

Flight

The Air Chair Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 2: Autumn 1997

Marine R&D 31566 Railroad Cyn. Rd., #101, Canyon Lake, CA 92587

Hello fellow foilers. There's a storm on the horizon.

This sport is about to get the boost it's been needing for a few years now. Designs will improve. Riding levels will go up. Competitions will raise riding levels to new heights.

Any storm represents uncertainty, fear, and destruction. But a storm also brings new life, energy and vitality. We stand on the brink of that now. More next issue...

It's been exciting here at *Flight* headquarters. Subscriptions have been coming in and it's evident that people around the world are excited about riding the air chair. I am too.

This newsletter needs your support. Send me your stories, tricks, and best photos about *your* sport. Of course, I need your support too. The future of *Flight* depends on you, so subscribe today. You will be glad you did!

Tony Klarich

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Up for Grabs

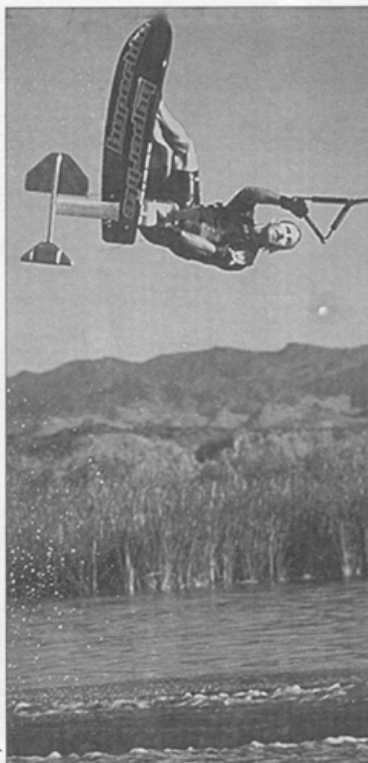


photo: Bender



photo: Klarich

Grab Your Seat Tower or Ski for a New Sensation.

No sport exists within a void. And so it is with hydrofoiling. As more riders begin to take flight on the chair, each brings their individual style, and sometimes a rider can change the way we ride. Ron Stack, going for a tail grab above, is one such rider; wakeboarder turned hydrofoiler that has helped bridge the gap with the influence of grabs.

But what are grabs and where did they come from? A grab can be defined as a clear meeting of the rider's hand and board. Air Chairing can trace its grab history from wakeboarding with far out moves like the roast beef and stale fish. But even the wakeboarders must credit their grabs to skateboarders and snowboarders. So now you know. Skate, snow, wake, air chair.

Grabbing your board takes a combination of skill, flexibility, and arm length! It requires concentration on a good jump before even attempting the grab. For those not so flexible, you can still get the feeling of a grab by locking onto the rear upper part of the seat tower during a jump or inverted move.

See "Grab Bag" on page 6 for a list of grabs currently being done.

photo: Bob Woolley



Mike Mack's

AIR CHAIR HEADQUARTERS

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

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FAKE a WAKE

by AIR BOOM™

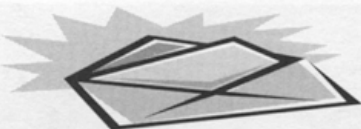
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- You gotta fake a wake!



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Letters



Here's all you need to stay in touch with the sport. It's your voice so speak up and sign up.

As for the tricks, that section is already being expanded as you will see in this issue.

GiddyUp!

Hope everyone is riding hard. We just went out today, the back gainer is coming around and the landings are getting better every day. Now I just need to lay them out for a Chair Raley.

Bill Kinnison Seattle, WA
airjunky@oz.net

Mr Junky. You are not alone in imagining a Chair Raley. That and a few double flips and 720 will all be done. Just wait and see...

Air Chair Fishing

I recently nailed a 20 lb. buffalo carp while riding. The fish brought me down but he lost his life with a nice gash to the mid section. Is this a first?

David B. Diederich

You are not alone. It's kind of like a rite of passage when you claim your first fish.

Too Much Air

I think that this newsletter is exactly what us Chair Heads need. I have written to other magazines to cover us high-flying pilots but they denied us. Maybe because we achieve too much air. Meanwhile, keep the trick help coming.

Brian Hall Southern Cal

Hooked

We have been owners of air chairs for the past 4 years. What a blast. We can ride it all day and never tire of it. Or should I say I can ride it all day.

Once I start riding Ron can not get me off unless he stops the boat. I have already owned two chairs and am planning to sell the one I have now and buy a new chair without the powder coating on the foil.

Cathy Adams
Anaheim, CA

Yellow

It is apparent that my friend Geno Yauchler hasn't gotten the big message. He could easily have done 2,000 rolls if he had been passed bananas instead of apples.

