10	10	10
9	55	Stuart Jones	0	11	46	7	45	5	6.75	10	110	11	-1	11
11	57	Rev. Jim	3	10	38	8.5	16	9.5	-1	11	54.22	9	17	9

Novice Division

1	6	Rachel Smucker	2 catches	1	18	1	26	1	0	1	53.53	1	11	1
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New England Boomerang Corroboree

by John Flynn



*Front row (left to right) Bennett Sprague, Paul Sprague, John "Moleman" Anthony, John Flynn
Back row: Matt Wissler, Rick Saidenberg, Chicago Bob Leifeld, Sam Lemay, Jeff LeBeau, Jim Youngblood, Bob Foresi*

It was a wet day for the New Hampshire/Vermont/40th New England Boomerang Corroboree, and the Injury List (IL) is too long to list here, but People rallied and spirits were high being back on the circles in 2021. Gripping the booms was an adventure. We paid tribute to Larry Ruhf, who hosted the first of many NEBCs in 1981, also my 1st tournament. Adam Ruhf (IL) drove up with an armload of 2-wing Larry boomerangs for a group throw then a TrickCatch Suicide event where Chicago Bob Leifeld (doing his best Usain Bolt), in town with family to check out some east coast precipitation, won by foot catching a Buddha Rang to edge John MoleMan Anthony. Thank you Adam. Mole got the last laugh, nipping Chitown by a point in the overall. 1st timer Sam Lemay had a fine 29.18 in his first contest, 17-yr-old Matt Wissler threw some moonshot MTAs, which he will eventually be catching (and made many of us sigh, remembering when...), and Paul Sprague (IL), unable to throw right-handed due to a bad rotator cuff, threw all day left-handed and backward, no doubt setting a world record for Fast Catch with 44.68s in the left-handed and backward category, then succeeded at a Doubling attempt at the end of the day. Mole won the day, but Paul gets the hard-core boom stud of the day prize! Thank you Jim Youngblood (IL) for scoring, and we were thinking of the other NH/VT usuals who are on the IL and couldn't attend, get well soon...JF

New England Boomerang Corroboree

(continued from page 23)

40th New England Boomerang Corroboree, Lebanon, NH, 17 June 2021 (Weather: 70 F, rain/clouds)

Final		Name	Accuracy 100		MTA 100		Aussie Round		Fast Catch		Trick Catch Suicide	
Place	Points		Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points
1	9	Moleman	86	1	76.21	1	74	1	24.63	4		2
2	10	Chicago Bob	82	2	63.76	2	64	3	23.69	2		1
3	20	Rick Saidenberg	64	3	59.47	3	20	10	21.00	1		3
4	22	John Flynn	53	6	57.59	4	56	5	24.54	3		4
5	30.5	Jeff LeBeau	62	4	43.99	5	61	4	47.71	8		9.5
6	39.5	Bennett Sprague	32	7	14.31	9	30	8	44.13	6		9.5
7	40.5	Ira Clark	56	5	21.31	7	35	7	-	12		9.5
7	40.5	Sam Lemay	25	9	26.31	6	16	11	29.18	5		9.5
9	43.5	Matt Wissler	29	8	17.15	8	24	9	67.25	9		9.5
10	48.5	Bob Foresi	22	10	8.28	11	51	6	-	12		9.5
11	49.5	Paul Sprague	20	11	9.81	10	12	12	44.68	7		9.5
11	49.5	Adam Ruhf	-1	13	-1	13	65	2	-	12		9.5
13	61	Eric Darnell	-1	13	-1	13	-1	13.5	-	12		9.5
13	61	Jim Youngblood	-1	13	-1	13	-1	13.5	-	12		9.5

(*) Threw all events left-handed and backwards!!! And did doubling demo!



Paul Sprague overcomes right arm injury by throwing with a left-handed backhand release.



Rain can't dampen spirits when throwing as friends.



Chicago Bob demonstrates his excellent form.



MHLDR (Many Happy Long Distance Returns)

by David Hirsch

Gentle thrower, if you are a long-time subscriber to MHR, you might recognize some of this material... because I am shamelessly pulling it from earlier columns for this MHR reboot. But it's been a while and it's still good stuff!

