

# Many Happy Returns

The Official Newsletter of the United States Boomerang Association



## 2022 Team Trials



Included in this issue:

Capping scores ?  
by Manuel Schutz

Dallas Winter Tourney

USBA Kids Team

## Seattle, Washinton

## 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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# A letter from the USBA President

Boomerang friends,

The boomerang community had a busy first half of 2022! We were back in action with tournaments in Dallas, TX, Waterloo, IL, and West Lebanon, NH. In addition to these opportunities to compete, the U.S. Team Trials were held outside of Seattle, WA in Snohomish County where athletes competed for the coveted 12 positions that make up the U.S. team. These team members are diligently preparing to defend their world championship title in Bordeaux, France August 15-25.

Just as exciting as the national team, the USBA will also send an all-youth team to Bordeaux to compete against the best in the world. Sam Lemay, Janet Costello, and Jim Schramm have been integral in getting this team off the ground. In this edition of MHR, you'll learn more about the U.S. youth team and your opportunity to support these young athletes via direct donations (<https://gofund.me/277d3681>) or through the youth team boomerang auction currently available at <https://usba.org/shop> (learn more on page six).

USBA Board nominations are currently open (learn more on page eight). The USBA heavily depends on the service of volunteers to keep the organization moving forward. It's vital we have a healthy pipeline of leaders who are willing to do the work required to advance our efforts. Innovative ideas on funding, membership growth, and engagement of non-athletes are vital to this community. If you have thoughts on these subjects (or other ways we can improve the USBA), we encourage you to self-nominate for a USBA Board position for the 2022-2024 term.

I want to give a few special "Thank You's" to those who continue to go above and beyond for the USBA. Special thanks to Tom Luczycki for coordinating this issue of Many Happy Returns. Thank you to David Hirsch, Richard Bower, Daniel Bower, John Flynn, Bob and Lisa Leifeld, and all those who help host boomerang events. Thank you to Dean and Shelly Helfer for sponsoring the USBA and the U.S. National Team. Most importantly, thank YOU for your continued support of the USBA. See you on the field!

Many happy returns,

Logan Broadbent  
President  
United States Boomerang Association  
[Logan@usba.org](mailto:Logan@usba.org)



# A letter from the Editor

Greetings fellow-'rangers!

The recent resurrection of MHR has led me to look into the history of its publication in print form, and its intersection with an emerging digital world. In doing so I hope to learn about what worked, what didn't, and how MHR might move forward.

The first-ever appearance of a web address in *MHR* was in 1995 issue #062 in an article by Tim Schallberger entitled "Booming the Electric Highway." It was a very informative piece that was a great primer on the web and its resources. For some, it is a lovely trip down memory lane. For the younger set, I'm sure it is like gazing upon a cave painting. Clever, recognizable, but in many ways mystifying.

Tony Brazelton may have taken heed to the words of Schallberger:

*I believe that the WWW is the information presentation medium of the future. When people are interested in a particular topic, they will search the web first for the information and with that in mind, I believe that the USBA should have an official presence on it.*

Issue #064 announced the debut of the USBA website.

From here, the internet began to trickle into the publication, usually features in a section like "From the Web." Even so, *MHR* continued to be a nexus for boomerang interest for some time, pointing out to the world (wide-web). Boomerang enthusiasts, (unrepentant dopamine junkies the lot of them) would search the web for boomerang articles, plans, and other information and bring it back to MHR like individual ants dragging back morsels of food to their hill for the benefit of the superorganism. It was a community of discovery and sharing, and *MHR* provided a hub for all things boomerang. We would get our paper copy of *MHR* in the mail, see an item of interest, and type in the URL. In 2003 *MHR* became available as a digital version, which made it much easier to follow the links.

