

**W**elcome to the first of what promises to be many publications of a newsletter addressing your needs as an Air Chair Junky. Yes, I know you are out there because I have traveled the country and world meeting with you and sharing experiences of flight. There's one thing for sure, once the bug hits you, you are hooked. I have been writing articles for various publications around the world for over ten years, and now seems like the time to take the next step...publishing. With the advent of the computer, and access to many of the best riders in the world, *Flight* was the next logical step. Inside you will find a wide assortment of news from *your* sport. Since this is the beginning I need your input to make each issue better than the one before. But most of all I need you to subscribe today. Enjoy!

*Tony Klarich*

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## Sport For the Ages



photo: Rick Doyle

**At 78 years young Mary Murphy is still flying high.**

Sit down and get ready for the ride of your life. The Air Chair is expanding the limits of what is possible on and above the water. In the five years since its introduction, the world's first flying ski has become an exciting contender in the world of water skiing. It's fun to ride, entertaining to watch, and is still new enough to be on the cutting edge.

Riders have discovered that the Air Chair has many advantages over other types of skiing devices. The foil slashes through the water with so little drag that long rides are possible without getting tired. Less drag also makes the Air Chair attractive for personal water crafts and boats with as little as 25 hp. If that weren't enough, rough water is no problem because the ski glides smoothly above the turmoil below. When it's too choppy to enjoy anything else, you can still have a blast on the water.

More good news is that you don't need a wake to make big air jumps. Lift is generated by a combination of speed and technique; it is not dependent on leg strength or wake size. Once a rider has acquired the skills, jumps and flips can be performed anywhere behind the boat. And even coming down from all that air has its benefits. The foil breaks the water first, decreases the shock, and makes for cushy landings.

photo: Bob Woolley



Mike Mack's

# AIR CHAIR HEADQUARTERS

Ski School & Resort  
on the Colorado River... Parker, AZ

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**jumps <> rolls <> flips <> hang time <> flight <> landings**

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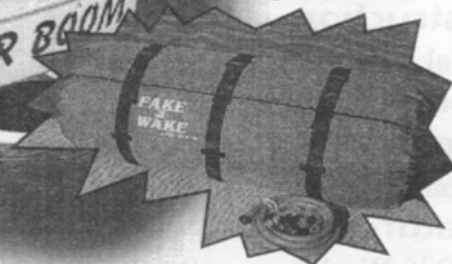
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## FAKE a WAKE™

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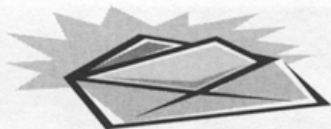
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## Letters



### The Air Chair is Perfect!

I recently purchased the Air Chair at Hayden Lake in Idaho and am totally addicted! I rode my EP only once since then. Back home on the coast, I rode the Air Chair in the ocean several times. I had to quit because of all the Great White shark sightings in the area. The only problem is jumping. As with most beginners I need some directions.

Whenever I ride the Chair I always attract a crowd. Boats follow you and cheer when you crash. This thing is a gas to ride. It's the most fun you can have on the water out of the boat. And for us old guys over 40 we can ride this thing for hours. The only thing I regret is not having bought one 4 years ago.

*Dr. Winslow*

*Northern CA*

*You're in luck, doc. The wake jump is featured in this quarter's instructional feature. As to the Great Whites, the Chair would be hard to swallow.*

### Getting Started

The Chair comes to some people easily, and some people not so easily. It's just like skiing or any other sport. Make sure to pick up a deep-V handle for learning. This will keep the rider and Chair in perfect position for a deepwater start. Here are some other tips: Use a very easy pull. Easier than a wakeboard. Put your hands on your knees, use a palms down grip, keep your back and arms straight, and shoulders back. As soon as the board planes lean forward as far as possible, and break at the waist. Don't curl your back. Look at the boat not the water/board.

Lean like you are riding a bicycle to turn.

As you get comfortable slowly straighten your back until the chair comes up on the foil and the board rises up on the water.

When flying moving the handle to your waist (down) will take you up and moving the handle up will take you down.

When you get in trouble, and you will, break forward at the waist, push the handle towards the boat, and look at the boat.

Always use the heel straps and seatbelt and go 12-15 mph until you can ride with control.

*Good luck, Robert Plamondon*

*Sounds like you have taught a few new riders. Good job Rob.*

### Dime Technique

I've added wing tips to my front foil and it adds stability, but I am afraid to take down the thickness of my foil much because my friend did it and it rides kind of squirrely now. I also tried the dime, but it didn't add noticeable lift so I will try a nickel tomorrow. I've been working on the backside roll and landing about 1 out of 10, but last week I finally started landing consistently by slowing the boat down to 22 mph from 26 mph. It's great! I'm a pilot for American Airlines and I come home and spend all my time flying the Chair.