Banana George Blair
Winter Haven, FL

Yauchler did 1,416 consecutive rolls for the new record. Banana George knows about records too. He's in the Guinness World Book for having barefooted on all seven continents.

Northern Exposure

The Crane Lake Air Chair Club successfully hosted its first Fly-In on the July 1st weekend. Located about 8 hours north of the Montana-Canadian border, Crane Lake is a hotbed for watersports enthusiasts.

Three years ago the first Air Chair showed up. Now there are three boards and a dozen confirmed airheads. Because July 1st is a national holiday, it made sense to mix camping with air chairing.

The first day of the long weekend saw temperatures in the 60s and drizzling rain most of the day. While it didn't deter the riding, it did cut down on spectators. The second day proved better. A crowd gathered on the beaches and about 2 dozen newbies were given lessons by club members. The second evening saw one of the highlights... watching 15 foot Mike Murphy videos on the side of a motor home. Mike is impressive on the small screen, and even more so on the big one. The third day went well, with over a dozen new users receiving lessons.

Special thanks to Air Chair for their help and sponsorship of this event.

Ron Young
Grand Centre, Canada

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



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Online

You can punch up these hydrofoiling junkies while cruising the web: Seattlite Bill Kinnison has photos, and more. Bill and brother Jake are also stepping up with some super cool colored non skid for the feet and butt called Traxx. This page still needs content, but makes it up with the most soul of any chair related site.

<http://www.oz.net/~airjunky/>

Go to the Air Chair Link (skiing sitting down) of the home page to find several stories, tips, and photos put together by Charlie Hill. Although the updates are infrequent, this site has the most content, including the most comprehensive trick list out there. You can also tune into a running e-mail section with posts from everywhere over the past year or so. Tell 'em *Flight* sent ya! <http://waterski.com>

The official site from Air Chair has cool stuff including a parts diagram, ordering form, and more. There is also a strong photo gallery. Check this one out to see what's up and leave E-mail with the main company dudes. <http://airchair.com>

International Hydrofoil Society: For those of you with a serious affliction of foil fever surf to this home page to get plugged into some serious brain power. There's also an incredible links page for those serious about hydrofoil research.

<http://www.erols.com/foiler>

Cover Boy

Jon Wilborn busts big on this Summer's cover of Bart's Catalog. This shot is a family affair too, with wife Theresa driving and Jon Jr. along for the ride. More coverage like this is just what this sport needs.

79 Year Old Great Grandmother Celebrates Her Birthday With a Splash

Mary Murphy recently celebrated her 79th birthday with an inspirational feat. She air chaired 26 miles from Long Beach, CA to Catalina Island in one hour and fifty three minutes. The challenge was not a spur of the moment decision for Mary, who has been training daily with 3 mile walks, weight training, and hour long sets on the water. The entire event was captured from the cruising comfort of the 72 foot long Body Glove yacht acting as chase boat. Reporters from the TV show Extra and magazine people were on hand to record the achievement. Mary Murphy, mother of Mike Murphy, and grandmother of Tony Klarich, remained true to family form. She made the channel crossing without a single fall, while taking sea creature sightings of whales, dolphins, jellyfish, and a 8 foot shark in stride. "I skied to Catalina when I was 50, and have spent a lot of time in the ocean. It's what we do so it doesn't bother me a bit", she commented.

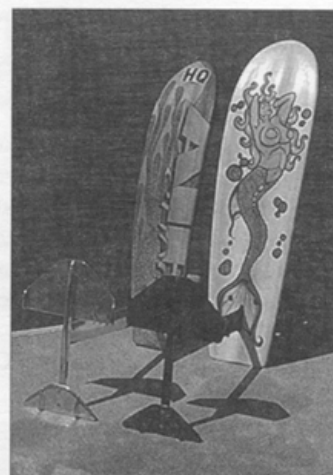
The near octogenarian was greeted at Avalon on Catalina with cheers, hugs and a birthday cake from family and friends. When asked



Mary Murphy foiled to Catalina

what her favorite part of the trip was she replied with a smile, "all the attention I'm getting from these young guys!"

She's just like the Energizer Bunny: she keeps going and going.....



Wider is better for beginners

Wide Body Board

Mike Murphy has joined forces with Southern California surf shaping legend Jimmy Nudo. Their result is the first ever oversized board complete with racy graphics. Murphy has been using the board with to help beginners get up easier on deep water starts. "It helps me teach people about 50% faster", Mike said. "The increased surface area helps on the start, and also gives stability on top of the water".





1: Start near the wake



2: Cut out past 45 degrees



3: Stay on track.
Dip your deck



4: Pull up on your knees!

CRACK THE WHIP

You don't need a wake for big air. Set up for the "crack" by cutting hard out to one side until you are about 20 feet off the stern of the boat. Coast straight ahead briefly then initiate a jump. Throw your shoulders back from the waist, avoiding pushing with your feet. While in the air

keep the handle low and steady, board straight ahead with the tip up, and shoulders back.

