



**BOOMERANG ASSOCIATION of AUSTRALIA**

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**WORLD BOOMERANG CUP SEATTLE 2008**



**BAA AUSTRALIAN TEAM AUSSIE STARS**



**AUSTRALIA FRANCE INTERNATIONAL TEAM  
OZ-FROGS**

The 2008 Boomerang World Cup was held in Seattle USA.  
 The location was at the University of Washington.  
 Nine countries registered to compete.

1.	Australia.	One team.	Aussie Stars.	10th
2.	Brazil.	One team.	The Others.	14th
3.	Canada.	One team.	Goldmembers.	13th
4.	France. French Touch.	16th	French Kiss.	7th
5.	Germany. Flying Igel.	11th	B-Motions.	1st
6.	Italy.	One team.	New & Old.	12th
7.	Japan. Syoryu.	8th	Samurai.	5th
8.	Switzerland.	One team.	Team Skandal.	3rd
9.	The United States of America.	Three Teams.	Black Rabbit.	6th
	Rad Revolution.	2nd	The Confluence.	4th
10.	International teams.	Four teams.	boomHERrang	
	Oz-Frogs.	9th	14th	Forefathers.
	Eighteen.	17th		

**Eighteen teams in total.**



**ABOVE B-MOTIONS  
 WINNERS OF THE BOOMERANG WORLD CUP 2008  
 Below Fridolin Frost World Champion four times**



**SEATTLE WORLD BOOMERANG CUP 2008**  
by David Richardson

Just getting to Seattle would prove a challenge in itself. There were a series of cancellations, and late-scheduled flights. Craig Carter and I booked a grand total of nine flights. (One ticket had to be re- issued, after my name mysteriously became Antonio Carrasco!).

To make our way therein, became known as the never-ending August the Fifteenth. (thanks to the international date line) Luckily we had a couple days to recover, before the competition started. Rob Croll, Jarrod Byham, and then Gary Broadbent arrived within that time frame. Unfortunately, our sixth member, John Gorski, was a no-show due to his wife's advanced pregnancy. Our team name was 'Aussie Stars', inspired by the Southern Cross emblazoned on our very bright shirts.

All modelling job offers will be accepted.



(Thanks to [www.treesmart.com.au](http://www.treesmart.com.au) for sponsoring our clothing!)

In total, eight Australians were represented in the team competition. Roger and Grant Perry were joined by fellow Western Australians, Gary Mitchell, Matt Barker, together with Frenchmen, Luc Bordes and Eddie Mittelele. Their team name was, "AusFrog". Leonie Metzakis continued her role as chief referee with Diane DuFresne.

The days leading up to the team's competition were perfect, weather-wise. Come the actual competition days, Seattle's reputation as the city of rain, came true. Rain came down, on and off, for the next four days. Three of those days, were the scheduled team days. The fourth day was the "rain day" that we fully used. There was a solitary lightning strike on the first day, but no follow-up. At no stage were events stopped because of the weather conditions. The ground thankfully drained very well (except for under the tents, which became rather a nasty bog after several days). In the end assessment, the need to use much of the "rain day" was more due to poor planning than poor weather. The blisters and subsequent calluses on my feet from the lovely wet conditions, are just now disappearing, after nearly two months.

Generally, the winds were mild, with Albury-like changes of direction. The long wedge-shaped field narrowed to about 80 metres at the eastern end. It was the end most exposed to the wind. The western end, however, was edged by a solid line of tall trees. Those who threw in the shadow of the tree line, often experienced near- perfect conditions. Depending on the event, up to six circles were used. There were only two Aussie Round circles.

The captain's meeting meekly accepted the American system of MTA3+. I.E. (the total time for the top three throw/catch times count. Not the single best time, as used elsewhere in the world). It was a somewhat surprising decision, for it seemed the vast bulk of throwers beforehand were opposed to the change. Otherwise, the rules used at the previous World Boomerang Cup in Japan were adopted. The exception was that of the incidental contact of the feet with the ground during a foot catch, once more became allowed as a valid catch. **Maximum Time Aloft Catch.**



**MTA boomerang throw.  
Featuring Zoë Ruhf  
U.S.A.**



**Seattle WBC field layout**

The "Team Accuracy" competition was the first event. I won't say much about it here, for reasons that I'll note in more detail later.

Team Aussie Round was next. A disastrous trend was settling in for me, (David Richardson) for the day.

Practice was great, the scoring throws weren't. In my case, practice was in moderate to strong wind. Two-and-a-half hours later when Jarrod and I finally threw winds were light and very variable. Our co-ordination wasn't too great either. (go LEFT after throwing, Jarrod!) We ended up with just 80 points between us. The full impact of this only became apparent later, when we found out Craig Carter and Gary Broadbent (perhaps favoured by the more sheltered of the two Aussie Round circles) had scored 76 and 75 points respectively. They were the third and fourth best individual scores (Adam Ruhf of the American 'The Confluence team' and Frido Frost of the German 'B-Motions', were the top two). Our scores positioned our team to fifth place.