*Greg Hess*

*In general, a shim under the front blade adds lift, while one in the rear decreases lift. Experimentation is the only way to find out what right for you. Look for in depth stories on shimming and winglets in future Flight issues.*

Got questions or comments? Send your thoughts and words to *Flight* via mail or E-mail: [hopro@ez2.net](mailto:hopro@ez2.net)

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## Room To Grow

The Air Chair factory has moved from Southern California to Arizona. More space was needed to accommodate the steady expansion of the company. Being minutes from the water and in close proximity to the Parker Strip (birthplace of the Air Chair) has also been a great boost for R&D and on water events.

## Hall of Fame Inductee

Mike Murphy was the first rider to be inducted into the Air Chair Hall of Fame by Tommy Phillips. Murphy's accomplishments have included exceptional performances in most aspects of water skiing including show, speed, hot dog slalom, kneeboarding, and more. Outstanding contributions in the world of Air Chair have included being the co-inventor, and performing the first inverted move (a backside roll in 1992). Murphy was considered the Top Gun rider from 1992-1994, and held the world consecutive flip record at 151 and 708. He has been the innovator of many tricks including the hand to hand helicopter, air backside roll, and flying chicken with sound effects, all HUGE. Congratulations to the Flying Pinto!

## Flip Record Smashed

Florida based Geno Yauchler trekked to the Parker Strip to make an attempt at Mike Murphy's incredible 708 consecutive rolls in a row without stopping or falling. Geno was sent by



Air Chair's new address:  
2175 Kiowa Blvd #102  
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403  
(520) 505-2226 FAX (520) 505-

Florida's Cypress Gardens to show that Air Chairing isn't just a West Coast phenomenon. Unfortunately for Geno, he had been practicing with a harness and release that he could hook in to and rest his arms during his run. It was ruled that he couldn't use the harness, and had to hold on to the rope. Geno took to the water with Mike Mack at the helm of his Ski Nautique, and Jon Wilborn using a counter. Geno was pretty nervous at the 6:45 AM start time, and there were a few weeds floating in the River. He hit a big clump at about roll #50, but managed to work it off after a few more inverts. Yauchler took bottled water on his chair, and was passed apples for energy. They boat had to be fueled on the run, with a five gallon container passed on the fly. Geno mostly did two variations of rolls; his wake BS Roll and air BS Roll. At nearly 4½ hours into the run he doubled the previous mark with an astounding 1,416 rolls! This amazing accomplishment earned him a place in the Air Chair

Headquarters Record Book, \$1000, a free Air Chair, and payment for all his expenses. Great show Geno!

## Spotlight

On the tube you may have seen Dean Lavelle ripping it up on "Beach Extreme", saying that "you can get more air on an Air Chair than anything". Lavelle also had a nice photo on his chair in Launch wakeboard magazine. It's nice to see this crossover.

Murphy and Geno Yauchler were recently featured in a nationwide action packed broadcast of the Extremists.

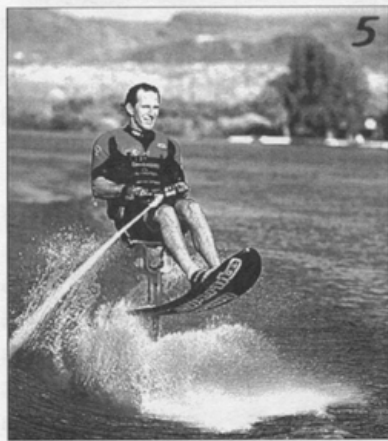
## Faces

Octogenarian *Banana George Blair* took flight recently on the Parker Strip. The Yellow One took time out to learn how to jump the Air Chair.



Blair Chairin'!





sequence photos: Rick Doyle

## CHAIR IT OUT

Tony Klarich, D.C.

The Air Chair is redefining what is possible on and above the water. Since its introduction in 1990 tens of thousands of skiers around the world have enjoyed the sensation of flight on the Air Chair. If you are among this growing crowd, one move to master is the wake jump.

### Pre-Flight

The right equipment makes a big difference. Set the rope length at 60' and boat speed at 15-20 mph, depending your weight and skill. Always use a low- or non-stretch rope such as poly-E or Kevlar. This will help reduce the chance of injury due to a flying handle. To combat aqua sprawl, gear up with a wetsuit and a Type III Coast Guard Approved life vest. You can further reduce the risk of injury by using a helmet with ear protection and trick release, especially when learning new skills.

### T-Minus 3-2-1...

Before you blast into the wild blue yonder, you should have good control of the Air Chair in the water. If all systems are

go, the count down continues...