From Schallberger:

*Today there are over 10,000 computer networks of all sizes loosely connected forming the Internet, handling an estimated 10 million users world-wide. Within those 10,000 networks, information regarding almost any topic, including boomerangs can be found. However, finding that information can sometimes be difficult.*

In 2004, that all changed. The Google search engine became available for public use. There were others before (WebCrawler. Lycos. AltaVista. Bueller. Bueller?) but all fell by the wayside in short order.



## A letter from the Editor (Continued)

This was probably the beginning of the change. I have yet to identify what issues was “Peak *MHR*”, but I believe that people began to use a web search to find new and different information, rather than depending on *MHR* to be their window into the boomerang world. As time went on, people became less inclined to share their finds, instead bookmarking them for their own use. The advent of Facebook in 2006 further changed how people participated on the web.

If this is indeed the case, how do we try and lift *MHR* back up to where it is once again a community? I propose:

- We actively solicit content from current boomerang web content creators for inclusion in *MHR*. As mentioned above, this is nothing new. But rather than just providing a link, can we incorporate that material into the newsletter? (With the author's permission, of course.)
- Look into developing a BBS (Bulletin Board System) or similar where we can begin to create a place for categorized and searchable information. The BBS is one of the earliest features of the web, but it may be the best model for us moving forward.

The internet is amazing as a distributed system that makes access to information easy. What it is lousy as at is archiving. *MHR* has served as a time-capsule, in part due to the physicality of it. With the web, someone has to decide what is important and try and bring it under one roof for preservation. It doesn't have to be one person making these decisions - it can be all of us in the boomerang community.

Please! If you have found something of interest on the web, latch your digital ant-jaws onto it and drag back it to the the hill that is *MHR*. One ant can make a difference. A whole colony of us can build something fantastic.

All the best,

Tom Luczycki,  
Norman OK

# Auction to Support the 2022 USBA Youth Team is now open!

In order to support our Youth USBA Team attending the 2022 World Boomerang Championships in Bordeaux, France this August we have over **40 boomerangs and boomerang related items** in our shop for you to bid on!

The auctions will close at random times on Sunday, 31 July and all proceeds will be used to fund our Youth Team.

Shipping will be a flat 5\$ for all US addresses and added to the final price. If we have international winners, we will work on getting an accurate shipping cost and add that cost as needed (or hand deliver in France at the World Championships).

*You will need to be a **USBA member (it's free!)** and **logged-in** to bid, so we can keep track of bids and ship to your address.*



# MHR Particulars

Want to advertise in *Many Happy Returns*?

**\$50 Full-page**

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*"REASONABLE RATES REACHING DOZENS OF PEOPLE."*

***Many Happy Returns* is a quarterly publication.**

**Issues are scheduled to be published digitally on (or around):**

**February 1, May 1, August 1, November 1**

**Please submit any materials to to [Tom@USBA.org](mailto: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.**

# USBA Board Nominations Are OPEN!

**The USBA is now accepting nominations for the 2022-2024 Board term. This is your chance to join up, and help shape the direction and growth of our sport over the next two years.**



Nominations will run from now until July 31st, with a voting period to run from August 1st through 31st, so that the new Board can take the reins on September 1st. All nominees are required to write a candidate statement stating why you would like to be on the Board, what position you would like to fill, and any specific goals you have for this term. This statement can be short or long. Current Board members should do the same.

The Board Positions :

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer-Secretary
- At-Large member (x5)

All nominations and candidate statements should be sent directly to USBA Secretary Richard Bower.

Thanks to all who have been serving the past two years, it's been a crazy ride which I'm pleased we are getting through!

Cheers and STAY RAD!

Rich Bower, USBA Secretary    [richard@usba.org](mailto:richard@usba.org)





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# 2022 USBA Team Trials April 22-24, Seattle, Washington

by Richard Bower

Photo by Katie Bower



We have officially wrapped up the 2022 US Team Trials. I would like to personally thank all who came to compete, score keep and assist run the tournament, hang out, and be RAD! I appreciate all your contributions large and small. We had competitors come from all over the USA, along with the local Seattle crew. After 3 days of competition, I think we have 2 strong veteran squads built out and are very much looking forward to heading to France in August, seeing all our “long lost” overseas friends, and working hard to defend our 2018 World title!