Adam Ruhf led The Confluence to top score, with 273 combined points.  
B- Motions were second with 260 points.  
'Black Rabbit', another team from the USA were third with 253 points.  
OzFrogs came ninth, with 191 points.

(I note at this stage that the official scores can be downloaded from

<http://seattle2008.ifba-online.com/>

Hope you have better luck interpreting the inconsistent use of nicknames in it, plus the odd variants on names, including 'Gerrad', 'Gerrid', 'Roberta', and 'Rofie'.)

After lunch was "Team Supercatch", while I had assumed I would be sitting this one out, my practice was too good to be on the bench. After a "best of three"(five, then seven!) MTA throw-off with Rob I went in with Jarrod, Craig, and Gary. Conditions were OK, and we made all our MTA catches, but our tally catching was less spectacular. Our best score was when Gary threw, not for too long, but we all made nice fast catch results getting a total of 20 catches. With a total of 56 catches, we positioned middle of the field in eighth place. That left six teams behind us who had failed to make all their MTA catches. Four who did catch the MTA throw made less tally catches including the OzFrogs, who totalled 51 catches).

The top seven teams unsurprisingly had also made all their MTA catches, with the best one-off score coming from B-Motions (27 catches off the MTA throw of big Thomas Szartowicz).

That was not enough to give them the win though.

The USA team 'Rad Revolution' scored four more catches, to win with 87 catches.  
The Confluence team was third, with 77 catches.

With the schedule running behind, despite Supercatch not being the usual first day schedule disaster, we knew Team Endurance and Relay were to be cancelled.  
Team MTA was the next and final event.

Again, somehow I beat out Robby for selection. When my first throw went up, it looked warranted. There was little wind, the sun popping its head out from behind the cloud, and a nice throw and sit. Then it just plain refused to come down. My boomerang stayed up there, and drifted downwind. It stayed up there, and drifted further downwind. At the end of its flight, it left the 100 metre circle, then went over the trees bordering the field, then drifted across the road, settling down ever so gently on the footpath opposite.

I didn't get a time as such, but estimated two minutes. Unfortunately, that was the extent of my "good" luck for the MTAC event. The team ended up with only two valid times exceeding 30 seconds. Our total was a very disappointing 221.01 seconds. That score positioned us in sixteenth place, our worst for the entire tournament.

OzFrogs (International) were tenth with 301.55 seconds.

Three teams exceeded 400 seconds;

The Confluence (USA) taking the win narrowly 417.63.

Team Skandal. (Switzerland). 413.57.

B-Motions (Germany) 409.30.

I was following Fridolin Frost of Germany. That was an interesting exercise, as his throws were travelling out maybe 70 metres, something not usually done in light wind conditions. Fridolin proved he was mortal, with two drop to catches.

The Confluence (USA) had three of the top seven throwers to give them the victory, but the best individual throw and sum of three throws was a bit of a surprise: the unheralded Renato Banalotti from Italy, with 63.32, and 122.93 seconds respectively. Mind you, Renato had floated a huge throw into the trees during Supercatch earlier.

As a curiosity, I calculated that if the traditional MTA scoring had taken place, the fourth placed Rad Revolution would have swapped places with The Confluence. I guess the Americans had it won either way this time!

At the end of the first day, the defending German team B-Motions were in front overall, closely followed by the three American teams: Rad Revolution(USA),The Confluence team (USA), and Black Rabbit (USA). 'Samurai' (Japan) rounded out the top five.

With MTA finished, we rushed off to dinner in the university dorms, which I mention purely to have the excuse to quote Swiss-come-Canadian Tibor Horvath's online description that they 'resemble more a prison than a hotel but it's OK, the inmates have a key'. They weren't that bad (apart from the horribly unreliable elevators), but I think the quote is more about the throwers than the accommodation.

The second team day started with the news that, after much debate, the scores for the Team Accuracy event held on the first day were being junked. Apparently, multiple circles had misunderstood (or more likely, never read) the rules regarding what happens when one thrower makes a short throw, and had been scoring both throwers as zero when that happened. Personally, I think that interpretation actually should be the rule for this team event, to reinforce what little element of team is actually in it. Similarly, in the World Cup rules, if one boomerang is touched, only its score is cancelled, not that of both boomerangs; again, I disagree, and argued unsuccessfully to change it in Japan two years ago. Given there were enough zeroes whose status could not be clarified, the decision was made to scrap all of the scores, and to re-stage the event on the rain day scheduled immediately after the three days of team competition.

After that little fiasco was settled that moved (The Confluence (USA) into first place overall) we moved on to Team Endurance, where you have five minutes to make as many catches as possible, with the four throwers each getting one-minute to make their throws before running back to tag their next team mate.

With me sitting it out, Jarrod led us off to a great start as he made ten catches in the first minute, setting up a total of 36 catches, one more than the OzFrogs (International) (who had Grant Perry lead them out with ten catches). That delivered ninth and tenth spot respectively, as there were a rash of teams just ahead. But the comfortable winners were the Rad Revolution (USA), with great performances all around, as they raced to 52 catches, ahead of Samurai (Japan) (47), with Team Skandal (Switzerland) and The Confluence (USA) sharing third (45).