Start with an easy approach to the wake from a few feet out. Ride your board low to the water, but not on it. Use the wake as a guide for initiating your pop. Aim so that the board rides up the crest of the wake, with your foil exiting beyond the crest. As you near the wake get air by pivoting your shoulders back from the waist. DO NOT push your shoulders back by pushing with your feet. This is the most common wake jumping mistake and will result in a nose heavy landing. While in the air keep the handle low on your knees. Excessive hand movement will cause you to loose control. Throughout your flight maintain the correct body positioning: board tip up, shoulders back, and handle down.

For your landing, keep the board pointed in the same direction that you took off from. Keep your shoulders back, handle down, and foil blade tilted up for a smooth re-entry. Once the blade hits the water your next crucial step is to get and keep the board on the water. To do this break forward at the waist, raise your hands, and push on your feet.

### Touch Down Tips

When it comes to landings, there are two common problems. The first is the nose digger. This is a result of improperly pushing on the feet at the takeoff or raising the handle while in the air. The second downfall is the dreaded double jump. Smooth it out by focusing on the landing. If your shoulders remain back and the handle stays down after you land, your Chair will turn into a bucking bronco. For both common falls, review the proper landing above.

### Wakeless Air

Good news for riders is that you do not need a wake to grab big air. Most lift is generated by a combination of speed and technique. Once you feel confident with jumping off the wake, experiment with other launching sites. Anywhere is fine, but one popular spot out very wide. The wake jump is a big-time building block that can take you higher, or prepare you to get dizzy with flips and spins. Once you fly, you'll be an Air Chair Junky too!



## Backside Roll Call

The wake backside roll is an inverted trick that contains side over side rotation. At least 100 riders have got his one down, and many more are sure to follow. If you want the challenge, get completely comfortable with 2-3 foot high wake to wake jumps first. Build up to your roll in steps, and take your time.

Buckle on your helmet, wear a USCG-T3 vest, hook up a trick release, and set the speed at 18-22 mph. Use a low stretch polyE rope

at 15' off (60'). A vertical extended pylon can also help you get more hang time to complete the trick.

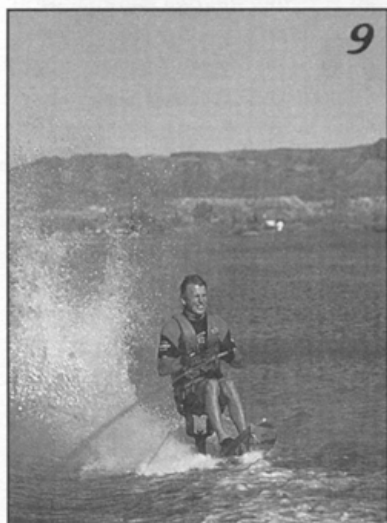
1. Position yourself about 15' outside the wake before approaching with medium intensity. The water should be about midway up the strut. As you near the wake, push down so the board hits the water, then rebounds for extra lift.

2. Aim so that the board lifts off the crest with the foil exiting just be-

yond. Throw your shoulders back aggressively to gain lift. Don't throw the roll too soon; your initial movement should be up and back.

3. As you get airborne, follow the rearward motion by rotating your wake side shoulder back. Turn your upper body and head in the same direction to spot the landing as soon as possible.

4. As the blade spins around, speed your rotation by throwing your



sequence photos: Rick Doyle Rider: Mike Murphy

Notice the key elements of a successful backside roll.  
 1. Head leading & eyes open to spot the landing.  
 2. Arms in, controlling line tension.  
 3. Plenty of height!

knees over your head with a stomach crunch. Another key to rotation is handle position. Keep it in to your upper stomach during lift off. As you get inverted, the handle has a tendency to get pulled away. Letting it out will slow rotation and surely result in an unnecessary header. Look for the landing.

5-7. To keep a quick spin going, pull to get the handle into a power position through the last half of the roll. As you spot the landing use your central strength to get the board pointing in the right direction.

8-9. When the foil hits, push on both feet and lean forward to ground the board.

Of course, your first rolls won't be as high as Mike Murphy's, shown here. With experience you'll learn to approach the wake at higher speed, throw the trick harder, and float the rotation around for an inverted move that you can really enjoy. And even coming down from all that air has its benefits. The foil breaks the water first and makes for cushy landings.

A simple variation of the wake backside roll is the backside pogo roll that is performed without the wake. Do this about 10' beyond the wake on your landing side about. It employs the same movements except that your initial throw is further back. You also need to whip it around quicker. Learning the backside pogo sets you up for free flying flips off other boat's wakes.