We had excellent weather for April in Seattle, mostly sunny all 3 tournament days, with highs in the low 60's. The winds on our field were quite difficult in the late morning and afternoon, low-medium speed but with sudden and violent shifts from 10-180\*. This resulted in some tough throwing moments, frustration, and learning opportunity for all throwers. All things which can be channeled into growth and improvement as we head down the road to Bordeaux!

It was awesome to have Sam Lemay and Janet Costello come out from New England. Their main purpose was to learn the ins and outs of running and participating in a team event so they can take those knowledge gains back home and use them to train the members of the US Youth Team they are creating. Stay tuned for more information on that. And if you have any good boomerangs, time, or knowledge you'd like to donate to that cause please let us know!

Without further ado, here are the 2 veteran US Team squad lineups:

## Squad #1

### **Rad-Line**

- Jason Smucker
- Kenny Barr
- Will Gix
- Logan Broadbent
- Daniel Bower
- Richard Bower



**Photos by  
Katie Bower**

## Squad #2

### **Vintage Rad**

- Betsylew Miale-Gix
- Chicago Bob Leifeld
- Rick Saidenberg  
(Team Captain)
- Stevie Kavanaugh
- Mark Legg
- George Essig



Again, thanks to everyone who came out to the event. Stay RAD, and I'll see you on a boomerang field this summer!

# 2022 USBA Team Trials

*Photos by Katie Bower*



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*Photos by Katie Bower*



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*Photos by Katie Bower*



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# 2022 USBA Team Trials

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# The USA Youth Team and how it came to be

by Sam Lemay



**Photo by David E. Klutho, SI**

I was at Barnaby Ruhe's art farm in Emmaus, PA in the Fall of 2021 and we were talking about the World Boomerang Championship happening this year. He said to me, "France has a youth team, Germany may have a youth team. Guess which country doesn't have a youth team?" The answer to this question was that we, the USA, did not have one. Over the past several decades of world competition in boomerangs, focusing on 6 main events plus team events, we had many successful, storied teams, our adult USA Team winning the world championships in 2018, but never a youth team. From this conversation, I declared that we would have a USA Youth Team to compete at the 2022 World Boomerang Championship in Bordeaux, France starting on August 17th.

To me, I envisioned what the experience would be like for these kids to travel overseas, and take part in this worldwide event with throwers from countries all over the world. I hear all the time from adult throwers that boomerangs became their passport to the world. They gained a world perspective and new friends from Japan, Germany, Australia, Brazil, and many other countries.

# The USA Youth Team

*(continued)*

Our sport is unique in that there is no real advantage in being stronger or faster, it really comes down to being present to the wind and executing the throws and catches at that moment. Skills like problem-solving and critical thinking are really important. And just like tennis or golf, the sport of boomerangs is a lifelong sport where there are always things to learn in the 6 main events of Trick Catch, Accuracy, Australian Round, Maximum Time Aloft, Fast Catch, and Endurance. (more information on these events can be found on [www.usba.org](http://www.usba.org)) Our boomerang community also sees this as an opportunity to grow our sport for the next generations, and share the many blessings that we have gotten. To pay it forward.

I started throwing boomerangs at the age of 16 in 1991, first seeing it in the book “Boomerang - How to Throw, Catch and Make It” by Benjamin Ruhe and Eric Darnell. My first boomerang bought from a sporting goods store caught a big gust of wind and flew into the woods. My second also from the same store, flew better and after an hour or so of throwing, I got it to come back. The next throw it broke after a hard landing. In the book were plans to make them so after a trip to the hardware store I made my first boomerang and was hooked! Boomerangs build a sense of pride, resilience, and community, realizing that what we throw out in the world comes back to us.

