



**THE  
BRITISH  
BOOMERANG  
SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER**

NUMBER 6 SEPTEMBER 1981

# The British Boomerang Society Newsletter

This newsletter is published four times a year. The aim is to provide all members and readers with miscellaneous boomerang news from around the world in addition to presenting boomerang plans and discussing technical topics. Material for publication is always extremely welcome.

The British Boomerang Society subscription rates for 1981 are :-

Junior, up to and including 15 years of age, £2

Senior, age 16 and over, £4

Overseas, (surface mail), £4 . Please send £4 in Sterling and not just the equivalent in another currency.

The British Boomerang Society is associated with the Midlands Kite Fliers and B.B.S. members may subscribe to the kite newsletters for an additional £2 per year.

Please make all cheques etc. payable to British Boomerang Society and address correspondence to :-

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The views presented in the newsletters are not necessarily those of the editor or of the B.B.S.

# NOTES AND NEWS

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E.B.S. Membership etc. Since the last newsletter was issued we've gained a few more members so let's hope the trend will continue.

In order to keep the E.B.S. going and still produce a worthwhile newsletter (I hope) I've decided to use smaller pages for this issue. Not only will this reduce the cost of printing, but envelope and postage costs will be lower too. As I've mentioned previously, we need a few more members. It's as simple as that! Need I say more?

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Free Throwers' Boomerang Society I've mentioned this before too, but their newsletter is so good I make no apology for doing so again. 12 newsletters a year are published and the whole show is run by the tireless Chet Snouffer. (He must be tireless as he holds the world record of 106 consecutive juggles and he is editor of "Return Mail", the newsletter of the United States Boomerang Association). It may not be generally known that the various boomerang societies exchange newsletters between editors and we have all agreed to allow reprinting from one newsletter to another. This exchange benefits B fans everywhere and we're pleased about that. However, there's a limit to reprinting and much as I'd like to reproduce more of the F.T.B.S. newsletters (they are in English!) it just isn't practicable. When you read M.J.H.'s report you'll see that we in Europe have a lot to learn from our friends in the U.S. and a good way to start is to send \$10 to :- F.T.B.S., 340 Troy Road, Delaware, Ohio 43015, U.S.A. Please send your sub. in U.S. dollars. To whet your appetite I've included a few titbits elsewhere in this issue.

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Holes in Boomerangs Günther Veit, of the Deutsche Bumerangclub (DBC), sent me the following information after reading Herb Smith's article on Wind Eaters .....

By accident I found a very effective method of building wind eaters. Just drill holes (dia. and number depend on B shape and size - I've not too much experience with that yet) in the wings. I did it at these points ....

The effect is that they fly their old path but lose spin and fall down as if exhausted onto your feet.



There's a second effect, a kind of whistling during flight, just because of wind friction. As they fly their usual flight path you can throw them even in calm air only you have to throw harder. The B flies well and returns completely .... at least that's been my experience with my Superflyer shape which is similar to Max Hoeben's Coldea.

What Günther says reminds me of something I once tried. I drilled 6mm holes "all over" a hook B. This was so that I could insert either a plug of lead or a piece of dowel in any of the holes. The idea was to try to gain some knowledge of the effects of placing weight at various points on the boomerang. How naive can you get? I got so confused I don't know what I found! I have a feeling though that with the little bit of experience I think I've since acquired I might do slightly better if I repeated the experiment ..... not too sure.

Still on the subject of holes, my Wham-O B has a hole near the end of one arm. Does anyone know why? Don't say because the mould was made that way ..... is it for hanging on a hook perhaps?

I'm sure we've all had Bs slip out of our hands when throwing particularly if we use a pinch grip. So on a few of my Bs I've drilled a hole to minimise the tendency to slip. The hole, about 12mm dia., needs to be in just the right place. If you don't like the idea of a hole going right through I guess holes drilled only part of the way through would still be O.K.

Of course, Bs can be made with internal holes (see Robert Leckie's article in the last newsletter), or the holes may be part of the design as in the "A" boomerang of Howard Boys. This whole thing has exhausted me ..... I'm off for a cup of coffee.

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Boomerang Events 24th Oct. Workshop at The Horniman Museum, London.

25th Oct. Competitions in Dulwich Park, London. Start at 11.00 hrs.

WATCH OUT! THE FRENCH ARE COMING IN FORCE!

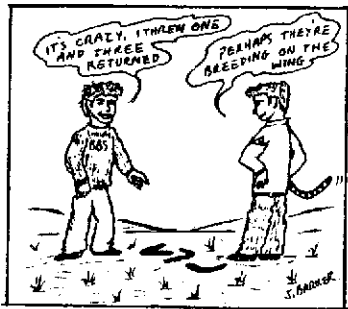
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Boomerang Events 1982 At the moment the only one I know of is the big one in Holland to be held at Whitsun. This will almost certainly be held again at Amstelveen as the alternative venue of Texel doesn't appear to so convenient for those travelling ..... Amsterdam must surely be so much easier to get to. One reason I mention 1982 events now is that I earnestly request all organisers to notify me please as much in advance as possible of any events to be held next year. With only 4 newsletters a year and some delay in printing I can't always give the necessary publicity unless I know the dates well in advance. (By the way, when is Whitsun 1982?)