Tony Klarich



In a very short time Jon Wilborn has exploded onto the Air Chair scene, quickly becoming one of the top riders. It's common for new riders to get hooked on the sport, but Jon has taken that to extremes. Eating, breathing, and sleeping Air Chair has helped launch him into the spotlight. But living the sport doesn't always equate with going all the way. Jon goes big and pushing that extreme takes skill and attitude. A background in downhill mountain bike racing is a nice crossover: dealing with speed, and riding the razor's edge.

doing repeated face plants to getting huge air (with occasional face plants!) But regardless, those crowds are my inspiration and if it weren't for them, I don't think I would have kept practicing through the pain as much as I did. There's nothing like the feeling you get after landing a huge front flip in front of a crowd of hundreds of screaming river rats.

**Flight:** Who is your Air Chair mentor? How has he/she influenced your riding style?

**Jon:** Definitely Mike Murphy. I think a lot of people want to be as big as he is.

pulled me for many hours, giving instructions, helping me to recognize bad habits, and giving me the support I needed when I was on the verge, at times, of giving up. I mean a man can only take so much abuse!

**Flight:** Going big seems to be your obsession. When does big become dangerous?

**Jon:** I think going big is the name of the game, that's what Air Chairing's all about in my eyes. The bigger the better. Big is not dangerous, crashing is. Unfortunately the equipment is limiting the height at this point, but Air Chair's working on it.

**Flight:** Do you feel you go the biggest of anyone out there?

**Jon:** I like to think I do. But obviously there could be someone out there who couldn't make it to the World's and who goes higher than anyone else. But as far as the known competition goes, I feel I'm one of the highest, if not THE highest.

# Airborne Wilborn

**Flight:** First of all, what got you interested in Air Chairing?

**Jon:** A friend of mine, by the name of Frank Martinez, owned a chair and loaned it to me for a week. After learning to ride it, I was standing on the dock at the Sports Valley restaurant along the Colorado River in Arizona to watch a ski show Mike Mack puts on. I had gone to see Mike Murphy because I had heard he could flip the thing. I couldn't see too well because the dock was really crowded. Then, all of a sudden, here comes Mike Murphy on the Air Chair. He threw a barrel roll that, of course, was visible over the top of the crowd. That's when I was hooked. This was only 3 years ago, so I'm still relatively new at it.

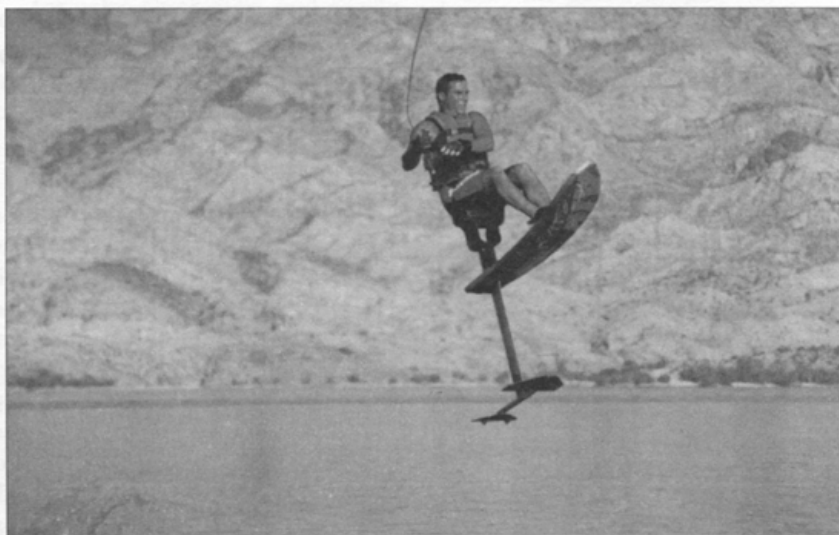
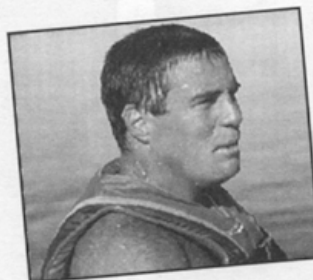
**Flight:** Talk about the California and River influences on hot dogging and showing off.

**Jon:** Well, the crowds along the River are great to perform for. There are people out there that have watched me progress from

I know I did. It really doesn't matter what trick he's doing, as long as its big, people are amazed.

**Flight:** What other riders have had an influence on your style of riding?

**Jon:** Bob Woolley



When it comes to going big, Wilborn measures up.

**Flight:** Going huge also means big falls. How do you face this, and what would you suggest to other riders who want to push the limits.