I'd like to go over some of the terminology involving some of the most common materials used for making LD booms and some basic info about those materials.

First, however, let me reiterate a few important points about LD booms. When you go to the field to throw think safety! LD booms are, by design, sharp. It's one of the reasons that a catch is not required in competition. A very large space is mandatory. Don't throw when other people or animals are within range. And when working with the materials I'm about to discuss, wear a respirator. Not a paint mask, a real respirator; these materials are bad to breathe!

Currently, most LD booms are made with some type of plastic; one of a variety of high density, very strong composites. There are a lot of names used for the most common material. Primarily it is fiberglass, but the word fiberglass can cover a wide range of generalized names and materials. Mostly, the material used for LD booms is a high-pressure laminate composite. Some of the names associated with these materials are Bakelite, Derakane, Garolite, phenolic, G10, G11 and GFEC. It's often misunderstood but the first three of these are just brand names. It's easier if you look at it this way: you have a material (cloth, paper, spun glass, glass fabric, etc.) and a binding agent (epoxy resin, phenolic resin, melamine resin, ester resin) that are put together under pressure/temperature to make the material. For instance, Derakane is not the material the boom is carved from, it's the resin used in the material (Derakane is the brand name of the binding agent, epoxy vinyl ester resin). And for those of you who have been working what you were told is Derakane, it's very likely G-10, certainly a high-pressure laminate, and very likely fiberglass. It doesn't help that many manufacturers use the words incorrectly. For example, the distributor I get my G10 from incorrectly calls it phenolic. More than one distributor I'm aware of lumps these materials incorrectly under that name. You aren't truly using a phenolic unless the binding agent is from the phenol class. The G-10 designation has to do with the specifications of the material, its heat and strength tolerances, and the binding agent. I know some folks swear that G-11 is stiffer, but the specs don't qualify it as such. The main difference is in heat tolerance and the binding resin is melamine.

MHLDR

(Many Happy Long Distance Returns)

(continued from page 25)

Although, with the variances from one manufacturer to the next, it is certainly possible that some G-11 is stiffer than some G-10. It's confusing because different manufacturers make these materials, and the tolerances can vary. That's surely at the root of why some folks report that the G11 they get is much stiffer than G10. And some folks report G10 that has lots of delamination issues. The supplier I get mine from has always carried a good, cheap material... \$40 for a 2 ft. x 3 ft. piece, much cheaper than some sources, and I've never had delamination problems, even from booms that are several years old and have taken many bad hits and thus had to be bent to retune them. The problem, as I've alluded to, is that you really don't know where the material came from, and the manufacturing tolerances used. Distributors may use one or more manufacturers or switch without telling you. If you can find a distributor that sells good stuff at a fair price, that's what matters. As a matter of reference, I'll give the name and number of the source I use at the end of this article. They will ship and cut sheets, which is another issue as some distributors won't sell partial sheets. It's also good to know that as of this update I only use carbon fiber because of detuning issues with G10.

GFEC is what the Europeans often call the group of materials we're talking about (GFEC stands for Glass Fiber Epoxy Composite). Here again, many materials are sometimes lumped under a single name.

One other thing about these materials; you need to be sure of the substrate, that is the cloth, glass fiber, etc. as this is where much of the strength of these materials comes from. If you get something with cloth or paper, which tends to occur more often in the phenolic class, you may have a lighter cheaper material, but it will not have the strength. Hopefully, this clears up some of the terminology issues out there but as you can see it can be confusing, to say the least.

MHLDR

(Many Happy Long Distance Returns)

(continued from page 26)

Now on to a completely different material: carbon fiber. I'm really singing the praises these days of CF. It is significantly more expensive and is better used after getting some manufacturing experience with the cheaper G10 but I really like the way this stuff flies. And don't get me wrong; Manu's World record was done using G10. It's just that CF is 20% lighter and even stiffer and thus gives older arms an advantage :-), but more importantly, it doesn't detune on a bad throw. This is not CF that I'm setting up myself but rather sheet form purchased from a vendor.