To recover, wait until the foil hits the water, then lean forward to ground the board. As you advance you can increase your height by getting more speed with a double wake cut.



5: Look ahead to your landing. Handle in



6: Land tip up



7: Maintain handle control



8: Shoulders forward

Stroked

Here's a great tip I learned from Dean Lavelle last summer on the Water Ski Tour. We had finished our Air Chair rides and were swimming to shore. I was doing it the hard way, taking a few strokes, then pushing my Chair ahead ever so slowly. When Clean Dean pulled up and passed me, I knew he was on to something...and here it is. When you are headed in after a ride lay

down on your board with your legs straddling the lower part of the seat tower. Now you can power paddle with ease and control. Simple yes, but it's the best way to end your run.

Helmets - Strap One On

Using your head is the name of the game for longevity in any sport. Anyone pushing their limits while learning new moves can help protect against unwanted impact by covering their cranium. Helmets may help to reduce risk of direct blows to the head from water impact. Eardrums can also be protected if your helmet has full ear cover-

age (water can still shoot through ear holes). A meeting of a head and the foil is another unfortunate risk of riding the chair. Anyone trying inverted moves and having their feet come out of the bindings can attest to how quickly the foil can swing up and around!

When choosing a helmet make sure your brain bucket fits snugly and covers both ears completely. Remember that exposed edges can catch water during a fall, so keep this in mind when buying. Also look for a helmet that is lightweight and won't soak up excessive water.

Beside protecting from direct blows, helmets are great for protection from cold. I have found mine to be much more comfortable and secure than any neoprene hood or beanie.

- Tony Klarich



The best way to paddle and protect your head

Head Over Heels

with the Air Gainer

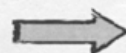
1: Turn back towards the boat a bit to take off in a straight line. Start with your ski low to begin the rotation.



2: Give the line to the boat by straightening your arm. This will help you spin head over heels.



3: As you come over the top look for the water. Adjust your rotation by opening up or staying tucked.



Quick Release

You know the feeling. The foil flies higher and higher as you try to get it down. After a bit of a battle, you hear a gurgling sound just before the foil tops out and sends you over the edge in one big drop. Next time you'll be ready. Don't fight the board back down, just lean back and do a mini-jump.

Get air by pivoting your shoulders back from the waist. DO NOT push your feet. This is the most common jumping mistake and will result in a nose heavy landing. While in the air keep your board pointed in the same direction that you are traveling. Throughout your flight maintain the correct body positioning; board tip up, shoulders back, and handle in.

To regain low and level flight after re-entry, wait until the foil hits the water, then lean forward. You've recovered control by going up to go down!

Grab Bag

Grabs are really starting to catch on, and you can too. This is the list so far, but more are sure to come!

Reach Around (tower grab: rear upper vertical tower near top of "wineglass") This is one of the easiest to do (see cover shot for positioning)

Method Air (right hand/right rail grab near foot, or left hand grabs left rail)

Nose Grab (bend forward and grab the tip)

Tail Grab: See this month's cover, right photo

Cross Rocket Stiffy (Stiffy with rail grab across board near foot)

Nancy (floater w/ two hand rail grab near feet)

Gainful Employment

This move, like many others I do is an adaptation from another discipline of skiing. I learned two ski ramp gainers in 1984 working the ski show at Magic Mountain in California. The Air Chair gainer came from that, and it was just a matter of time and falls to get it wired.

Set up with a strong cut out from the wakes to either side. Stay on edge until just before you're ready to pop.

Let up from the cut and coast briefly in a straight line. This will reduce line tension, and keep you from getting pulled sideways.

Stomp the board off the water, throw it straight back, and look back to reach and spot the landing. Lead with the head and shoulders, then follow through by crunching your stomach to speed rotation. Avoid tucking your head and shoulders back down or your rotation will immediately stop.

sequence photos: Rick Doyle



4: Pull your arm in to control your rotation. Get a fix on your landing site. The more aware you are in the air, the more time you will have to react to the flip.

Handle position is critical. Quickly give the rope to the boat by extending your handle arm as you throw it. This will keep you from getting twisted in the air. As you peak out and come around, pull the handle back in and control the line tension to style the landing.

I have found the tucked version of this trick easier than doing it laid out. To lay out your gainer lead with your head and shoulders while opening at the hips. Let the board trail behind. Be ready to crunch your stomach to get your foil back around and avoid going nose in.

Try gainer dismounts (without the rope) to get the feeling of the rotation and touchdown. When I first learned these I really accentuated turning into the boat to reduce the slack line. The driver also helped me by backing off on the throttle after I was in the air, then speeding up slowly after I landed.