Time for Supercatch once more, and I was the one sitting out this time (or, rather, standing, head judge in a fast catch circle for the next two-and-a-half hours). Conditions were a little tougher than one day earlier, with twice as many teams (fourteen of the eighteen) missing at least one MTA catch. Unfortunately that well and truly involved the Aussie team, as only Gary Broadbent made his MTA catch. It was a good one, setting up the fifth best score of the day (nineteen catches), but one MTA catch in Supercatch is nonetheless a sign of disaster. Remarkably, then, we finished two places better than we had the previous day.

Grant Perry's MTA throw delivered 21 catches for the OzFrogs (International), equal second best of the day, but a drop by Luc Bordes meant they fell short of the top three. That third place went to B-Motions (Germany), who also suffered one drop, with 54 catches.

But well ahead of those two were The Confluence USA (68) and winners Team Skandal, (Switzerland) (72), who were now moving up the overall ladder.

After lunch we repeated the first day transition from Supercatch to MTA. As noted, there was more wind than on the first day, and only one of the eighteen teams ('The Others' from Brazil) would improve on their previous time, thanks to three of them putting up one stand-out throw. In fact, had the usual MTA scoring been in place, they would have jumped all the way from second-last to second place. With MTA3+, however, they had to settle for eighth place this time. Still it was a great improvement.

Of the remaining seventeen teams, the Aussie Stars "Australia", actually lost the least amount of time from the previous MTA event, but coming twelfth is still a pretty drab result, especially as it was an event (even without Tim Lendrum) we should reasonably have expected to do quite well in. The OzFrogs (international) also slumped to fifteenth.

At the top, and starting to assert their position once more, were B- Motions (Germany), with 306.06 seconds between them (i.e. averaging just over 25 seconds per scored throw), with Alex Opri the star as he collected 97.77 seconds (only Manu Schütz individually out-scored him).

In second with 302.75 seconds were the Rad Revolution (USA), while third was the second German team 'Flying Igel' with 290.25 seconds (honorary German Steve "Cookie" Cook was their star, collecting 94.15 seconds in the third-best individual effort).

The Black Rabbits (USA) came fourth, but were perhaps unlucky in that Betsylew Miale-Gix "donated a boomerang to the sky gods" in what was clearly the biggest throw of the tournament. There was a hill of over 50 metres in height northeast of the field, and this rang went over, and beyond, it comfortably.

It was time for "Aussie Round". The luck of the draw certainly applied here, as the winds varied greatly over the several hours it took to run (again, we were stuck with just the two circles, not really enough for 18 teams). This was illustrated well by the first throws of Rob and myself -- the throws were genuinely good, but with a huge wind shift just after release I was lucky to run down my boomerang about 30 metres to the side, while Rob couldn't make it to his. Our final scores were between 40 (Rob Croll) and 58 (Craig Carter, the fifteenth best individual score) and another middle-of-the-pack result of ninth was the result. The OzFrogs (International) team, led by good scores by Grant Perry and Eddie Mittelete, who managed to slip one rung ahead, in eighth.

In these conditions it didn't take much of an error to slide down the ranks, and even the eventual winners had to be satisfied with an average less than 60 points per thrower -- that team being The Confluence (USA), with 235 points, and a top score by Stevie Kavanagh of just 68 points. Alex Opri (65) led the B-Motions (Germany) to second place (228 total points), while the Rad Revolution (USA) (221) came third.

Onto Trick Catch, and with the strongest winds experienced yet, Jarrod Byham and I were banished to Killer Circle #6, where the trees and the back fence were close enough that we simply couldn't throw as we would have liked, for fear of losing points and boomerangs to them. This wasn't a problem during the first half -- I scored 44 out of 50, but come Doubling I was literally blown away, adding just ten more points.

Luckily Jarrod Byham did the opposite, ending on the same number of points as myself by improving his scores during Doubling. Gary Broadbent and Craig Carter were less successful elsewhere, scoring 35 and 46 points respectively, leaving us -- yes -- ninth again. And again the OzFrogs (International) would slip one position ahead, with Gary Mitchell and Grant Perry scoring well. Indeed, Gary Mitchell scored 48 during Doubling, after a slow start.





David Richardson prepares for trick catch.

With the top score for the event, Manu's (Manu Schütz) 98 points would lead Team Skandal (Switzerland) to the win here, a total of 318 points. Manu was well supported by a score of 81 from Stephan Spirgi -- who, incidentally, is one of my favourite throwers in the world to watch. He's just so dynamic, blazingly fast, and full of style.

Just six points behind were B-Motions (Germany), thanks to their consistency. (all four throwers were in the top fourteen scores), while Black Rabbit (USA) came third on 292 points. Their best score, was made by the lanky and likable, James Stickney on 85. Unfortunately, I have to report that fellow Black Rabbit (USA) Chet Snouffer no longer does back-flip catches, but he still performs well otherwise, collecting 73 points.

For some inexplicable reason, the Team Relay event had been scheduled as the final event on every day, and was therefore liable to being dropped every day. As an event that runs quickly, and as the most obvious team event, this was insane scheduling. On day two, despite the end of throwing time being extended by an hour to 7pm, Team Relay was again not contested.