**Jon:** Well, first off I don't think about falling. I mean, I know it's bound to happen, but when I execute a trick, all I'm thinking about is what I need to do to land it. To other riders I would suggest pushing the limits slowly. Build up to it and definitely buy a helmet. I've been knocked senseless on a few occasions, but that didn't stop me from reaching my goal. My wife finally couldn't stand it any longer and bought me a helmet.

**Flight:** Your laid out gainer is the biggest and prettiest around. How did you come up with it?

**Jon:** My son kept telling me to try it. He was eight years old at the time and could do a beautiful laid out back flip on his trampoline. He just kept insisting that I try it, so I did. Bob Woolley helped me fine-tune it.

**Flight:** You've earned a lot of nicknames in Air Chair circles. Care to comment on any of these?

**Jon:** Well, let's see, there's Airborne, Wildborne, Gorilla, Aggro...I don't mind nicknames. I think nicknames signify, in a way, recognition, and there's nothing wrong with that. I prefer Airborne, though, since going big IS my obsession.

**Flight:** It's still a ways before being one of the top riders will be enough to earn a living. Comment on this and what do you do now so you can get your fix.

**Jon:** I would love to make a living at it. Who wouldn't love making a living out of something they love most? Right now I'm a foreman for a general contractor who is also one of my sponsors, so that helps. He understands the importance of practice. I have to work for a living, so

of course I can't spend all day, every day out on the water, but I do have my weekends free and after work, also, to practice. I really love to chair, so training is a lot of fun. When it becomes work, I'll probably stop. NOT!

**Flight:** What are your Air Chair goals for the future?

**Jon:** To some day win the Worlds, of course. And, hopefully, make a living at it. If I could travel around the world putting on exhibitions, I'd be in heaven. I've performed for ski shows and wouldn't mind doing some more of those. I'd also love to be the first to do a double flip, (intentionally!!)

**Flight:** How has your family supported these goals?

**Jon:** My wife Teresa has spent literally thousands of hours in the driver's seat pulling me while I practiced. We don't have power steering in our boat, so her arms have definitely gotten a work-out. And my son, Jon, sat patiently as the



Laid Out but Not Laid Back.

observer, telling me what I was doing right or wrong, and convincing the Coast Guard he's 12. I think they're probably two of the best trainers out there! They both Air Chair now, but didn't back then. So now I have to share my fly time with them!

**Flight:** What are your life goals for the future?

**Jon:** Realistically, all I want is to stay as happy as I am right now. But also to remain happily married, have my home paid for, and become independently wealthy through a few business ventures I've envisioned. I plan to continue to Air Chair as long as my health permits and hopefully watch my son, Jon Jr., win the World's one day, if that's what he wants!

## PERSONAL DATA

Current Residence: Glendora, California  
 Hometown: Pomona, California  
 Trains with: Mike Murphy, Mike Mack, Bob Woolley, Bob Rowland.  
 Age: 36 HT: 5'11 WT: 180  
 Married: 15 years  
 Age learned to ski: 8 years old  
 Highlights of skiing career: Throwing away ski and buying an Air Chair  
 Chair/Foil modifications: Tuned foil, added lift  
 Hobbies: Air Chairing, mountain biking, motorcycling  
 Endorsements: Endorsed by Mike Mack's Ski Shop, KM Wells Custom Builders, Air Chair.

# 1996 Air Chair Worlds

**F**lyers from across the country and Canada packed up their gear and headed to Soda Lakes near Denver, Colorado to compete in the first annual Air Chair World's. The event was full of fun and spirited competition as a wide range of ability levels showed their stuff for over \$2000 in prize money and the coveted title of World Champion.

## Following the Footsteps

Air Chair formats parallel wakeboarding whenever possible. By doing this riders and judges don't have to learn a whole new system, and events featuring both disciplines are easier to hold. Having a solid base of knowledge and experience from wakeboarding competitions also comes in handy when riders have questions about how to introduce new tricks, or why formats are set up a certain way. Like kneeboarding in the 80s and wakeboarding in the 90s, Air Chair junkies hope that organized competitions will inspire riders to new heights, raise the awareness of the sport, and provide an opportunity for air heads to get together and share experiences and knowledge about the sport.

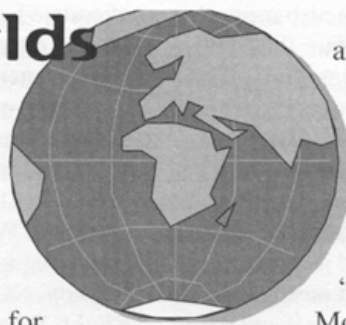
Tommy's Slalom Shop was the title sponsor of the event, and there could not have been a better choice for the first annual competition. The long list of accolades attributed super dealer Tommy Phillips gave everyone involved with organizing the competition a sense calm and

confidence. Tommy is the #1 dealer for Air Chair, and he has played an integral role in developing the first competitions and associations for both kneeboarding and wakeboarding. He has put on dozens of successful on water events, and the Air Chair Worlds was no exception.