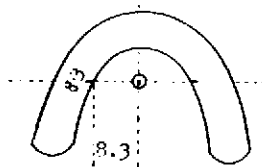
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Weston Park Results This was held on 21st June and I've mislaid the details. Sorry about that! Still I know who won and who didn't do very well! David Griffiths of Wolverhampton won both events with some very good throwing. For his prizes he received boomerangs kindly donated by Bill McGovern and Michael Hanson.

On the day, it was felt by the "Officials", Michael Hanson, Peter King, John Wray and John Jordan, that this was an event for promoting Bs rather than one where we needed to adhere strictly to EBF competition rules. Such rules would have given most competitors no chance at all as many had never thrown a B until 1/4 hour before they took part. A group of Scout Cubs competed and, mainly for their benefit, catches could be made using a net about 1 metre diameter. Maybe some of the rest of us should have used it too!

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Al Gerhards' CG-Finding Device I thought this might provoke some comment and I welcome any sort of feedback.....at least it means someone's read something! David Weiss likes the idea but can't see why Al first balances the B on a piece of wood. I can't see either, but as I'd forgotten what Al said when I asked him I thought I'd better describe it as he did. David writes ..... I stuck a sheet of polar co-ordinate graph paper on my card, this made things very easy. I inked over the circles at 2cm intervals, emphasized the four axes and numbered the circles outwards from the centre. This makes it very simple to mark a B so that it's CG can be referred to at any time with no apparatus other than a ruler. Having balanced the B the two intersections of a diameter are marked at the B's inner edges on the arms and the distance of the CG from one of them read off directly from the graph paper (easily to 1mm). This figure can then be inscribed against the mark from which it was measured. At any time thereafter (until the inevitable modifications!) the CG can be pin-pointed by placing a ruler across the two marks and measuring the appropriate distance.



Could it be Heineken?



There's more to fishing than catching fish.

There's more to boomerang sport than ..... ??????

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# LETTER FROM MAX

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"EUROPEAN BOOMERANG FEDERATION"  
Postbox 509  
1180AM Amstelveen, Holland  
Phone: 020-450983  
Amstelveen, July 1981

Hello Boomerangfans,

At last, here we are with some info concerning boomerang activities and so on. We hope that your clubs and associations are doing just as well as A.B.O.-"Holland" This morning a new member was registered. He was number 82, and still more coming. But first I like to thank you for for letters and information received. Forgive me for not answering in time, it is hard to keep up with the mail I receive.

John Jordan informed me that the "British Boomerang Society" suffers from lack of members. Keep it going John, don't give up for I have been in the same position. At a certain stage we were down to 7 members and that included the board. It may help if the B.B.S. bulletin is sold in bookshops. Ask the store keeper if he wants to have some bulletins for selling and pay after he has sold them. In my opinion the fees of the B.B.S. are too low. Real enthusiasts I think are willing to pay a bit more to keep the Society going.

We are thankful to Al Gerhards for coming to Amstelveen during Easter. Visitors will know that as far as the weather concerned we had not much going for us. Anyhow the 2nd Easterday was a bit better and we had some good throwing, including a good show from Al Gerhards. We all learned a lot from him and I think most of the participants had a good time.

A big championship is to be held Whitsun 1982. Suggestions are made by the Dutch members to have the championships 1982 at the island of Texel in Holland. I am open for suggestions by the E.B.F. members and have received letters that they like the mentioned event in Amstelveen. Let me know what you prefer as soon as possible. It is good to know that we are able, due to a good sponsor to invite Al Gerhards for a second time. We surely hope that he accept our invitation. We look forward to see more and more participants. It is our hope that we will have Herb Smith as our guest this coming year. If we can find sponsorship other friends may be with us. To show how the event went this year you will find a score list in this bulletin.

As I received the Australian competition rules just recently, that are up to date, things will be done as they should be. It is strange that I had to receive mentioned rules from Ben Ruhe and not the Boomerang Association of Australia. Anyhow it is good to have them.

The suggestion by Bob Curtis of Victoria to make the Mesopotamian mythological hero Gilgamesh patron saint of boomeranging is O.K. with me but the decision to accept Gilgamesh is up to others. By the way, I wish I had a Maggie McDonald or a super enthusiast doing designs and typing. (So do I! J.J.) Nice work Maggie, maybe we meet some day. Ben Ruhe, I like to know that I was sorry to miss out on the Washington Tournament. To others I am pleased to say, "See you in Dunbar the 8th and 9th of August."

I like to give my thanks to everyone for mailing me info and assisting me to keep others informed. My special thanks to Larry Hoffman and his connection in Tokyo for the bleeper I build in a boomerang for blind people. Also thanks to all good friends for the Well Wishes to Tonnie whilst she had to stay in hospital. Just phoned Bill McGovern about my plan coming to Dunbar. Looking forward to meet a lot of boomerangfans and to learn what there is to know about hobby and sport. Due to her illness Tonnie did not get permission from the doctor to come with me. Let us hope the weather is good and that we can have plenty of throwing.

Before ending this bulletin I like to give thanks to Herb Smith, Richard Harrison, Günther Veit and others for donating prizes for our boomerang festival at Easter. Dave Jones donated a boomerang and Jack Thomas 100 Fr. Francs.