As a result, the first event of team day three, Trick Catch got to join the list of events done twice before Relay was even considered. The wind was once more blowing from the south and once more, through some failure to distribute teams fairly, Jarrod and I were banished to Killer Circle #6. I'm afraid I totally wiped out here, partially because while I don't usually mind chasing a floating trick catch boomerang, here that simply wasn't an option. Jarrod Byham got a solid 51 points, but he was our top scorer, so we finished tenth. OzFrogs (International), led once more by Grant Perry and his 62 points, had a very creditable fourth place.

Jarrod Byham and I (David Richardson) got to view half of the winners of this event, as once we were done, the wind dropped massively and Alex Opri and Thomas Szartowicz got to throw in very nice conditions. Alex Opri top scored for the event with 83 points, and would have scored 97 had his boomerangs not struck each other during his final throw, resulting in one not making distance. Undeterred, and despite their resulting wonky flights, he made the final two catches, just because he could.

Thomas's 73, was the sixth best score, and elsewhere Frido (Fridolin Frost) scored 80, giving them the win with 287 combined points. Rad Revolution, (USA) was second with 275, with Matt Golenor equalling Alex's Opri's 83 points. Team Skandal (Switzerland) were third on 255 points.

The final running of Supercatch was next, and Team Skandal (Switzerland) added to their run for top spot via Tobias Jacob and Manu Schütz setting up the best and third-best scores. Tobias has grown up massively since I saw him last as "one of the kids" in France in 2004, and now has a big body that may set him up with honours in years to come. He certainly has the nous off-field, as he now makes his own carbon-fibre MTAs in preference to those of Manu Schutz!

So Switzerland won this event with a total of 65 catches, just ahead of B-Motions (Germany) on 61, with the Rad Revolution (USA) trailing on 51. Rob Croll missing his MTA catch cost us a high ranking for the event, leaving us -- argh -- ninth, while OzFrogs suffered worse: they took only two MTA catches, and therefore slumped to twelfth place. One of those MTA miss catches, was by Matt Barker, whose throw went from border to border on the field to land in a tree, in what could have been one of the top scores for the event.

The biggest victim of this event was not one whose boomerang floated away, however. Dana Carlson of 'Team BoomHERang' (International), the ladies team, managed to find a bit of a divot while running for her MTA, placed a foot awkwardly on the edge of it, and broke her lower right leg. In a country without universal health care, it was indicative of the "boomerang family" that within the day the "boot of donation" collected over \$1100 to offset her ambulance and medical costs. Dana now has the dubious honour of joining Frido Frost as the sole World Cup bone breakers...

Onto Team Endurance, and things started clicking for the Aussie Stars (Australia) as we made 45 catches, which is usually enough for a placing. Unfortunately two teams made 46 catches, relegating us to fifth in a tie with B-Motions (Germany). The OzFrogs (International) placed eleventh, putting the teams with Aussies on a near par for overall points. Up front there was a tie between Team Skandal (Switzerland) and Samurai (Japan), who each made 50 catches.

The inherent perils of automatically appointing judges to circles were demonstrated here, and became a discussed issue later at the International Federation of Boomerang Associations meeting. The current method is to appoint the scorekeeper and head judge for each event by team name prior to it being known who that person will be. This is the best way to distribute the judging roles fairly between the teams, but more often than not the sixth (or, for some teams, the fifth) team member not throwing and instead is sent off to do the judging. They may be the least experienced, and possibly the least informed on the rules and practicalities of running events. Here, I was appointed scorekeeper but also became de facto head judge after it became apparent someone had to step up to that role. At its most extreme this can mean the abandoning of events, as happened on the first day. Using less experienced judges also typically results in ongoing delays, something that has often plagued World Cups events.

Alternative methods were discussed at the IFBA meeting (such as having a list, updated on an ongoing basis, of people qualified for various roles, and choosing from them where possible first, even if it means choosing judges more from a given nation or nations) but none were decided upon. The issue of mixed languages also came up. Ultimately that also comes down to experience. If you know the rules you can work out most instructions in just about any language.

Our second appointment of judging, well effectively first, given the earlier problems, was running of Team Accuracy.

Team Skandal (Switzerland) would continue their run, beating B-Motions (Germany) by a solitary point, 291 to 290.

That wasn't the only one-point split, either, as The Confluence (USA) beat the #1 French team, 'French Kiss', 284 to 283 for third place. And then the OzFrogs (International) beat the Aussie Stars (Australia) 242 to 241!

Jarrold Byham (who doesn't want to talk about his scoring in this event!) and I had the pleasure of watching half of French Kiss (France) throwing in Killer Circle #6. In particular to see Daniel Abelairas throwing six bullseyes in a row on his way to the equal top individual score of 89 points (Frido Frost also scored 89, though he had to score 59 from his last six throws to do it).