## Free Ride

Saturday kicked off with perfect conditions in the Mile High City. Temperatures hovered in the upper 80s, the wind was calm, and the private lake was smooth. Riders came out of the woodwork with a range of styles and many equipment modifications. Cool custom decks expressed individuality and flair. Seat towers were painted and often included two through bolts to reduce foil movement and enhance high speed control. Several flyers strapped on helmets for extra protection, and nearly all had tuned their foils.

The opening round of the Free Ride let riders and judges get their feet wet. The anything goes "expression session" gave men 3 minutes, and women 2½ minutes to perform their best maneuvers without imposing a fall limit. Chief judge Darin Shapiro



and two others awarded style points based on "air", "degree of difficulty", and "performance".

Most chose to "tie high" to the Fly-Hi vertical extended pylon provided by Barefoot International for the event. With field of 24, it was not necessary to make cuts for the finals. The seeding was complete, and it was time to get to get to the real competition.

Tommy was on the microphone with his usual wit, endless anecdotes, and pounding promotions. The PA system was a great tool to get out information about the tricks, and explain exactly how the competition worked.

In the Free Ride finals the field of four women took turns showing their best jumps and carves. 78 year old Mary Murphy, mother of Mike Murphy, and grandmother of Tony Klarich, joined the gals with an exhibition ride that inspired. She flew with no problem, waved to the crowd, and even pulled a few mini jumps with the front blade clearing the water. Shonna Klarich took top honors with



The crowd & competitors of the 1<sup>st</sup> Worlds





Mike Mack and Bob Garlick get ready.

slalom carves, and a series of nice two wake and wide air jumps. She ended her run with a gainer dismount attempt, only to come up short and end up with a back flop. But watch out girls, the rumor is that a German woman is landing backside rolls already! But she, like many talented riders across the country and world should take note: if you don't compete, you can't win.

The men under 35 division was the largest group with 8 riders. Wakeboarding's influence could be seen and felt with the performance of several grab and tweak maneuvers like the Method, Cross Rocket, Reach Around, and Stiffy. Four of the competitors also got dizzy with wake rolls, air rolls, and flips. Crossover wakeboarder Ron "Air Boom" Stack came away with top honors, showing his competition savvy skills. Stack let it fly with a unique group of handle release moves of his own creation. The Floater is his base trick. He jumps up and lets go of the handle for a good second before regripping for the landing.

bag man" Saunders, ski school owner Mike Mack, Texas shop owner Bob Garlick, and home boy Bob Welsh threw some moves. Age didn't deter these seasoned riders from going big. Garlick introduced the wake gainer, with perfect straight back rotation. He landed in third, with the best showing in the "performance" category of style.

David Meyers exploded on the scene to throw numerous inverts including rolls both ways and gainers. His mastery got him second place with the highest marks for degree of difficulty. But Bob Welsh bested them all with the biggest air.

Other variations he pulled off included the Lazy Boy (hands behind the head) and Spinner (handle spins at least one time). A gaggle of grabs, releases, and tweaks put Stack on top. Men over 35 also had a strong showing as veteran riders like speed skier Charlie "the

The Pro Open Division lived up to expectation as four of the world's top riders put in great sessions. Conspicuously absent was Dean Lavelle, who made the difficult choice to pass on the World's to compete in the US Open Wakeboarding Championships in Cincinnati, OH. Geno Yauchler, Cypress Gardens show skier and all around performer, put in an impressive run with helicopters, multiple rolls and wide air front flips on both sides that blew some minds. Colorado River Rat Jon Wilborn didn't have the variety moves of Yauchler, but went big enough to edge him out. Wilborn's claim to fame is a nicely styled laid out gainer that

## Wakeboarding's influence could be seen and felt with the performance of several grab and tweak maneuvers like the Method, Cross Rocket, Reach Around, and Stiffy.

is huge. The family competition heated up between Uncle Mike Murphy, and his nephew Tony Klarich. Third off the dock, Klarich put together a smooth all around run with carves, jumps, and all the rolls. He then worked up onto some of the more difficult skills like gainers and front flips, finishing

his no fall performance with a couple combo rolls and clean gainer landing. Murphy responded by going huge. No one gets more air than the Flying Pinto whose rope angled up several feet from the top of the Fly-Hi extended pylon.