If you start now, be wary of pulling too fine an edge on the G-10; it's easy to pull a very keen edge. There are even some websites out there dedicated to making knives with this stuff. One thing I will say, find a way to mark a good midline before you begin sanding the airfoil. If you look at Manu's plans, he calls for a variance of .1mm from the top to the bottom... that's a pretty tight tolerance! I usually finish sanding mine with jeweler glasses; an accurate midline is that important. It can be a help also to look for the layers as you sand to help guide you as you make the airfoil.

The plastic supplier I use for G-10 is:

Allied Plastics

10828 Shady Trail, Dallas

Tx., 75220

(214) 350-3990

My favorite CF supplier is:

McMaster-Carr. Find them at www.McMaster.com

Remember to check out www.baggressive.com for thrower distances.

It isn't a boomerang if it doesn't come back. Throw far!



Boomerangs Take Flight in Canada Thanks to the Brockville Boomerang Club!

by Logan Broadbent

This past June, throwers from around the country participated in the “2021 Boomerang Experience”. The purpose of this event was to introduce the sport of boomerangs to more throwers across the U.S. We want to give a huge thank you to those who got out into their community to throw. Here are just a few new names we wanted to highlight!

David Gagne – Minneapolis, Minnesota

Michael Haring – Hilo, Hawaii

Elliott Hamilton – Hyattsville, Maryland

Jesse Rogers – Joliet, Illinois

Sam Lemay – Brooklyn, Connecticut (The Brooklyn Boomerang Club)

If you are interested in creating your own local boomerang club, here are a few resources to help you get started. Remember, as we learned from the Brockville Boomerang Club, CONSISTENCY is key! Pick a day each week or month that you will regularly get out to throw. Stick to that schedule rain or shine and ensure everyone knows where and when to show up.

Event Planning Resources:

[Meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com)

This is a great place to announce your event and find new throwers. Here's a website that explains how meetup.com works...

<https://ipickup pennies.net/2018/01/how-to-use-meetup-com-successfully/>

Facebook Group:

Invite new members to join your Facebook group and be sure to turn on notifications so they can be alerted each time you post a new event.

Facebook Events:

You can create an event on Facebook and invite your friends and groups to join!

Community Event Boards:

Most cities/towns have community event calendars where you can create an event and get approval to post. Check your local city and suburb websites and messaging boards.

Direct outreach to libraries, scout troops, boys and girls clubs, etc. - Incentivize with a free boomerang give-a-way or other prizes.

The 2021 Boomerang Experience and how to start your own boom club!

(continued from page 28)

If you are planning to host an event, the following schedule has been a recipe for success with past boomerang demonstrations and events.

Schedule Example:

Boomerang Introduction:

Discuss history, science, craftsmanship, art, and sport of boomerangs.

How to throw a boomerang:

Provide a tutorial on how to throw for all new throwers.

Boomerang Games:

Use the "Boomerang Games" document at USBA.org to create a fun competitive event with the attendees.

Award Ceremony (basic):

Send all the new young throwers home with a boomerang.

The Wrap Up!

Open throwing for all...

Want to advertise in *Many Happy Returns*?

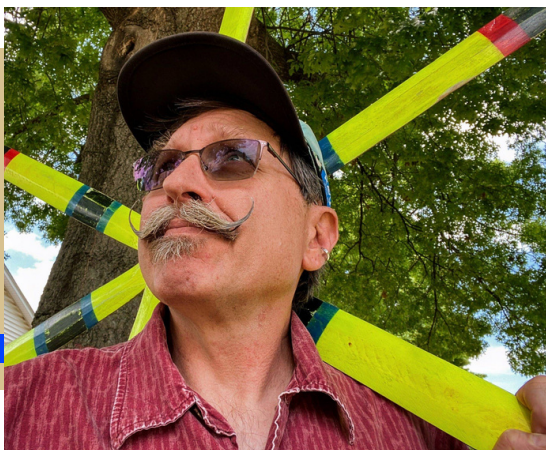
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\$12 Quarter-page



"REASONABLE RATES REACHING DOZENS OF PEOPLE."