-Tony Klarich



5: As the rope tightens pull in to help you spin. Try to under rotate slightly. Allowing the deck of your board to hit the water as you land will help to stop the rotation.

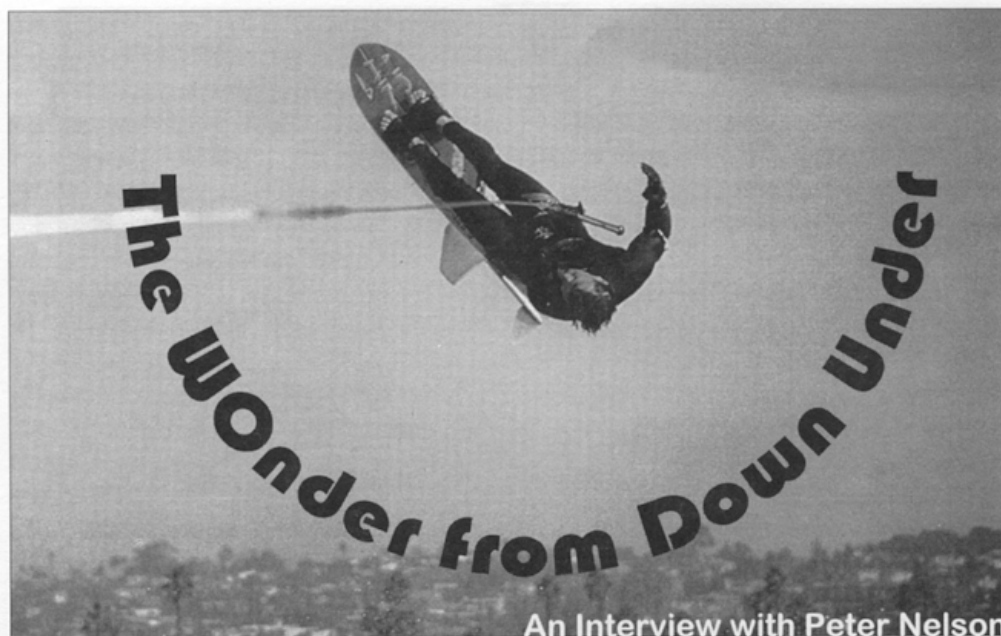


6: Landing a gainer is one of the best feelings on the water. Done correctly it will feel effortless as you float around.

Brain Waves

"I watch a variety of sports to make up new moves...motocross, skateboarding, flatland biking. They all have something to offer".

-Ron Stack



It's been an interesting journey for 36 year old Peter Nelson. Growing up in the laid back atmosphere of Brisbane, Australia is a long way from living in the heart of Los Angeles.

It started with the Aussie kid who won titles in every facet of water skiing. Soon he was doing professional water ski shows. His natural leadership skills and problem solving abilities soon drew him to the U.S. as a ski show director at the famed Sea World in San Diego, CA. Now he's the stunt coordinator of Universal Studio's award winning "WaterWorld" stunt show. It's no wonder that this man from down under can ride with the best on an Air Chair.

PBs (Personal Bests)

Long distance jump: 52.2 meters (171 feet-Moomba Masters Invitational)
Freestyle jumps: gainer & 1 ski heli
Slalom: 5 @ 35 off (National Tournament)
Barefoot tricks: front to back, back to front
Ski racing: Australian Record set in 1978 @ 191 kph (119 mph)

Flight: As one of the world's top all around skiers you've mastered most water ski devices. What is it about the air chair that stands out in your mind?

Peter: I would have to say the incredible air you can get with minimal amount of effort.

Flight: The Aussies seem to have quite a contingent of top riders. Who are some of the guys leading the way down under?

Peter: David Brown and David Hedley are two that stick out in my mind. I've spent a lot of time with both these guys and they can do it all.

Flight: What riders inspired you to achieve success on the water and why?

Peter: Back in 1991 "Murph" was riding with us down in San Diego about once a month and I can remember the air

he was getting, thinking I would like to be getting that high. I also got motivated after riding with Tony, Mack, Brownny, Rob Albright; all are great riders and each had their own stand out move.

Flight: What age did you start show skiing and what got you into it?

Peter: It was in 1988 and I was still competing in three event and trying to make a go of it, training every morning. I had already been to the States twice competing and training

at Horton Lakes in exchange for giving lessons. Skiing was going great but the bank account wasn't doing all that well. Then Brett Wing called me and asked whether I would ski with him at "World Expo 88" which happened to be in Brisbane Australia, my home town. It didn't take long to say yes! Man the talent we had there; Brett, Jack and Deon Ellison, Dinga Doyle, Gary Thompson... and let me tell you as single men back then we had a ball.

Flight: When did you get on the Air Chair for the first time? What was that like?