Onto Aussie Round again, and the Aussies unfortunately failed once more to claim their namesake. The Stars came eleventh and the OzFrogs (International) plummeted to sixteenth, with only Frenchman Eddie putting together something resembling a decent score. And Craig Carter came out of the event with an awfully sore head as well as a disappointing score, after he and I ran into each other during our last throw. The only consolation was that I was less knocked about by our head clash, and therefore managed to get back to the bullseye for the catch!

The winners this time were Rad Revolution (USA), with a total of 228 points, ahead of B-Motions (Germany) (224) and the Japanese team, 'Syoryu'.

While conditions weren't perfect, I remain confused as to how poorly Aussie Round is often competed at this top level of competition. The top score this day was 68 points by another Frenchman, Laurent "Loofy" Boiteux, whose bright blue hair was one of the quieter parts of his personality. Unfortunately I haven't quite got around to taking advantage of those slack scores yet!

And finally, finally, we got to Team Relay, as the last event of the originally planned last day. During this third day, Jarrold Byham strained a hamstring. He was sitting this one out. Gary Broadbent had provided the team some 30 metre relay boomerangs that surpassed some of those we already had. We bravely jumped into the first relay with little practice with the new boomerangs. It worked well. Rob Croll and I, was sharing a slower boomerang, because of concerns about range.

The team made eight clean throws with no-fuss catches, and brought it home in 2 minutes and 50.91 seconds, to claim fifth place. B-Motions (Germany) pushed back against the challengers by coming first in 2:31.77, two seconds ahead of Team Skandal (Switzerland)., Four seconds clear of Samurai (Japan).

The OzFrogs (Australia) were in eleventh at 3:23.24, but at least they weren't the veteran team of 'Forefathers', who suffered from rangs being called short -- or running 60 metres away on a badly executed throw -- and ended up with a painful time of 6:36.41!

So the third day had seen Team Skandal (Switzerland) win three events and push up to second place, 7.5 ranking points behind B-Motions (Germany). Suddenly the impossible seemed to arise. Manu Schutz getting enough support to drag his team of five to the team win. It seemed a distinct possibility, and yes, it did create a bit of a buzz around the field, and in the dorms later.

Day four, the nominal rain day, would see four events made up from the previous days: the cancelled Accuracy from the first day, Endurance and Relay from the first day, and then after lunch Relay from the second day. Being a rain day, it rained, of course, just like during the previous three days!

Jarrold Byham was taking it easy due to his hamstring. Craig Carter joined me for the Accuracy event on the exposed southeast circle where I ended up doing all four of my rounds of Accuracy during both the team and individual tournaments. Unfortunately the swirly wind resulted in a number of Craig's throws failing to score. An eventual score of 26 from ten throws. I (David Richardson) wasn't all that much better (though at least I earned a beer bounty from Jarrold Byham with my solitary bullseye!).

Way out west Rob Croll and Gary Broadbent both exceeded 70 points. That only dragged us up to a thirteenth place.

Elsewhere, the Black Rabbits (USA) "Chicago" Bob Leifeld and Betsylew Miale-Gix threw as a pair, and scored 84 and 80 respectively, giving them the two top individual scores. Despite that, and passable scores from their team mates, the Black Rabbits (USA) would have to settle for second place, as the throwers of the Samurai (Japan) all scored between 74 and 79 points, for a total of 307. Third place would go to B-Motions (Germany), who totalled 264 points. Only just behind were Rad Revolution (USA) (263) and OzFrogs (International) (260), with Grant Perry once more the leading scoring with 76.

Our final running of Team Endurance would be interrupted by a second injury. Gary Broadbent strained his groin. We weren't alone: the pace of Stephan Spirgi had been cut by hamstring soreness, limiting any chance Switzerland had of stealing the overall title. Four days in a row in the wet had accumulated other victims, (including, to some extent, Fridolin Frost). Indeed, with many throwers eventually throwing seven days in a row, the entire World Cup could be said to have been an Endurance event!

We had a solid performance here, tallying 34 catches for seventh place. (I (David Richardson) topped the team scores with nine, but then broke my boomerang when I slipped in mud after the final catch). The event was notable by the way B-Motions (Germany) absolutely destroyed even second place Team Skandal (Switzerland) and their 45 catches. The defending world champions (Germany) made a stunning 54 catches, with Frido Frost contributing thirteen catches in his first minute, and returning to the circle after all four had cycled through to add eight more.

A pair of Team Relays was there to finish the teams tournament, and with only three fit men (and one of them was the not awfully fast Robbie Croll) we failed to measure up to our first round of Relay -- but it wasn't really due to any of those reasons I just quoted, but rather some sloppy catching. Lesson #1 of Relay: make sure of the catch before you start running back to make the tag! Our time therefore ballooned out to 3:17.59, and a disappointing eleventh place. OzFrogs (International) fortune from the previous round was reversed as well, with their 2:35.40 worth fourth place. But the top three teams would get under two-and-a-half minutes, perhaps spurred on by the decision to race teams as per their previous Relay results: Rad Revolution (USA) (2:24.74) over B-Motions (Germany) (2:27.03) and French Kiss (France) (2:29.87).