The Final Bailey Boomerang Auction?

by Tom Luczycki

Ted Bailey's [50th boomerang auction](#) is in progress and may very well be his last one. If you have never participated (or even if you have) this might be your final opportunity. While Ted looms large in the history of our sport largely due to his pioneering work with MTAs, it is his unflagging efforts in boomerang commerce that may have had the most influence. I had a phone conversation with him recently to talk with him about this unique aspect of our favorite pastime.

Inspired by the boomerang auctioning efforts of Rich "Boomerang Man" Harrison in the mid '90's, Ted sought to create an auction system that was good for buyers, sellers, and most of all for the sport itself. Though eBay came into existence around the same time, Ted's auctions offered features that they could not:

- An auction that was run by a person knowledgeable in the materials, makers, ranges, etc. with accurate assessments of the boomerangs' condition and individual notes on each item.
- 3 bids per boomerang: low, middle, and high. If your low or middle bid beat the other's highest, you got the boom for that amount. This allows a person an opportunity to win an item without overbidding.
- Conditional Bidding allows a bidder with a limited budget to make some good choices. There are a variety of ways that you can set conditions:
 - Set a maximum dollar amount and list your choices in order of preference
 - Place bids on all boomerangs of several makers, and stipulate that you only want one from each craftsperson. Ted allows you to get creative, providing that the instructions are clear and not ridiculous in nature (Yes, sometimes he would get something like "I bid one dollar more than the highest bid." and he would disallow it.) Ted kept track of all of this on a vintage mac running OS 9 using Works 3.0. Amazing.
 - Overbidding safeguards: If you win a bid, that amount you pay will only be 10% more than the next highest bid. If you bid \$100 on a boomerang, and the next highest bid is \$20, you only pay \$22. Ted did not want to create a tulip economy on his watch.

The Final Bailey Boomerang Auction?

(continued)

Ted's auctions also had [advantages for sellers](#) as well. It gives up-and-coming boomsmiths an opportunity to see how the community might respond to their offerings. They provide a good way to liquidate an estate after a collector has passed away, and have been used to raise money for families with special needs. No cash for booms? Many use Ted's auctions as a way to trade old boomerangs for new ones.

Over the years he was able to compile a [Boomerang Pricing Guide](#) that allows collectors to review past auctions to have some idea of what a boomerang went for to make informed bidding decisions. Not only is it an important list representing the full arc of boomerang history, but it is also amazing that every one of these artifacts has passed through Ted's hands.

Ted does collect 20% on all auction items, but consider the incredible amount of effort that it requires to run this auction:

- Receiving the boomerangs, unpacking
- Photographing them
- Compiling descriptions
- Posting them to the web
- Receiving the bids
- Computing the winners with the conditional bidding
- Collecting the funds
- Packing, and shipping

20% is a pittance, considering.

To be fair, this is not the first time that Ted has announced that this will be his last auction. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult for him with his continued loss of vision, and more recently with the loss of his wife Pam that was his steadfast assistant in this endeavor. He has indicated that he may have an auction in the spring that will focus on boomerang ephemera such as pins, 45s & LPs, bumper-stickers, things-that-return-when-thrown-but-are-not-boomerangs, postcards and photographs from giants of the sport, and more.

Go! Look! [Place some bids!](#) Better yet, consider how we as a sport might continue this important aspect of our sport for future throwers.

Fall Tournament Calendar

September 3, 4

[Hurricane Patrol #30 Tournament](#)

[Emmaus Community Park](#), 101 S. 14th St., Emmaus PA

RSVP barnabyruhe@gmail.com or text (917) 721-2541

September 11

Brockville Boomerang Club

3rd Annual Boomerang Tournament

Dana Street Park

Brockville, ON K6V 6X2

Brian Curley

brockvilleboomerangclub@gmail.com

October 2, 3

United States Boomerang Association

[National Tournament and Exhibition](#)

Lorain County Community College

1005 Abbe Rd N, Elyria, OH 44035

(North-West Parking Lot)

David Hirsch

duckhead@airmail.net

October 9

9am - 4pm

42nd Annual Free Throwers Boomerang Tournament

Stratford Woods Park

(Liberty Road and Hawthorn Blvd)

Delaware OH, 43015

Games and challenges, things for beginners .

Fee: \$10

Chet Snouffer

Chet@USBA.org