Peter: It was 1991 and I was down in Sydney, Australia skiing in one of the Ellison brother's shows. Jack Ellison turned up with this weird looking thing and asked whether anyone would like to try it. We all jumped at it but no one knew anything about it so we just figured it out. The thing that I remember is all the guys in the boat cracking up while I was out the back on a bucking bronco ride.

(Continued on page 9)

Flight: At the Fly-In a few years back you took a wild ride with Bob Dunham on the two man (side by side) air chair. What was that like?

Peter: That thing was crazy. Every time we thought we had the hang of it the thing would take off in the other direction and you couldn't stop it. I think it could work with some more development, maybe with one strut. I was glad we were wearing helmets because we banged heads a couple of times.

Flight: The ski show you directed at Sea World was one of the first places to demonstrate the air chair. Tell us about the air chair connection and show skiing.

Peter: It's a natural combination. I can still remember the audience of 3,500 roaring every time we jumped it on the first pass. Then we had them screaming when we flipped it on the second. No one had seen anything like it. Last year I rode it at "Jet Jam" at Anaheim between jet ski races and it turned out to be huge. Every time I took to the water people were running down to the shore to get a glimpse of the air chair.

Flight: The site at San Diego was pretty tough to perform in. Tell us about it.

Peter: That site is the hardest to perform in, as it was built in a horse shoe design so the boat was always turning. On week-ends we had all the wakes from boat traffic to deal with. The salt water didn't worry us except for the occasional sea lion and sand shark. We used to play practical jokes with all the new skiers at the start of the season. I used to hide underneath the

dock and someone would bring a rookie down and point out a shark. When they were close to the edge, they would get pushed in and I would grab their legs. Talk about a move.

Flight: I know you are now the director of the WaterWorld stunt show at Universal Studios in California. How's that going?

Peter: The show itself is going great. Last year we were awarded the most outstanding live show in the world.

That was a great honor. We also have lots of stunts that have never been done before and I was involved with their design which was also a great experience.

Flight: Not much time to ride. Where do you train now?

Peter: I don't have to tell you

but so the readers know I train with Tony, Shonna, and "Murph" at Canyon Lake whenever I can. That's been fun because we do everything: jump, slalom, bare-

foot, air chair.

And of course I'll go up and ski the River with Mack and Vicki.

Flight: Being proficient on an Air Chair should also come in handy with your latest venture, Amphibian Stunts. What made you get into this?

Peter: In the past I've had the opportunity to do TV stuff and always enjoyed it. Then I was the water stunt consultant and stunt man for the "WaterWorld" commercial. It was just a natural progression to specialize in water related stunts for movies.

(Continued on page 15)



"Nello" floats weightless with his patented one arm roll

Taking Off

The 3rd Annual

Air Chair Fly-In

photos/words Tony Klarich, D.C.

Air Chairing is starting to really catch on. Over 12,000 have been sold since the sport was invented in 1991, and this year was better than ever. In response to this increasing hunger for the new extreme sport, over 300 Air Chair aficionados gathered from across the U.S. and Canada to completely submerge themselves in mind and body. Annually held the last weekend in September, the 1996 weekend event was the largest yet, with temperatures in the 80s and 90s, clear skies, and light breezes. Attendees from cooler climes were having a great time in the Indian Summer of the desert Southwest.

Decks came in a multitude of styles and colors



Ron Stack Rolling on the River

Year In Review

The past twelve months have been very active for Air Chair. Sales keep moving up and that has precipitated moving from the cramped space of Southern California to wide open well-springs of Lake Havasu City, AZ. As riding levels increase rapidly the number of outstanding pilots who jump and flip keeps rising.

The first World Championships have also heralded the establishment of competition. In July, 34 flyers from across the country and Canada packed up their gear and headed to Soda Lakes near Denver,

Colorado to compete in the first 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.

Competition riding is new to the Air Chairing, but the ideas behind the competition formats are not. In an effort to avoid reinventing the wheel, rules and 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.

Competitions, organized events, and mega-media coverage are establishing Air Chair as a sure and steady performer. About 1,500 chairs were sold in 1996, and the numbers are increasing. As more people learn to ride, and teaching techniques improve, the whole scene is snowballing.

Fly-In on the River

This year's Fly-In was by far the best to date. More people, better organization, and a world-class competition drew over 300 to the 3-day event. The Fly-In is to foilers what Boardstock is to wakeboarders.

Friday was busier than ever at Mike Mack's Arizona Shores Resort and Ski School, with riders pulling in from two hour drives across the desert from Phoenix and Las Vegas. Several boats were on the water ready to give tows along with tips from top riders. Many took advantage of the exquisite weather, lack of wind, and smaller crowds before the weekend.

Saturday kicked off early with early bird riding at daybreak. Coffee and doughnuts awaited those from the water or those rising sleepy eyed from one of the 11 rooms at the resort. Others stayed at nearby hotels, camped out, or bunked down just about anywhere.