After lunch it was Relay again. Jarrod Byham was slightly less injured than Gary Broadbent, so became our (Australia's) fourth man. I was worried Gary would do that hamstring proper and have to drag himself back to base. He certainly didn't go half-hearted. With two inspired catches by Jarrod Byham and David Richardson, we set our best Relay time yet: 2:43.52. With stronger competition, we had to settle for sixth, just behind B-Motions (Germany). French Kiss (France) won this event, getting through in 2:27.12, just one second ahead of The Confluence (USA), and three seconds ahead of Rad Revolution (USA). The OzFrogs (International) were beaten by Team Skandal (Switzerland) into eighth spot.

And so... the overall title? Well, B-Motions (Germany) had led every day (apart from the Accuracy fiasco), though not by large margins, and they had kept steady through this fourth day and were, once more, the World Boomerang Cup champions. Their quality is best shown by their worst result: an equal fifth. The three teams following them (Rad Revolution (USA), Team Skandal (Switzerland), and The Confluence (USA)) all finished as low as ninth. Given the final winning margin was just 17.5 ranking points, a couple of bad events could be all that was needed to determine the best team.

So congratulations to Gerrit Lemkau (captain), Frido Frost, Alex Opri, Thomas, Oli , and the "father of the team", Günter Moeller!

By the way, in the overall awards, once the scores for the multiple running of the individual events were combined, B-Motions (Germany) came first or second for every event. They won Trick Catch, Aussie Round, MTA, and Relay, and shared Accuracy first place with Samurai (Japan), and Endurance first place with Team Skandal (Switzerland). The only award they did not at least jointly win was Supercatch, where Team Skandal (Switzerland) snared 213 catches (an awesome average of 17.75 per MTA throw) to beat the Germans by 15.

Due to those ties, we had some rather amusing indoor Fun Fly MTA throw- offs during the team tournament award dinner, to determine who would take home the plaques, and who would get identical ones mailed to them later. Conveniently for the tournament organisers, Takeshi Honda beat Günter, and Manu beat Oli, so that halved their postage costs!

No rest for the wicked, so it goes. Bright and early next morning the individual tournament was due to start. Generally we threw in the same group throughout. The groups were alphabetically based on first name, so my group included the likes of Dennis “Juice” Joyce, “Dizzy” Kloeckner, Doug DuFresne, Emmanuel Dumonte, Eric Darnell, Fridolin Frost, and Gary Broadbent. First up was MTA, and it was overcast, windless, and basically without any assistance at all from the conditions. At least it wasn’t raining!

Five safe catches later (yes, I know, shock horror); I had a total of 90.31 seconds from my three best times, good enough for second best in our group, albeit without much competition. Fridolin was awesome, though, defying the dead conditions to get his best flight up for 57.38 seconds, third best overall. Billy Brazelton (65.57) and Michel Appriou (57.40) had better individual throws, but with MTA3+ in use, their second and third times were not enough to claim a top place overall. The man who got both aspects right was Tobias Jakob, whose top time was 71.40 seconds, as part of his total time of 140.26 seconds.

From an Australian point of view, Grant Perry continued his excellent recent form, totalling 100.85 seconds for twenty-fifth place, and Gary Mitchell collected 94.83 seconds before retiring due to injury.

Individual Aussie Round, the event that takes forever. Grant Perry and Fridolin Frost was in the first group. Arguably with the best conditions they continued their form to take the early lead. With 64 and 67 points respectively (Grant scored twenty with his first throw), they wouldn’t hold onto that lead, but it would place both in the top ten come the end of the first day.

There wasn’t much more to note from an Australian point of view for Aussie Round; David Richardson, Jarrod Byham, and Rob Croll scored approximately 50 points to place us in the top half. The scores dwindled from there. Craig Carter scoring two Zero point throws on his way to 24 points. Leonie Metzakis, who threw in this event plus Accuracy, at least can claim to have his measure on Aussie Round for the moment!

With 80 points, Billy Brazelton (co-organiser of the tournament) won Aussie Round. Both Billy and Manu (77 points, second place) had two perfect twenties but also a lowly ten-pointer, indicating even those on song were liable to the very shifty winds. Betsylew Miale-Gix (74 points) took third.

So at the end of the first day, three-time world champion Manu Schütz held the overall lead. Billy Brazelton in second, and American Mark “Shark” Weary, Italian Andrea Sgattoni, and the reigning champion Frido Frost completing the top five. Grant Perry was in tenth spot. David Richardson was the next Australian at thirty-sixth. Rob Croll, Jarrod Byham, and Roger Perry placed in the fifties. With four events to come the second day, there was plenty of time for change.

Come the next morning (dry once more!) and we were back in our groups, and my Dingleberries (rapidly renamed the obvious way) were off to my usual swirly southeast circle for Accuracy. My practice was great, the competition throwing less so -- 70 points out of 100 wasn't even enough to be in the top half for this event. But I did get to watch the winner, as Frido hit the bullseye five times on his way to 92 points. Only Stephan Spirgi, elsewhere, would collect that many bullseyes, as he came second on 90 points, with Takeshi Honda coming third with 88 points.