The last mentioned was won by Jacques Beslot and the Dave Jones boomerang by another French boomerang enthusiast Mr. B. Potitas. As you can all see on the score list a lot of others did very well including 9 year young David van Dam. Since we could not complete all events there are prizes left. Those will be used in a next event.

Dear friends this is all for now. There is still a lot of mail waiting to be answered. Let us hear from you, keep in touch and get ready for the Championships Whitsun 1982.

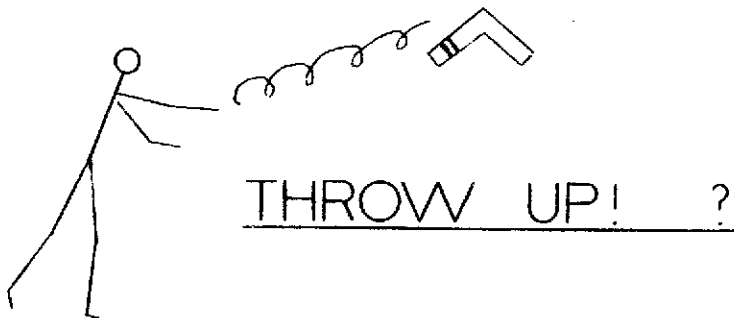
Good Luck and M.H.R's.

Yours sincerely,

Max O'Brien

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Max, I hope you don't mind, I've slightly shortened your letter. Also I've omitted the score sheet as the weather conditions were so bad. You'll find Max's "Wings" design full size on the centre pages.



Don't throw up is the advice usually given and all but complete beginners know that if you launch a B too much upwards it will quickly fall as it turns. On the other hand, a B thrown slightly downwards will rise as it turns and some Bs need a downward throw before they'll return completely.

In the last newsletter I mentioned the tip I got from Al about throwing up a bit in windy weather. Recently, David Griffiths and I have been experimenting. We are now both convinced that even under "normal" conditions it's necessary to throw some Bs upwards much more than we'd previously thought desirable.

Probably many good throwers naturally throw upwards without fully realising quite what's happening. It seems that the fall due to the high throw is counteracted by the tendency of the B to rise and, if you get things just right, a fairly level flight path results.

Of course the wind and layover angles still have to be right too!

A deliberate high throw can give one something of the feeling of a gentle throw.

And regarding power, here again, I'm constantly being amazed by the quite different requirements of boomerangs.

#### EXPERIMENT!

You can say all this stuff for beginners has no place here. I don't know .....it's taken me 4 years to learn it!

J.J.

## FROM 'THE LEADING EDGE' —

NEWSLETTER OF THE F.T.B.S.

\* THROWN FOR A LOOP...the "Lone 'Ranger" rattles on...

This world wide ripple of boomerang interest and it's intermarriage with man's longtime infatuation with competition and the quest for supremacy alternately thrills and then distresses me. I am excited to share my jealousy with others and yet in the wake of my promotions and communiques, I find myself out of touch with the inherent value and essence of it all. I find myself working to organize and structure an activity that I first fell in love with for it's non-structure and simplicity.

For ten years I threw with no awareness of the rest of the boomeranging community, and now that I am in touch with the world of the experts, I am no more content and satisfied, and in fact am more anxious and confused than when I was at ten years of age.