In January of this year, my friend Janet Costello came on board to build the youth team, with her extensive experience in coaching competitive sailing from youth to adults. We started having weekly meetings with USBA President Logan Broadbent and searched far and wide for youth who would be interested in competing and earning a spot on the first-ever USA Youth Team.

Janet and I traveled to Seattle in April to the USA Team Trials. For me it was a chance to compete and experience what the competition format would be like in Bordeaux. For Janet it was a chance to see how these boomerang tournaments work and she threw and caught her first boomerang! We met Reverend Jim there, and found that he has a passion for youth in our sport, he talked to his son Christian to come out for the team. Jim is now a coach with us and has been instrumental in moving things forward.

At the 34th Annual Gateway Classic boomerang tournament in Waterloo IL that happens every year on Memorial Day Weekend, we held a sort of youth team trials to earn a spot on the team

# The USA Youth Team

*(continued)*

Among them was Rachel Smucker 12, out of Atlanta GA, who had competed in her first tournament in 2021. Cam Brosnan, 8, out of Rhode Island, had first seen Logan Broadbent on Dude Perfect in 2018 and took up boomerangs as his sport. My son Seth Lemay, 7, also out of Rhode Island came out to compete, our youngest athlete. Finally, Christian Schramm, 18, local to St. Louis, came out to compete as well. We are proud of their accomplishments on the field as it was very windy, at some points over 15 mph and the sun was very hot!

What is unique about competing in these tournaments is that everyone competes at the same time, whether they are top-level throwers or are just out there having fun. There is so much to learn, with what boomerangs to use and how to throw them! And the community is generous in sharing tips and tricks in real-time. What is unique about competing at the World Boomerang Championship is that there are also team events for the first part of the tournament so relay-style events are incorporated which are very exciting and take extra time to train for.

We would love to have another 3-4 young throwers come out and join us. The way it works for team competition is that 4 team members go out to compete at each event at a time. If we have 7 or 8 throwers, we can sub some in for different events as the Team competition spans 2.5 days.

More information about the Youth Team and events can be found at [www.iplayboomerang.com](http://www.iplayboomerang.com) and if there are young throwers that would like an opportunity to be on the team they can send information there and/or reach out to me directly. We are also actively looking for corporate sponsors to be part of this wonderful story and assist us in purchasing plane tickets, room and board, jerseys and other expenses for the WBC in August.

We also started a [GoFundMe](#) to assist in sending one youth and one parent to Bordeaux, and also a boomerang auction.

At each event we attend, we are learning more, and having conversations as to what we can implement to grow our sport. We are excited about assembling again in Bordeaux and creating new memories and having amazing experiences that we will bring back with us when we return.





# To Cap or Not to Cap? That's the Question.

by Manuel Schütz

In a Facebook discussion there were discussions on whether or not to cap MTA. To cap at 50s means: All 50s+ scores receive the same amount of positional points in the overalls.

So I thought:

- What about the other events?
- What's the cause/origin of these caps?
- What's special about MTA?
- What about the possible scoring systems: Do they have caps too?

Does a cap hinder the development of boomerangs? Clearly, the winner in MTA 1 out of 5 should still be the one with the highest time, whether you see it as a "tiebreak for >50s" or not.

**What's a cap? 2 definitions:**

a) Range of scores: Defined by physics, physiology of the human body and the returning boomerang itself.

Example: Accuracy.

a1) Absolute minimum: A boomerang has a range of 21m and crashes at 19m. It returned by 1m. A crash at 18m would be slightly better. Lowest possible score: 0m=on the 20m line. Otherwise, it's not a 20m returning boomerang flight anymore. You could simply throw a kylie then.

a2) Absolute maximum: Yes, a boomerang can land anywhere within the bullseye. But landing exactly on the pin is the most accurate achievement thus the absolute maximum.

b) In contrast, a cap further restricts the range of scores, based on conventions of the boomerang community. This can be done one or two-sided (lower cap, upper cap).