What Murphy lacks in moves, he makes up for in sheer hang time. His front flip was massive, landing 20 feet out in the flats. It came down to his last move, a submarine. No other competitor even attempted this move in competition, which Murphy made in the seeding round. With the boat speed slowed to 8 mph the Pinto took his double wake cut to build speed. He threw the air backside roll out wide, and purposely under rotated to slice own into the water. After several seconds of collective breath holding he popped up from the depths, but couldn't hold on to the extreme pull out of the hole. Saturday night most of the gang gathered at Wahoo's taco shop in downtown Denver to talk shop and let off some steam. Mike Murphy became the first inductee into Tommy's Air Chair Hall of Fame. It was followed by a rousing round of Happy Birthday to the Spotted One. The food and camaraderie were great with a field competitors and participants is just small enough to still be an intimate gathering.

## Tricks Are for Kids

Sunday was just as nice as Saturday with temperatures

up into the 90s. It was the final day for the men to compete in the Tricks format, with the scores from Saturday and Sunday added to decide the Overall titles. Tricks gives riders two passes to perform a total of ten moves in order as given on the attack sheet, five per pass. Each pass is 25 seconds. Riders choose from an official tricks list that currently contains over 40 moves, 20 of them inverted. In lieu of wakeboarding's Wild Card move at the end of the second pass, Air Chair riders who complete their second pass are given a dismount that must be performed near a landing buoy. Three judges give style points in the categories of "execution", "air", and "performance" which make up 30-40% of the overall score.

Getting competitors set up in the

morning took some time to explain the regimented rules of writing down tricks and performing them in order. There was some confusion, but not because the system does not work, it was because riders are not yet familiar with its operation. TV coverage is a major goal in years to come, and this 25 second format of rapid fire tricks is just what producers like for the tube. Free Ride, more popular with riders, doesn't come across as well on TV.

The young guns were up first, and the battle was tight. Free Ride World champ Ron Stack missed re-grabbing the handle early in his first pass on a trick he can do in his sleep, a Floater. He did make a unique dismount, the McSkidder to end his run with a disappointing fourth. The twists and turns of competition

are strange indeed. Damon Moore fell victim to not knowing the terminology of writing down his tricks, and performed a couple of repeat rolls. He too went big, with a number of impressive inverts. Al Lewin had his neurosurgeon father on hand to watch him



Ron Stack exudes style with a backside roll.

battle through one of the tightest finishes of the competition. He nailed a couple of grab moves including the Reach Around and Method Air, but failed to receive credit on a Show Gainer because his rotation

was somewhat less than end over end. He

also had trouble holding his Skidders for the required 2 seconds, but managed a super close second in Tricks and a first in the prestigious Overall award. Todd Kyser put it all together in Tricks to take the old. He scored big style points when he unleashed a new move as a transition trick. Skill and flexibility let him reach forward and lock on to the nose of his board for a solid grab on big air. He also hit an impressive front flip, one move that's tough to master. The over 35 group competition came down to who completed

the most tricks. Landing a roll was the big stopper, as 4 of the 5 competitors couldn't stick it. Only Mike Mack got to the dismount, but failed to get credit for the move he originated, the McSkidder, because he didn't hold the skid on top of the water. Mack did complete most of his other moves to garner big style points. It was enough to vault him to first in Tricks and second Overall. To see his face when he got the news he'd won was to see shock. The title of World Tricks Champ will be valuable to the man who runs Air Chair

Headquarters and Flight School on the Colorado River. The Pro Open Division was anyone's guess for top honors. Yauchler came out strong with two stand up passes including the first Flying Chicken of the meet. He went for big points on the dismount with a combo gainer, but came up short on the first revolution, receiving no credit for the landing. Nevertheless, the multi-talented skier, had set the pace. Next up, the aggro-extremist Jon Wilborn went for broke at the end of his first pass with his newly learned combo roll behind the boat. Down he went and with it his chance for the Overall. After completing pass #2, he rocked

(Continued on page 14)

## World Record Performance

### World Championship Winning Runs - Tony Klarich

Pass #1	Pass #2
Wrapped Air Helicopter FS Roll (frontside) Air Gainer Front Flip Skidder	Air Kick In BS Nose Poke Roll (backside) Wide Air BS Roll Reach Around (wake jump with tower grab) Switch FS Roll
	dismount: gainer



photo: Rick Doyle

**Tony Klarich rose above it all to sweep the Pro Open division.**



the house with another try at a gainer combo. Wilborn came around nicely on the first back flip, but stuck the tip the second time around. He still got credit for the first gainer because dismount points are awarded on a continuation basis to encourage big moves. Mike Murphy started out with by far the biggest single jump of the weekend. His opening back roll was easily a 20 foot diameter rotation, and there was a collective gasp from the crowd. Murphy completed both his run and ended with a stylish Gyro glider 540 rotation without his board hitting the water. When the results came back Murphy learned a valuable lesson about practicing runs. His last Air Front Flip was deemed out of time after video review of the trick showed that he was not in the air when time was called. Next time, he claims, he'll practice his runs with a timer to make sure they are no problem.