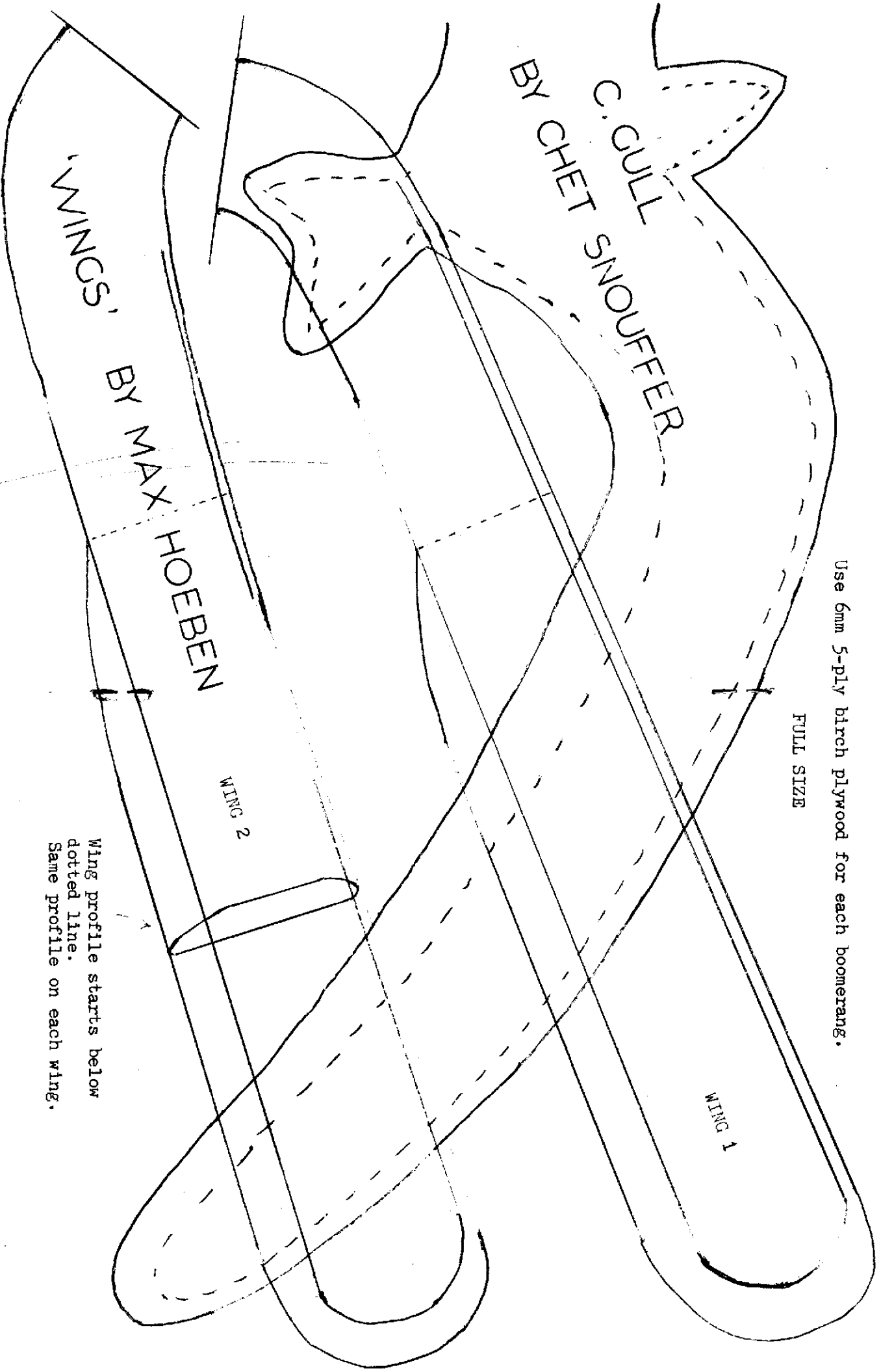
All Fujino helped bring me out of my last bout with "fulminating boomerangosis". She writes, "I just like the idea that they are little pieces of wood, and they come back to me when I throw them. I think as kindly old Gepetto said, 'stay wood, boy, stay wood'." That brought back memories of my initial intrigue and fascination that the product of my hands would swing out wide and come home unbeckoned.

Peter's article came last nite, reconfirming what I then knew once again by experience...a great experience! The wind was a mere whisper and the setting sun a pastel stroke on the horizon, and I, after a long day of promotion and hoopla, was alone in the field as I had been fourteen years hence. The soft whir of wings winding their way home to my hand time and again stirred the memory of that time of innocence, when no books, newsletters, or D.C. flings existed to inform me of warps, dihedrals, records, and Ruhes (and Ruhes, and Ruhfs, and...how many are there?!) Anyway, for the time until darkness wrapped me in dew, I was once more the only 'ranger I knew, and my stick my extension into the nite air. I threw doubles until content, then juggled for fun, with no goal, no aim...and stopped when the 73rd toss fell short of my hands. Seventy-three. Try that in D.C. It won't happen! Until engulfed in the black of nite, I threw my pet Omega, oblivious to all else until exhausted and yet refreshed...purged of my organizational and competitive iniquities, I retired home.

This, for me, is the essence. The flings and comraderie are gifts; icing on the cake. The communications and letters, and yes, even the Ruhes!; these are blessings beyond the basics of being alone in the field, in harmony with the wind, the wood. Let us not focus on the icing and the gifts, however. Then we become fat and spoiled, and our taste buds become numb to the marvelous mix of flavors comprising the cake itself. I had so much frosting and visions of National championships dancing in my head, that I lost the cake altogether! How sweet to find it once again!

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 \* SEA- GULL Boom This was inspired by Bob Foresl of West Springfield, Mass. He came up with the wing idea, and I added the body. It flies like a traditional, with a short range and some hover. Handles a breeze pretty well, and resembles an E-rang. Use 1/4" birch ply with standard airfoils. The entire body area is cut back exactly as the leading edge...about 1/4". The trailing edge proper is only on the wing span. I paint it white with black trim and details. As I always label a B with the name of the originator when known (ex., Harding Hurricane Hook, Smith V, etc) when I build another's designs, I hope those who try this design will label it as I do...C.Gull! (for Chet of course!). Or call it Bob's bird, or some such name, which credits the designer.

(J.J.'s Note. Thanks Chet, for this very attractive design which has created a lot of interest. I've made a couple of C.Gulls and both need quite a bit of +ve incidence on the tip of the leading wing. Those who make one might like to bear this in mind).



Use 6mm 5-ply birch plywood for each boomerang.

FULL SIZE



# DUNBAR 1981

For 3 years now we've had boomerang competitions at the Carnival of the Air organised by the East Lothian District Council. This year was a two day event on 8 and 9 August. With archery, model aircraft, kites, a parachute jump, powered hang gliding, electric motor bikes for kids and boomerangs. The Carnival is held in the wind-swept John Muir Country Park. This year though was the exception to the rule. Saturday winds were very light but there was a dose of drizzle now and then. We thought we were going to pay Max Hoeben back for the Amstelveen weather! Sunday was lovely and sunny with a gentle breeze. In all, good weather.