Example: Accuracy- There's an upper cap at 2m from the pin. There's a lower cap at 10m from the pin.

# To Cap or Not to Cap? (continued)

## The caps in the events:

**Accuracy:** In the current situation we have a lower- and an upper cap as explained in definition b.

10m as lower cap is our “best practice” solution as it limits the work to do for drawing of all lines.

Conclusion: Accuracy (and also Aussie Round) sees a lower and an upper cap for the accuracy part of the score.

**Fast Catch:** The absolute minimum is zero catches. A score of 0.0s is of course not achievable. Physics and physiology certainly define an absolute maximum, achievable for the ideal athlete under ideal conditions. I remember that Adam Ruhf guessed 13.99s in 1996. Certainly <10s is impossible. So there exists an absolute maximum between 10 and 14.07s, but not a cap.

**Endurance:** Similar to Fast Catch. 100c would be equal to 20 consecutive fast catch rounds of 14.05sec.

Conclusion: Endurance and Fast Catch have no lower cap (as the minimum of 0 catches is achievable). In fact they have no cap at all, but an absolute minimum and maximum.

## Trick Catch/Doubling:

If seen as “consecutive catching” there would be no absolute maximum. However, this event is not thrown as “consecutive” except for setting world records. It is meaningful to say that 80p is double as good as 40p. But not 200p = double as good as 100p because the competition mode changes after the perfect round!

That’s why I would classify the perfect 100p as an absolute maximum with no additional cap.

**MTA:** Other than Fast Catch and Endurance, for this event no absolute maximum can be estimated outdoors. Certainly more than the current world record of 2min 19.1sec. John Gorski caught his MTA in the early 90’s after a flight of 17min in practise. So is it 17min? Or 1 hour? Not even a rough guess is possible since it’s based on pure luck to catch a thermal without losing your MTA.

# To Cap or Not to Cap? (continued)

## The factor of luck in the events:

First: Luck is part of the game. Getting rid of it can't be the goal.

But as much as possible, flukes among the events should have a similar influence to the overall standings. No sportsman should be proud of flukes, learn a lesson from snooker players!

Let's start with what we know for sure: No thrower of this world can currently get 60s flights with a perfect throw. So 80s can't be seen as "double as good as 40s". In contrast, 13s in Fast Catch would rather more be seen as "double as good as 26s" since this will not happen by a fluke (if at all).

For some MTA throwers the cap should be at around 25s since they are not capable to do >20s, for very few throwers it is 50-60s because they can't do >45s. Hence the 50s cap allows factor 1.1 or 10% luck for top throwers and  $50/20=2.5=150\%$  luck for a beginner. If we change to 60s,  $60/45=1.33$  or 33% luck,  $60/20=3=250\%$ .

No matter where you set the cap, it's always much more generous for beginners than top throwers. I think top throwers can live with that. Don't forget that in Accuracy a beginner who scores very randomly, some fluke bullseyes will be also of more importance than for an expert who is always close to the bullseye. So it's not just about MTA.

All events except MTA do have an upper limit. By part caused by caps (Accuracy and Aussie Round), by part by an absolute maximum (Fast Catch, Endurance, Trick Catch). In order to aggregate the 6 events to an overall score, they should as much as possible have the same properties thus having a similar impact on the overall standings.

That's why a cap for MTA is reasonable for the overall standings.

And yes, let them fly! For the event itself, first place in MTA should still be the longest flight. Regardless of the scoring system. In MTA3/5 the question would arrive if there's a tie at 3x50+s. Still take the raw score for breaking the tie?