Grant Perry's 77, was the best of the Aussies. Grant held onto twelfth spot at the half-way mark of the competition. Also on 77 points was Manu Schütz, and this would be a disaster for him, as it largely took control of the tournament out of his hands. Now multiple throwers would need to fail in the remaining three events to give him a chance to claim his fourth world title.

With this win, Frido Frost (also looking to claim that fourth world title) moved to first place overall, with Betsylew Miale-Gix right behind him. Alex Opri, Mark Weary, and Andrea Sgattoni now filled out the top five, with Manu dropping to sixth overall.

Trick Catch was next. For some reason we abandoned our groups and were grouped according to our success on the first day. That put me (just!) in the second-ranking group, and I would be paired off with legendary Japanese thrower Nobu Iizuka. We made an amusing pair, with one exception out of twenty, Nobu followed my performance precisely. I caught, he caught, and vice versa. Luckily the sole exception was a catch for me and a drop for him (a single hand catch during Doubling). In ideal conditions (except for the sun being directly into the eyes upon return), my 74 points were not enough for a really high ranking, but at least it nudged forward my overall ranking (and topped the Aussie scores). I know my round amused Will Gix, as I used rangs from Tim Lendrum that hovered fooooooorever, and in no wind they brought me forward to the twenty-metre line to scatter the spotters. They certainly amused him more than wife Betsylew's disgusted reaction to her own Trick Catch round of just 43 points, That blew her out of contention for a top spot.

Grant Perry had a bad round too, causing him to slump to thirty-first spot overall.

At the other end, Frido was extending his lead. He was the only thrower to make a perfect round (perhaps surprising given the good conditions) and extended that through to 133 points. Frenchman Arnaud Tribillon came second, one catch short of perfect on 93 points, with compatriot, “Loofy” Boiteux third on 91.

Alex Opri came fifteenth, and while Betsylew's disaster allowed him to slip into second place overall, he was now a full twenty-three points behind Fridolin. Mary Weary was third now, Billy fourth, and Manu was top five once more.

Fast Catch was our second-last event, still in good conditions. And while he wouldn't win it, Frido put on another show, finishing in 18.38 seconds the first round before we relocated to a windier circle where he chopped it down to 17.41 seconds, and gave a roar to the field to signify, perhaps, that he knew the title was nearly in his grasp.

Only one man would beat him, and that was the man who holds the world "Fast Catch" record, Adam Ruhf. With rounds of 17.93 and 16.80, he reminded everyone "he's still got it", and brought himself up to seventeenth place overall. Others to get under twenty seconds was Alex Opri, Billy Brazelton, Manu Schütz, Stephan Spirgi, Takeshi Honda, Thomas Szartowicz, Will Gix, Yasuhiro Togai, and the new tenth fastest man in the world, Craig Carter. With a boomerang he'd just been given by Gary Broadbent, Craig Carter had the balls to "go for it" after a fifty second first round, and completed the second round in 19.59 seconds. I gather the round could have been a little tidier, too, so the Australian Fast Catch record is perhaps one step closer to being inherited from his father Bruce.

Third place for Fast Catch was a dead heat: Alex Opri and Stephan Spirgi shared their second round time of 17.88 seconds, helping to keep Alex in second place overall, and helping Stephan's continual climb, up to twelfth place. Billy Brazelton, Manu Schütz, and Mark Legg all moved up one spot to fill out the top five, but it now remained Frido's title to lose, as all he had to do was finish in the top twenty-five spots for the final event, Endurance.

Frido, (Fridolin Frost) that he did, most emphatically -- he threw a personal best of 74 throws and 74 catches, (very almost the equivalent of fifteen consecutive twenty-second Fast Catch rounds) to win Endurance and become the only person to win the Boomerang World Cup four times.

I was lucky enough to have the best view of this, as circle judge to his side: the first three minutes were almost clockwork, and he was literally wearing a hole in the grass due to his foot coming down on the same patch every time during his throw. He was lucky to then have a slightly off throw that caused his throwing position to change, and get him off that frayed spot.

I also had the foresight to set my camera up on my boomerang case outside the twenty metre circle, to see Frido's winning round, find the video titled

**'Frido Frost Endurance round' on youtube.com**

The worst score by an Aussie in Endurance was 40, which historically would win most Endurance competitions in Australia, and I suspect each of the Endurance rounds was either a personal best, or at the least the best they have done for many years. Rob Croll got within five catches of his previous personal and Australian record of 59, and yes, it became very much 'previous' as Jarrod Byham rattled out 61 catches to place equal seventh in the world and place a distinct exclamation mark on his return to the field after many years out.



### **Craig Carter Endurance catch.**



Craig Carter, Grant Perry, and Roger Perry also reached or exceeded 50 catches to place them squarely in the top third of the field. Healthy competition!

Super Woman may have stopped her run for the very top with the trick catch disaster, but Betsylew rallied to take 68 catches and take second for the event, one ahead of Manu Schütz in third.

#### **Following is the individual tournament results.**

Fridolin Frost, (Germany), accumulated three firsts, a second, a third, and a twelfth. Giving him best ranking points of 20.