The group photo was one of the first priorities. A new record was set for the largest number of Air Chairs in any one spot at 55. With everyone together it was time for a few words and awards.

Michael S. Lambers, traveled the furthest, making the trek from East Rochester, NY. Others hailed from 14 more states across the country. Comments were made about how Geno Yauchler had recently shattered Mike Murphy's consecutive flip record (without stopping or falling). Yauchler, sponsored by Cypress Gardens in

Florida, exactly doubled the old record with an astounding 1,416 in 4 1/2 hours. Next, it was time for dry land classes with the masses. Topics included foil tuning, teaching beginners, and competition training. After class dozens of riders took their turns at going for air. The main

river in front of the resort, "Show Alley", was the site of many a flip attempt, and high flying jump. Two ecstatic riders rode away from back rolls for the first time.

The riding crowd was more diverse than ever. Youngsters hopped on sized down Air Chairs, looking to the future. Several women are progressing nicely. World Champ Shonna Klarich led the squadron with numerous jump variations.

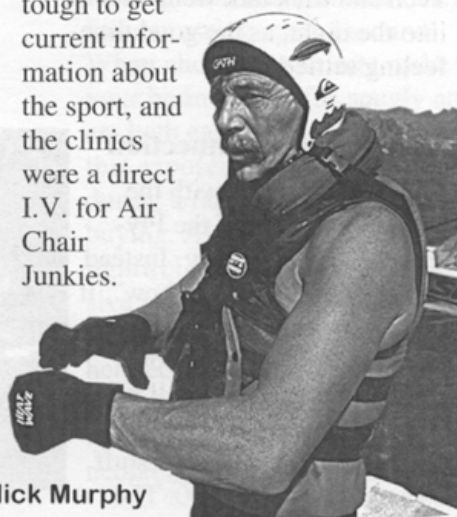
The Fly-In is to foilers what Boardstock is to wakeboarders



Vicki Mack Smiles and Skids

The oldest rider of the event was 78 year old Mary Murphy, who acted like the Energizer Bunny with long distance endurance rides that inspired many.

After lunch and more free riding it was back to dry land training with top instructors. Tricks taught included the wake jump, helicopter, front flip, and gainer landing. More than a hundred gathered for the latest thinking in training, and the video cameras were rolling to be played back at home over and over. It's tough to get current information about the sport, and the clinics were a direct I.V. for Air Chair Junkies.



Nick Murphy
landed his first Backside Roll



Saturday night's alright for flying. Pizza party at the shore.



Damon Moore gets completely laid out on a gainer during the Parker Dam run

Saturday night was party time, and pizza was the order. The crowd gathered was decidedly different. Older, more reserved, and affluent. The shorts are volleys and the shoes are tennis. There's no peer pressure in this group for tattooing, body piercing, or who can wear the longest corduroy shorts. Men 30-50 seem to be drawn to the sport. Afflicted with the need for hang time, most are able to fulfill their flights of fancy with big jumps and soft landings.

In between the slices and sodas, a good old fashioned raffle was in effect, with lots of prizes like T-shirts, hats, and low-stretch ropes. Tech and trick talk went on well into the night, as the good time-feeling settled in.

Competition Connection

Sunday kicked off with the first competition of the Fly-In's three year history. Instead of the "All Air Chair Show", it was every man for himself in the Free Ride competition three minute or three fall run. Six of the world's best riders took turns showing their stuff to a crowd of over 200. The action was a 35 minute

adrenalized demonstration of the best riding ever assembled. Johnny "aggro" Wilborn kicked it off with *huge* back rolls and laid out gainers. The twenties crowd was lead by Damon Moore with his picture perfect gainers and smooth big style. Local Brain Vasely had won a local INT-League Air Chair tournament, but got beat by the pressure and fell early. Wakeboarder turned air chairer Ron Stack injected his unique style to score big points with moves like the floater (handle release while mid air in a jump) and grabs. But Mike Murphy took first place with big, consistent air, and smooth moves. Murphy locked up his victory with a trick of his creation: the "sub".

The three judges loved it when the Flying Pinto did a backside roll and completely submerged himself for several seconds before rising and riding away.