The last rider of the day, Tony Klarich had only to make his passes to claim first place and a sweep of the top division. Klarich went out and methodically hit both passes. With the win in the bag, he gave an explanation point to end his two day, no fall runs. The new World Overall champ stuck his single gainer dismount, and casually glided ahead about 10 feet to slap the landing buoy before sinking in the water. At the end of Tricks, there was about 30 minutes of free time while the judges tabulated scores. It was the perfect opportunity to set a new world record. Eight riders and their chairs got wet, with lines preset to equal lengths for a multiple rider tow. No one knew if the Mastercraft would have enough power with the high altitude and decreased engine performance. After one failed attempt, the eight managed to rise above, and enter

the Air Chair record book, besting the previous record of seven riders behind one boat. Back in the scoring room it was a good thing that the runs had been video taped. It was decided to use tape as back up for close calls, and there were two calls that made a difference. Maybe the wakeboarders can learn something from us this time! All in all the entire event was a crowning success for Air Chair, as riders got pumped on the idea of competing and learning new tricks. Everyone went home with fire in their eyes, ready to tell their friends and do it all again next year.

## 1996 AIR CHAIR WORLD'S - RESULTS July 20-21 @ Soda Lakes; Denver, CO

### Women

	Free Ride	
1	Shonna Klarich	18.7
2	Darla Figoli	15.8
3	Denise Bushnell	11.8



Shonna Klarich is the first women's World Champion.

### Men Under 35

	Free Ride		Tricks		Overall
1	Ron Stack	32.6	Todd Kyser	12,020	Al Lewin
2	Damon Moore	31.1	Al Lewin	11,967	Todd Kyser
3	Al Lewin	29.1	Damon Moore	9,323	Damon Moore
4	Todd Kyser	28.2	Ron Stack	8,559	Ron Stack
5	Eric Ausitn	22.7	Ron Elmore	1,211	Joe Collins
6	Mike Figoli	16.8	Joe Collins	1,164	Ron Elmore
7	Joe Collins	12.7			
8	Ron Elmore	12.1			

## Men Over 35

	Free Ride		Tricks		Overall
1	Bob Welsh	26.6	Mike Mack	4,234	Bob Welsh
2	David Meyers	23.8	Bob Welsh	4,031	Mike Mack
3	Bob Garlick	23.5	Bob Garlick	2,660	Bob Garlick
4	Mike Mack	21.3	David Meyers	1,902	David Meyers
5	Charlie Saunders	15.2	Charlie Saunders	1,894	Charlie Saunders
6	Ron Young	11.7			

## Pro Open

	Free Ride		Tricks		Overall
1	Tony Klarich	34.7	Tony Klarich	18,489	Tony Klarich
2	Mike Murphy	34.5	Geno Yauchler	15,874	Mike Murphy
3	Jon Wilborn	31.6	Jon Wilborn	14,997	Geno Yauchler
4	Geno Yauchler	31.5	Mike Murphy	14,835	Jon Wilborn

## Extreme News from Around the Sport

### Kneeboarding

David McDonald is the first person to document and ride away from a mid air double rotation back roll. He is the first one in any of the skiing related watersports to pull this move off with the help of an extended pylon and weighted down boat for a massive wake.

### Wakeboarding

"Clean" Dean Lavelle captured the prestigious 1996 World wakeboarding Title, and in the process set a world record. The event was touted as a rematch from the X-games between Lavelle, and 14 year old boy wonder and previous world record holder Parks Bonifay.

### Racing

Italy's Carlo Cassa broke the time record to Catalina and back (a distance of 52 miles as the crow flies) with a blistering time of 0:52:03. Several riders surpassed the magic one hour barrier in one the fastest races in the history of the 33 year annual event.

### Tricks

As other watersports place more emphasis on the inverted moves, competitive trick skiing is warming up to the idea of going inverted. The AWSA has approved several new flips to a list that tops ten.

### Barefoot

Newly married and thirty-something, Ron Scarpa took top honors in the X-Games. The event combined disciplines in footing with competitors performing a trick run before flying off the 18 inch ramp to distances over 80 feet.

### Amateur Scene

The INT-League is kicking off its third year in 22 states. This Tour promotes fun, with events like slalom skiing (with and without a "mini" course), kneeboarding, and wakeboarding. Air Chairing will be included at selected Arizona stops this year.



Dean Lavelle is wakeboarding's world record holder and world champion.

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