# To Cap or Not to Cap? (continued)

## Is the development of better boomerangs useless due to caps?

But doesn't a cap hinder any development of better MTAs? At a first glance, you might think so. But what if you had developed an MTA which flies 70s in dead calm when you throw at your absolute best? Is this pointless? I'd say clearly no, because in that case, even a controlled throw would exceed the current cap of 50s. So you will score the maximum with much more consistency and more likely win the event MTA 1/5 or MTA 3/5.

Additionally: It's always possible to change the cap by convention. 50s was a first guess based on the best MTA throwers who can achieve 45-50s in dead calm without thermals. As said, throwers who consistently score 40+s have less room for a fluke than a beginner who normally scores 20s.

Nothing wrong with that! Good to see that a beginner may win this event. Maybe a bit more luck should be allowed even at the highest scores? So maybe 60s as a cap even now without seeing anyone consistently throw >50s?

If development really was an issue: Why did throwers develop faster boomerangs over the past three decades? That leads us to a second important point:

## The influence of the scoring systems on development:

So why should one develop 14-16s boomerangs when using placing points?

Fact: Winning fast catch with 3s to the second place, say 16s versus 19s (or Endurance with a margin of 15c to the second place, or winning Accuracy 92 versus 82) has always been unimportant compared to a few points or few (split) seconds at "average" level, which is often "big money" in placing points.

Clearly, adding the ranks is not a mathematically meaningful way to measure an overall performance, but that's a different story.

But yet, even this didn't slow down the development of new boomerangs. Needless to say that challenging your personal is always an option for an athlete. Regardless of the scoring system.

# To Cap or Not to Cap? (continued)

## What about ties caused by a cap?

So how should we answer a manyfold 100p tie in Trick Catch or 50s tie in MTA?

First, let's look at the possible reasons.

In Trick Catch this would simply mean: The event is too simple. That was the case with the rules of the 1990's and was an important reason to switch to the current system in 1996.

Yes, with position-based scoring you could argue that even over 100p scores can still be rank ordered. Just: We're talking about +/- 1 to 2 position points here. Even three scores >100p are quite rare. Then, instead of 2p/2p/2p with cap we would see 1p/2p/3p without cap.

+/- 1 to 2 points is again unimportant compared to a difference of 5sec in MTA or Fast Catch or 5p in Aussie Round or Accuracy in the middle part of all scores. In a larger competition, this can easily result in 10-15 position points!

MTA: Rarely, it happens that up to 15% of the participants score more than 50s.

Remember Rome 2010? There, clearly, the excessive thermals were the reason. We can't change the weather and luck has to be part of our game which is good. Possibilities to anticipate this:

1) Scheduling MTA as much as possible in the morning/evening would reduce thermals. MTA in the evening or night with LEDs would be fun despite of less possibilities for flukes, but almost impossible to judge.

2) Make the event more "difficult". MTA3+ with cap at 50 (or 60?) seconds with throw from 100m is a possible way to do it. Probably we wouldn't see many ties of 3x50s+ or even 3x60s+ at all.

# To Cap or Not to Cap? (continued)

## Caps in scoring systems:

Position-based: There is always a lower (number of participants) and an upper cap (rank 1). Regardless on how much the raw scores differ from the 1st to the last place. That makes it possible to “cap” isolated flukes since score differences don’t matter at all. However, it penalizes someone with a very good 40s flight heavily, as seen in Rome 2010 where that was ranked 30 of 100 scores!

In performance-based systems, the difference from 1st to last place is important. Caps in points only occur due to caps in the raw score of the event itself, making it more consistent. Disadvantage: An isolated fluke can score an important amount of points compared to others if the scoring function is exponential. That’s why the opposite of exponentials was the choice for the relative system. Advantage: It would not penalize the 40s thrower in Rome 2010 that hard for not having caught a big thermal.

So the question “to cap or not to cap” can not be answered with the choice of the scoring system.