Dam Run

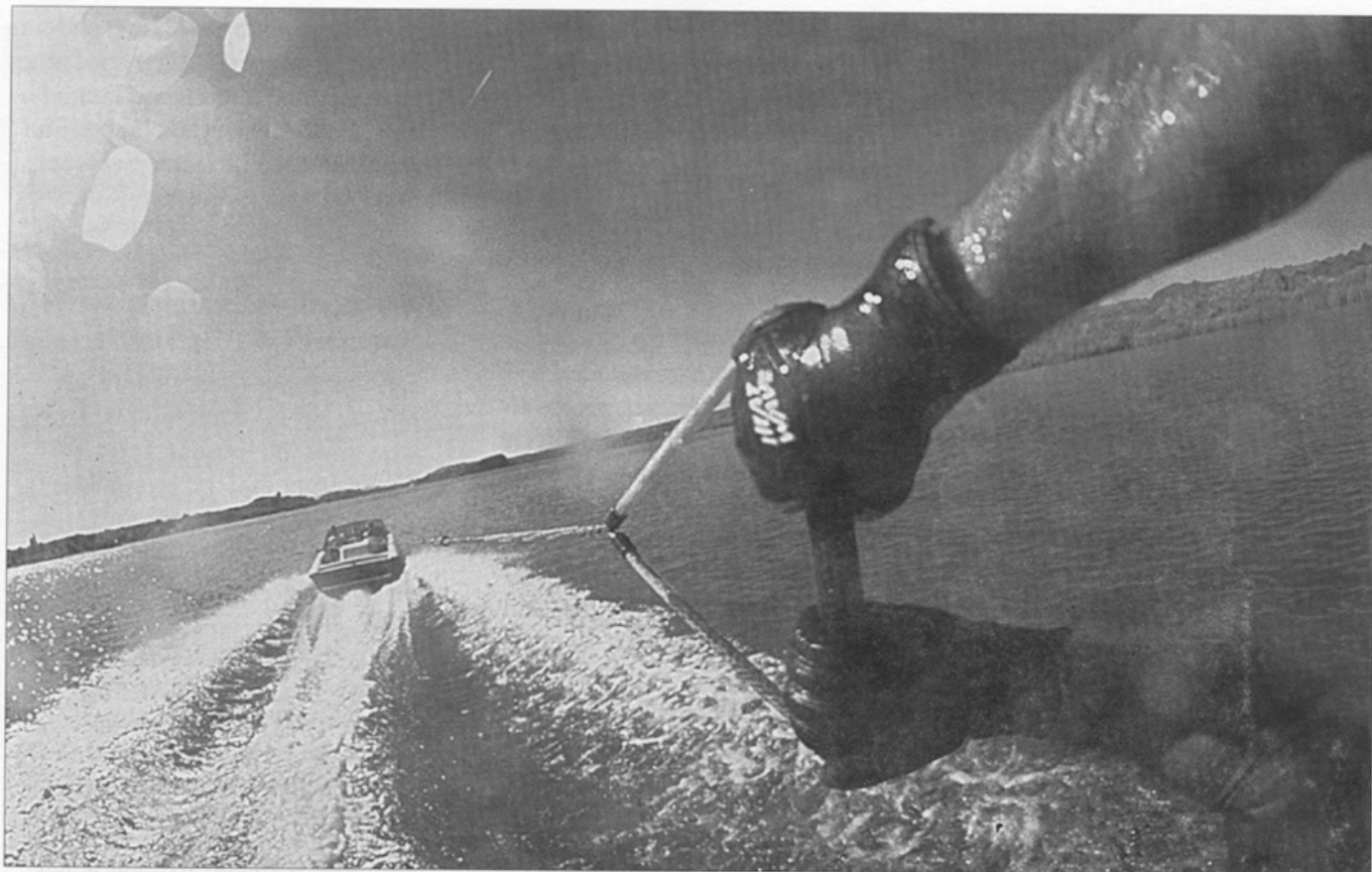
The Fly-In's final organized event was the River run, a 15 mile round trip from Mack's to the Parker Dam that a flotilla of boats took part in. Like bees taking flight, riders buzzed the banks and boats with a swarm of jumps and flips. At the Dam, tow boats took a break to bask in the glow of a return of a birthplace, like the spawning of salmon. But in this story the old guys just get stronger, and everyone looks forward to one more perfect ride.



Relaxing Near Parker Dam



Livin' Large!



Photographer Rick Doyle used a remote control helmet-cam on Tony Klarich to put you in the action.

UPPER: Mike Mack of Arizona Shores Resort on the Colorado River engages in radical power slalom: short, tight turns, leaping back and forth across the wake. The weightless sensation of flight is certainly amplified during the power slalom.

LOWER: Jon Wilborn, a frequent weekend skier on the Colorado River's famed Parker Strip, prepares for a velvet-smooth landing after completing this booming layout rear gainer. If you cannot believe he has completed a layout flip and is still at least 8 feet high, ask Jon to show you. He is on the strip almost every weekend all summer long (you will make his day).