Manu Schütz from Switzerland finished second overall. His ranking points of 62.5 just emphasise what a great performance Frido had delivered.

Alex Opri from Germany was just behind Manu Schütz, on 67.5 ranking points.

Billy Brazelton only just missed out on greater honours, with 69.5 ranking points.

The top ten was then filled out, after a large gap, by a logjam that comprised Mark Weary (120 ranking points), Junji Maiya (120.5), Thomas Szartowicz (121.5), Mark Legg (123), Daniel Bower (124), and Adam Ruhf (128.5).

For Australia: well, you should have seen Robby Croll coming to me After he saw the final scores, he was cackling with glee... Grant Perry was clear on top at 31st, followed by comeback kid Craig Carter at 44th. Another logjam then ensued: Jarrod Byham 45th, some non-Australian intruding at 46th, Roger Perry 47th, Rob Croll 48th, and me (David Richardson) 49th. Finally, there was a gap back to the only Australian debutant, Matt Barker, in 71st place. Gary Mitchell and Leonie Metzakis were at the tail of the field, as they only totalled three events between them.

The auction was held that night; despite the undoubted selling talents of the quiet men Roger Perry, Rob Croll, and Gary Broadbent, the highlight for most was the rubber band war that built up around it in the two-level foyer it was held in. I guess the thousands of bands left over from the competition had to be used somehow!

Not sure who started it, but I'll blame Alex Opri, who was picking Craig Carter and me off from the upper level early on...

The next day was a demonstration day, and it was back to steady rain. The highlight of this day was the head-to-head knockout competitions, drawn from the best eight throwers from the various events that had been held to date. With Frido sitting this day out, the star of the day was Manu, who won three of the events and was one little tree branch away from winning a fourth. Most stunning was his head-to-head individual Supercatch, where he was casually throwing his fast catch rang downwind as he trotted along at a steady pace below his MTA. The precision of those fast catch throws, with him barely having to break stride to catch them each time, was amazing.

Grant Perry had run one of the fastest Team Relay legs (unfortunately, the scores released do not show the leg breakdown times) and so was involved in one of the head-to-heads: he knocked a few out before having an errant throw in the final.

For those persistent souls ready for eight days throwing in a row, the following day was a "records attempt" day, though as it turned out only one event would be contested: Consecutive Catch. In cold, wet, and windy conditions, a number of national records were broken: Tibor Horvath went to 105 for Canada (he started doing trick catches once he reached 100), Rob Croll was similarly unconcerned once he broke his old Australian record of 765 (he extended it to 768), and Haruki Taketomi smashed the Japanese record with 1260 catches. That latter feat took some seven hours in the unkind conditions, and left him just 37 catches short of Manu's world record.

Matt Barker also extended the Western Australian record to beyond 500 catches.

The International Federation of Boomerang Associations held a general meeting that night, with a key decision being to award the 2010 World Cup to the bid from Rome. The long distance competition was to be held the next day, some distance away and organised separately from the main event, was cancelled due to strong winds.

I could go on a lot longer, but other highlights of the World Cup were the improvement of Yuuko Kondou, who has a javelin-throwing background (which shows up in her big throws), to 29th overall.

Betsylew might yet have some competition for her lonely spot at best woman thrower in the world. Everyone loved the youngest and cutest thrower, little Marie Appriou from France, and the not-much-older Alessandro Scarpellino from Italy, whose Endurance round of 37 catches marked the finish to the Individual Tournament.

Lowlights included the general lack of communication to the throwers on the day-to-day happenings. A bulletin board is not that much effort!

The scores were generally slow to come, and quite a few times subject to confusing revision.

The field was too small for the number of teams and people involved, and practice (especially for Aussie Round) was outright scary at times because of that.

Thankfully the field for Rome is a very large one, which should make practice easier and safer, and speed up the running of events.

But in the end, apart from getting to see the best of the best show their stuff, and bring some of that back to Australia, thanks go to the “international boomerang family reunion”, and to my team mates.

Life was very much enriched by team mate Gary Broadbent, who I had not met previously: what a personality, and a very generous one too, and he brought us his endearing son Logan too, who threatens to become the new Chet Snouffer via his sheer athleticism.

Cheers to Rob Croll and Craig Carter, even if you did join the rush to tip me out with that last event.

A special credit goes to Jarrod Byham, on his impressive return to the competition field, for his charm and integrity in doing so. Now let’s see how much we can get done before Rome in 2010!

#### **GROUP PHOTO WORLD BOOMERANG CUP SEATTLE 2008**



**Alessandro and Marie**



**Perry's in the Frey.**



**Jarrold & Manu**



**What did Bob Burwell do? Sorry I could not make it to Seattle to be with my boomerang friends. Instead I caught up on a holiday trip to Victoria with my wife. We had lots of Doll House miniature places to visit. (Pam's hobby) I revisited my old Army base at Balcombe. (Now a residential area) Mace oval was still there where I had throwing opportunities between 1959 and 1962. It was during that time that I met brothers Bill and Eric Onus. Bill and my father were old mates from the forties.**

**Bob gets ready for the catch with the same boomerang he used 50 years ago**



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