## Conclusion:

Caps are not a new phenomenon. We simply haven’t been aware that they are very common. Accuracy for instance has even 2 caps (lower/upper). Fast Catch has no upper cap but certainly an absolute maximum score which can never be exceeded. Overall, all events except MTA have a limited possible range of scores.

The upper cap in MTA makes sure that all 6 events have similar properties i.e. a limited range of scores and hence a similar impact on the overall standings.

This still means that the longest flight wins the event MTA, as does the highest number of catches after a perfect trick catch round. The cap only makes sure that none of the events can dominate a decision between two athletes by sheer luck. The convention of where to set the cap i.m.o must consider the technical progress of MTAs but should also make sure that even the best MTA throwers can benefit from a similar amount of luck as in other events (typically +-10 to rather 20% of a score).

The best MTA throwers can get 45s with a perfect throw, 20% of this leads to a cap of 54s. The current cap of 50s is in the right order of magnitude.

At the 18 European- and World championships 2000-2019, 45% of the MTA events saw 2 or more scores over 50s.

In Trick catch, 26% of the events saw 2 or more perfect scores. In order to reduce ties to a similar amount as in Trick Catch, “allowing a bit more luck” with a 60s cap is a possible answer. Or apply MTA<sup>3/5</sup>, which on the other hand reduces the extreme character of MTA.