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Extreme News

Wakeboard

Following close on the heels of the double roll in kneeboarding, Darin Shapiro has become the first wakeboarder to perform a double rotation maneuver. He calls his double front flip the Speedball. 15 year old Parks Bonifay answered Shapiro quickly with his double version of a flip, the double Tantrum. Both take huge air off a double up, quick rotation, and balls. When will someone do it on an Air Chair?



photo: Tom King

Shapiro's "Speedball"

Barefoot

33 year old Peter Fleck surprised everyone but himself with a first place finish in barefoot jumping at the X- Games in San Diego. Fleck is the director of World Sports Entertainment which puts together the talent for several ski shows including Sea World in San Diego. Fleck is a friend of the chair, and has been trying to get consistent with his backside rolls.

Air Boarding

The Rat Pack on the Colorado River is at it again. Mike Mack and associates have dusted off their air boards after four years in storage. Laird Hamilton of tow-in surfing fame has taken a liking to

the wakeboard with a hydrofoil, and he wants to ride Hawaiian waves with it.

With renewed interest there are now a few groups working on the contraption, and it won't be long until you see some insane moves on it.

Distance Jumping

Bruce Neville has extended his own distance jumping record to 222 feet at the Extreme World Cup last July in Orangeville, Canada. Jumpers are pulled through the course at 35 mph over a six foot ramp. They generate speeds of over 60mph and heights of over 20 feet. Recent advancements in jump skis have sent jumpers flying. The new breed of oversized skis are much longer and wider.

Just Do It All

The organizers of the US pro tour are at it again with the first ever iron-man skiing event. The "World's Greatest Skier" will be held on the Monday and Tuesday after the Wakeboard Worlds. The two day test of endurance and skill is slated to feature an amazing eight events including wakeboarding,



Photo: Art Brewer

Mike Mack on his original Air Board

kneeboarding, barefooting, slalom skiing, distance jumping, freestyle jumping, and a wild card behind a boat. Favorites of the competition are Dean Lavelle, Zane Schwenk, Tony Klarich, and Dave Reinhart.

Trampoline Training Bounces Up

Extreme riders everywhere are pulling off inverted moves. Those who have the flipping fever are discovering that the trampoline is a cool way to train and show off. Wakeboarders especially have taken flight. Most the pros use them, as evidenced at the season opening Orlando stop of the Pro Wakeboard Tour. Three large round tramps were the stage where the best riders played to the crowd with their aerial acrobatics.

The Ups

Jumping with and without a handle helps train your body for the motions on the water. This crossover training heightens aerial awareness; essential if you want to learn to spin or flip. You focus on better spots for landings and learn proper handle position. There's more: strength, agility, and aerobic capacity can all be increased by leaps and bounds. It's easy to go through dozens of inverts in a short period of time, impossible behind the boat. Wakeboarders find moves like the tantrum, scarecrow, and air raley prime candidates to leap through. Radical kneeboarders, trick skiers, freestyle jumpers, and air chair riders can perform rolls, front flips, and turning moves like a 540 or mobius.

The Downs

In 1984 I was showing off in a buddy's backyard, over-rotated a back flip, double bounced, and landed on a barbecue. I got 22

(Continued from page 9)

Flight: You got a pretty good gig doing some marine work in St. Martin for the movie *Speed 2*. How was that?

Peter: It was awesome. I wish we had been there longer, but it was just great to be involved with some of the best in the industry.

Flight: What kind of stunt work does Amphibian Stunts do?

Peter: Like I said before we specialize in marine related stunts and being on the water all my life has given us the edge in this type of work and given the chance we will prove it.

PETER NELSON'S PERSONAL STATS

HT: 5'10" WT: 175 lbs. Age: 36 Birthplace: Brisbane, Australia
 Top Skiing Accomplishment: Winning the Australian Nationals in barefoot, ski race, and flat kite the same year. Setting the speed record and jumping at the Moomba Masters.
 Top Air Chairing Accomplishment: Being the first person to land a back roll in Australia
 Favorite Air Chair Move: Long Distance Mule Kick
 Favorite place to ride: The River, Canyon Lake, Lake Somerset (Australia), Sea World
 Hobbies: roller blading, skateboarding, camping, salt water fishing, ping pong (Dinga & Nello vs. Mack and Klarich rematch coming soon).
 Sponsors: Arnette, Quicksilver, Dolphin Wetsuits Australia, Mike Mack's Ski School and Resort
 Married: Jill 29, two boys Jake 3 & Kurt 2

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Nelson, one of the world's top all around skiers, does it all.

Slalom (far left)
 Soaring off the ramp (left)

Back Barefoot, one foot (below)

X - News...

stitches on my arms, the worst part being an eternity of scrubbing out the embedded soot. Double bouncing isn't the only danger. Land wrong and it's easy to twist a knee, strain a back, or worse. My mishap kept me off the trampoline for over 10 years, but hanging out with the pro wakeboarders has me psyched to fly again. My new 14 foot round trampoline cost only \$239 at Costco, and it only took about 20 minutes to put together. It's great so far, especially since it's set ground level!

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