Some big names in the boom world attended - see results sheet. Lessons were given to volunteers for twenty min., and then the competitions started.

The competition rules were:-

## 1. Catching 1

Competitors have one trial throw and 5 scoring throws. If the boomerang is caught when your feet or a foot is in a square marked on the ground - 2 points. If caught elsewhere - 1 point. If not caught - 0 point. You may use the big net provided for catching if required. Most points wins.

## 2. Most throws in 2 mins.

One practice throw. Then you throw from a peg - retrieve the boomerang, touch the peg with it and continue as fast as you can for 2 mins. Most throws in 2 min. wins.

## 3. Catching 2

Form a snake. Competitors throw in turn. If you catch it, rejoin the end of the snake. If you drop it - goodbye. Continue until one left.

And on Sunday Max Hoeben kindly donated a cross-stick for an under 16 competition where all competitors had to throw the cross-stick. Most catches in 2 mins won. Also Jacques Beslot kindly donated a Bernard Bonnier boomerang for a similar under 16 contest - most throws in 1 min. The winners of these two contests won the boomerang.

An enjoyable weekend was had by all I think. Thanks to Mr Len Abbie for inviting us, to Max Hoeben and Jacques Beslot (for coming so far), to Bill McGovern for the boomerang prizes, to East Lothian District Council for the ply and trophies.

Finally thank goodness Donald Laird will be 16 next year.

## Dunbar 1981 Competition Results

competition	SATURDAY			SUNDAY			Max Hoeben	Bernard Bonnier
	1 points	2 throws	3 catches	1 pts	2 throws	3 catches		
John Jordan	1	11 1st	0	2	12 2nd	0	-	-
Max Hoeben	1	10	0	4(2) 2nd		0	-	-
Len Stewart	-	9	0	1	10 3rd	0	-	-
John Warburton	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-
Peter King	1	9	0	2	7	0	-	-
Michael Hanson	2 1st	9	6 1st	3 3rd	10 3rd	1 2nd	-	-
Jacques Beslot	-	-	-	2	13 1st	10@1st	-	-
Julian Quinn	-	-	-	0	5	0	-	-
Charles Herbert	-	-	-	4(4) 3rd	4	0	-	-
UNDER 16s								
David L	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Rufus Hanson	0	10	0	1 3rd	7	0	$\frac{1}{2}$	4
Richard Brown	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Julie Brown	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donald Laird	5 1st	11(6) 1st	7 1st	5 1st	12 1st	10@1st	4	5
Colin Stuart	0	8	0	0	-	-	-	-
Scott Mason	2	11(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gary Brown	0	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gary Finlay	-	-	-	-	-	0	$1\frac{1}{2}$	6 1st
John Kerr	-	-	-	4 2nd	7 3rd	2 2nd	5 1st	5
Gordon Brown	-	-	-	-	8 2nd	-	-	-
Josephine Warburton	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Gordon Stuart	1	10	-	-	7 3rd	-	-	-
Joseph Warburton	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-

NOTES Numbers in brackets are the results of throw-offs.  
No entry dash.

@ After 10 catches each, throwing continued with attempted one-handed catches. Jacques Beslot caught it on the fourth attempt.

PRIZES Only 1st prize on Saturday - a boomerang.  
1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes on Sunday - 1st a boomerang and a sheet of plywood, 2nd a boomerang or plywood and 3rd a boomerang.

Overall champions on Sunday recieved a trophy. They were Jacques Beslot and Donald Laird.

Ply and Trophies kindly donated by East Lothian District Council.  
Boomerang prizes generously donated by Bill McGovern.

Michael  
Hanson

Peter King

# HANSON'S PILGRIMERANG

I last visited the U.S. over two years ago in order to participate in the 1979 Smithsonian Tourney - the boomerangers Mecca. I began to toy around with the idea of making a pilgrimage to the U.S. earlier on this year. June 29th saw me at Heathrow with a rucksack complete with sleeping bag, a change of clothes, a Union Jack sewn onto the rucksack (upside down and back to front I think) and half a dozen small boomerangs. There were plenty of folk to see on the E. coast, one or two on the W. coast and two or three in the middle.

I got a standby flight to Miami and arrived at 5 p.m. Throwing boomerangs there is a bit like throwing in a huge sauna. (The snows had just cleared from the hills back home - I melted!). I managed to get to Miami by lift (wrong way!) and bus. I stayed the night in a motel.

Vero Beach - the home of Rusty Harding was 150 miles north on the coast road. So proudly displaying my Union Jack and my thumb I set off to hitch hike. After two hours I got bored and started to keep the Coca-Cola and ice companies in Florida in business. Eventually I got to Vero Beach just as it was getting dark. I asked around for Rusty Harding (no phone) and was told at a garage he lived 6 miles away. So I stayed the night in another motel - tattier but cheaper than before. Next morning I got up early and started walking. Towns like Vero Beach have a very large area:population ratio. In other words the place was enormous. I popped into the offices of the local paper :- "Ever heard of Rusty Harding?", "Who?", "Chap who makes boomerangs for a living", "Oh yes - about 3 miles from here - have a good day".