# Dallas Winter Tournament 2022

by David Hirsch



# Dallas Winter Tournament 2022





# Dallas Winter Tournament 2022



# Dallas Winter Tournament 2022



# Dallas Winter Tournament 2022



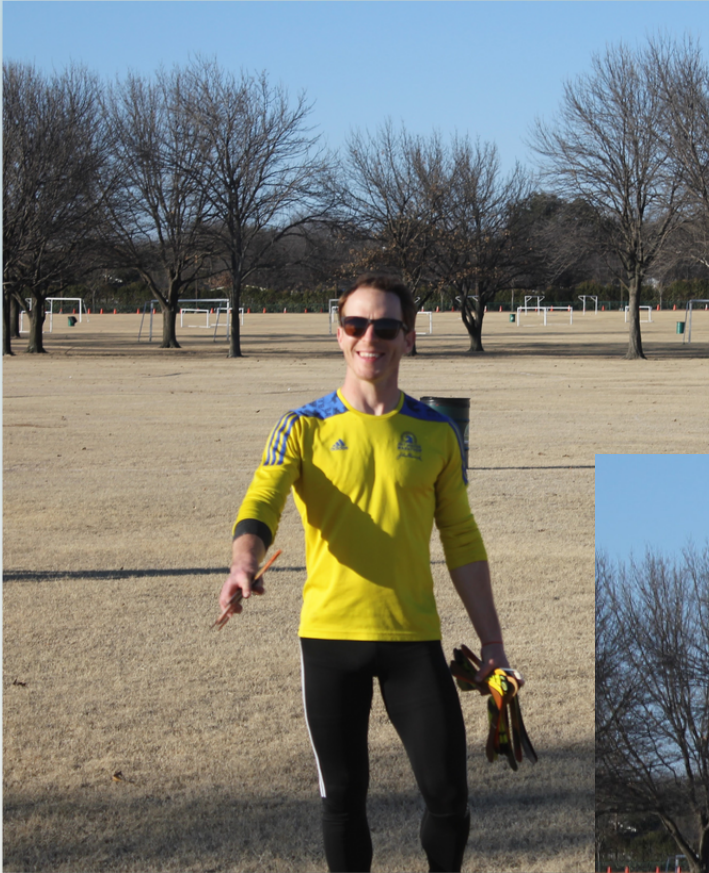
# Dallas Winter Tournament 2022



# Dallas Winter Tournament 2022

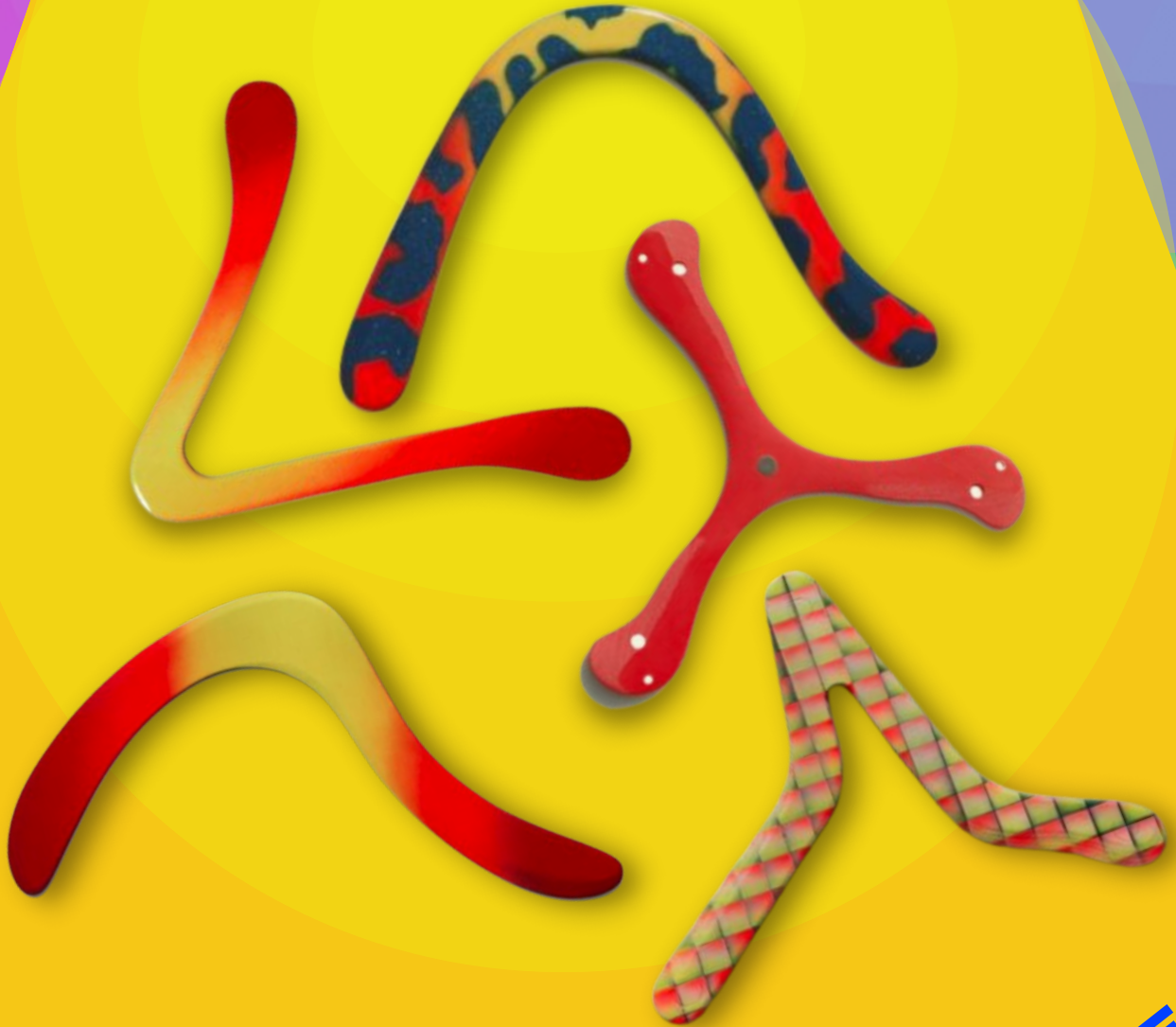


# Dallas Winter Tournament 2022



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# 2022 Tournament Calendar

**August 15 - 25**

**[IFBA World Cup](#)**

**Near Bordeaux, France**

**2022 Nationals**

***DETAILS TBD***