Well, eventually I got there only to be told by Louise and the three boys that he'll be back on Thursday. I was offered a tent in the back garden which I gratefully accepted. I was ferried here and there to see the sights - eat as much watermelon as I could - drink as much fresh orange juice as possible for 25c - laze on the beach - swim (first time for 5 years) - go fishing with the kids and have supper as night was falling under the trees in the back garden. All of Rusty's tools are kept in cabinets in the back yard. When he gets going he works from sunrise to sunset in the open in the back yard. Louise does the decorating. He arrived Thursday night late. In the morning we got talking and mulling over boomerang ideas. He gave me a couple of big light sticks (more about these later) and showed me his latest nightimerang which had about 8 flashing red LEDs and a tiny white light at the centre of rotation. The whole light show was powered by hearing aid batteries. I was also given an EZ Floater and a Quick Catcher - this little boomerang has quite a narrow chord, is made from 1/4" ply, needs a hard throw and returns for an EZ catch in 6 sec. - designed especially for quick catching contests.

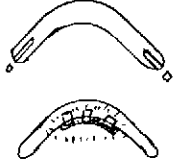


He'd been driving for 12 hours the day before but insisted on driving me to Orlando to have a look around Disneyworld or Disneyland. That day I decided that my initial plans for hitching the length and breadth of the U.S. were not really on so I caught one of them Greyhound buses to Ben Ruhe at Washington D.C. .... 24½ hours. I don't like buses normally but that was ridiculous.

I arrived at 8.30 p.m. on the 4th of July, caught a taxi, found Ben waiting outside his apartment and we hot footed it up to the top of a nearby hotel to watch the fireworks. After that we chatted awhile, talked about the tournament and I was disappointed to learn that there were no tournaments nearby till Aug. 15. On the Sunday I made my own way down to the museums. Got a bit of culture at the Hirschorn (modern art), saw again the Gossmer Condor at the Air and Space Museum, sat and watched Frisbee throwers and showed them the thinking man's Frisbee. In the distance I saw some cross sticks being hurled. I didn't catchup with who was responsible but Ben mentioned a college student who was helping pay his way by selling cross sticks on the Mall. Oh, by the way, the U.S. - Australia challenge is on - a 12 man U.S. team leaves in November. I took a trip to the Washington Monument - see last newsletter. I couldn't make a throw though - oh no - it was entirely surrounded by people and flags. (You know Nelson's Column bears thinking about). Back to the Monument - it's

not too big, looks easy. Perhaps one day in the early morning or late at night ... that brings me on to these light sticks.

I had a parcel from Rusty Harding some weeks back that contained among other things 6 light sticks. It's a sealed polythene tube with a sealed glass tube inside. You bend the poly tube and break the glass one thus mixing together the two chemicals. I had heard that they glow for about 20 min. I set one going that night at 10 p.m. and a bright eerie green glow filled the room. After 60 min. to my surprise it was just as bright. Incredible. When I got up the next morning it was still glowing hard. Unbelievable. I had visions of extracting the two chemicals into separate bottles and mixing them together when required. I saw several clear polypropylene boomerangs with tubes in the tips and little screw plugs. Ben has a better way. He showed me some stuff that he'd extracted after the initial mixing in the poly tube - it was 3 weeks old! When he warmed it up it was as bright as new - he'd kept it in a freezer. He pointed out also that it's not necessary to go to the trouble of making a clear plastic boomerang. Just get a length of clear plastic tubing, pour in the mixture, plug the ends and tape it inside the elbow. As easy as that. U.F.O.s till you get fed up with them - Dr. Steve Miller's idea. If anyone knows where to get light sticks in the U.K. - please let me know. They are cheap, non-toxic and quite magical.



One night at about 11.30 Ben said, "Let's go and throw boomerangs". "O.K.", I replied. We went to a cross roads which was very quiet

and threw small cross sticks under the street lights - range was about 10 yards. The strobe flashing of the lights made the boomerangs not a spinning blurr but several distinct images. For the first time ever I did some doubling - throw two and catch both - that pleased me. Then - not too successfully however - we threw two with the flat surfaces together so that one went that way and the other this way.



Time to leave. I caught the train to Baltimore and was met by Dave Robson whose booklet "Why Boomerangs Return" explains clearly and concisely the physics of boomerangs. He drove me to Al Gerhards' place. Poor Al was in the depths of disappointment. He had just been banned from testing his boomerangs on the field he's been using for years. Apparently the management of a bordering hospital had enquired about boomerang throwing to the police and they were told that they could be classified as potentially lethal weapons. There's not another field for miles. It's a bit unfair, considering what Al has done for boomerang throwing - good luck in his appeal.

We had a meal and then drove to the next town for a throwing session. After about an hours worth of warming up we decided to have a competition between us three. Al had a chain covered in frabric that when spread out made a circle about 3 yards in diameter. We took it in turns to throw and if we made a catch with one or both feet inside the circle we gained one point. First to ten wins. My boomerang went a measly 30 yards, Dave's about 40 and Al had a short range one - only 60 yards! Hanson was losing miserably when the others had 6, but as darkness was falling Hanson showed what carrot juice can do and was first to ten. So it was my first round. No disrespect intended, but European beer is better.

Al says that he's going to have another go at the record soon. He showed me his latest innovation - a double size airfoil tracer. You clamp the boomerang and trace round the airfoil with a stylus.

Next day I tried hitching again - with some success. I was dropped off on the main road and was walking along with my rucksack on my back when a car pulled up .. "Mich Hanson? - I'm Peter Ruhf". So I was taken to Peter and Lester Bertioia's semi underground house. Over coffee and pancakes I learned that it was Lester who had originated the Omega-E design. I had always thought so and saw the

original. I remember a lady throwing in turn half a dozen alphabet boomerangs and catching each one at the 1979 Tourney. That I learned was Lester. Peter is an artist dealing in ceramics and paintings and he showed me some of his beautiful work in his studio in the woods nearby. At present though he's finding he's making a lot of money selling his boomerangs. In the afternoon we went to see Barney and Richard Ruhe who were living at the farm in Emmaus. Peter had brought some 1/8" 3-ply and fibreglass and resin. We all four made boomerangs which you might describe as fibreglass sandwiches. It makes a remarkably strong boomerang. You could colour the resin which would make it quite pretty I thought. They all

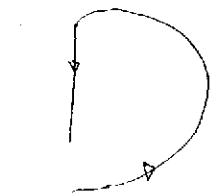


weighted the tips with lead. The range to aim at I learned is 40 metres because in the "Australian round" the boomerang must go at least 40 metres - then additional points are gained for accuracy and a catch. Come the evening we went round to the local sports field for a throw. More an aerial ballet session.

First M.T.A.s. 19-20 seconds were acquired with ease. They went round after a hard launch with not a degree of layover, stopped translational motion way up high and then an oh so slow stable

hover down. I learned from Richard that the final hover depends a lot on the launch. A bad launch can produce a spiral hover which brings it down fast.

So much time and so much effort is spent on the fine tuning of these boomerangs. They are made of lightish 1/4" ply with a wing section like this:-



Stable hover



Spiral hover



The 'undercut' extends all along each arm. Peter is working on a boomerang that he hopes to get 25 seconds with!

Next the jugglers. Really these are were two semi M.T.A. boomerangs that have near enough identical flight paths. Throw A and while it is still hovering throw B, catch A, throw A, catch B throw B etc., etc. - always one in the air. Doublers were very interesting. Two boomerangs thrown together. A little one on top of a big one. The little one goes round and comes back for a catch while the bigger one is still hovering above your head so you've plenty of time to catch it. Needless to say I took a few tracings.

I stayed at the farm a few days - sunbathing - and when you got too hot a dip in the pool cooled you off. Another evening we went throwing and as it got dark masses of fireflies came out to play and flashed very brightly for about 1/4 sec. every 2 sec. The same bright green glow as the light sticks. Also some bats came out to chase the M.T.A.s

As I now couldn't afford to see the folk in the W. or even those in the centre, a bus to New York and a subway to the airport. I got to the B.A. desk to learn that the fare was £239. I sat down to control my breathing. I couldn't swim that well. Rush round to the Laker place. As I approached I made out a notice saying 239. I sat down again. After a rest as I got nearer I made out a dollar sign - \$239! Unfortunately the aeroplane left at midnight and I bought my ticket at noon. Still ,....

Arriving in London I felt too tired to travel home so I went to Harlow to see my old chum Peter King. We had an interesting throw in the park and he taught me how to catch one handed. Not a bad way too finish the trip.

Finally I would like to convey 1000 grateful thanks to :- my wife, Louise, the kids, Rusty, Mr. and Mrs. Coca-Cola, Mr. Greyhound, Ben, Dave, Al, Peter, Lester, Barney, Richard, Drew and Sir Freddie Laker.

Michael Hanson

## WHO INVENTED THE BOOMERANG ?

How, when and by whom, was the boomerang invented? For many years these questions have been asked, and have baffled the most brilliant archaeologists, aerodynamicists and students of the boomerang. None have come up with a satisfactory answer to the problem. Of course, there have been many plausible theories put forth as to its origin, but none have been completely convincing. I am now in the unique position of being able to give you the true facts of the boomerangs origin, after spending many years in research, and at times, heart breaking toil.

### THE INVENTION OF THE BOOMERANG WAS THIS WISE:

Long, long ago....before spray on deodorants, razor blades and Chinese-Take-Aways were invented (but about the time rock music first became popular), there lived in Australia an old Aboriginal couple named UKACHEM and IKUKEM. They were a devoted husband and wife who spent their days in violent arguments, which often resulted in one or the other receiving a split head, broken nose...or both. This was particularly sad and unfortunate, because the nearest free hospital was about 1000 spear throws away...or roughly 26½ miles as the Ombumkin flies. Their only means of transport was an old second hand bamboo bicycle. This was usually off the road owing to termites, which have a nasty habit of eating away the hard wood saddle. As spares were hard to come by in those days, one can imagine what a painful experience it must have been to cycle 26½ miles over rough concrete roads (tarmac was unknown then) on a saddle-less bicycle, with a broken nose or a split head...or both. But, as I verily mentioned, here to fore, they were a devoted couple, and by no means ignorant or lacking a spirit of inventiveness. Both had received a fair education and between them had amassed 3 O levels, 3 A levels and a pair of unevens. (Their 3 children were also attending the local Grammar School). So, with their combined store of knowledge, they would usually come up with some brilliant ideas as to how they could make the journey to hospital in reasonable comfort. Even if it meant padding up the saddle shaft with old newspapers or pieces of rubber foam. This done, one would kindly lift the other on to the cross bar, mount the bike in the normal way and off they would go on their journey, singing merrily and swapping odd jokes between them, till they reached the "YOU-TELL-ME-WHAT-IT-IS-AND-I'LL-TREAT-IT" place. (Yes folks, things haven't changed much over the years. Even now, doctors don't know what's wrong with you when you're alive, but they can soon tell you what you died of!). Now, to get back to the story. After treatment, which usually consisted of a dose of aspirin water and a couple of coloured pills, they would make the long journey back to their humble abode, put the kids to bed and settle down comfortably for the rest of the evening, with hot mugs of cocoa and plates of bloater paste sandwiches.

Perhaps you are wondering what all the foregoing nonsense has to do with the invention of the boomerang? Well...precisely...NOTHING! But it will go to show you what types of character become brilliant inventors.

Now, as I was saying, the invention of the boomerang was on this wise:-

One morning, at about 06.30 hrs, on the unteenth of October in the year 00782, IKUKEM woke up to the sweet sound of the Ombumkins flying overhead singing in their melodious growls. It was a beautiful Summer day...like every other, with flowers blooming and the village pump creaking with a monotonous squeak as the villagers performed their morning ablutions.

IKUKEM rose and busied herself in the kitchen, preparing the morning meal. She little realised as she went about her morning chores, that this particular day would be an unforgettable date in history. This was to be the day when history would be made! A day, which in countless generations to come would lead to mass gatherings of nuts from all over the globe, dozens of divorces, hundreds of arm aching hours of toil and frustration, and thousands of exaggerated tales of achievement related to the tossing of a bent piece of wood.

"Time to get thee up, O my beloved UKACHEM" she yelled. "Don't forget we need some more tooth powder today", she added.

Now, as everyone knows, charcoal has many uses. Artists would be lost without it, and barbecues would never have been invented, but for charcoal. In powered form it makes an excellent tooth powder, when mixed with a little Eucalytus oil.

UKACHEM stirred himself slowly from his bed, savouring the rich, fresh smell of KOLA BARK tea which his beloved wife had just brewed. "I won't be long my Treasure" he said, and with that, stretched himself, yawned a couple of times, turned over and went off to sleep again. "Get up this very minute you lazy-good-for-nothing-sunbaked-pickled-prune, I'm waiting to clean my teeth". "I'm on my way, my precious" said IKACHEM as he slid out of bed in a foul mood, put on his shorts and vest and ambled outside to where the night fire embers were still smouldering.

At the edge of the fire place he stooped to pick up a short, bent piece of wood which had partially burnt away on its underside, leaving the upper surface untouched by the fire. Then, squatting down, he began to scrape away the dark, rich charcoal from the still warm branch, with his worn out pocket knife. He scraped and scraped till every part of the charred wood was removed, (stopping every now and then to take a puff at his home made cigar). When this was done he discovered to his surprise and delight that he was now holding an object resembling a stout wooden coathanger. Uhm! he thought to himself, this will make a good rib for my fishing boat...I don't know why he thought that because he didn't own a fishing boat at the time, and in any case, the nearest lake, river or stretch of water was a good 5000 spear throws away...or about 132 miles as the Ombumkin flies.

Whilst he was musing and fondling his new acquisition, the sound of IKUKEM's voice reverberated through the still morning air. "Have you gone to sleep again? You idle-good-for-nothing". By now UKACHEM had reached the end of his patience. He slowly rose to his feet, grasped his new boat rib by one end hurled it violently towards his dear beloved IKUKEM. Fortunately (for history) it missed her, circled their humble abode and came flying back to strike him a painful blow in the mouth. Poor UKACHEM was completely bewildered and further enraged. Spitting out several broken teeth, he picked up this strange piece of wood and hurled it once again at the now hysterical, rocking form of IKUKEM. A moment later he was struck another violent blow across the top of the head, which opened up an old war wound, and all but knocked him senseless.

In a dazed state, with blood streaming down his forehead, he felt himself being hauled onto the crossbar of his ancient bamboo bicycle to make the journey for the second time that week to....you know where?

The last words he remembered before passing into unconsciousness were the gentle soothing tones of IKUKEM's voice, as she mounted the saddle....."and leave that stick alone, till yer dad gets back". With that she pedalled away furiously, singing at the top of her voice till they were both just a dark speck on the distant horizon.

And that, folks, is how the boomerang was invented!

This is a true story, but names have been changed to protect the innocent..... and in case of any possible "COME BACKS". Ugh!

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H.A.J. SMITH.

GEMSTAR PUBLICATIONS.

Members please note:- Articles, Designs etc. for inclusion in future newsletters are always very welcome. You need not type things, but if you are kind enough to spare me, or rather my two fingers, please use a black ribbon and leave the usual sort of margins. Also art-work is best if it's nice and black.

Thank you!