

American Yo-Yo Association Newsletter

September 1995

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AYYA Newsletter

September, 1995

New address for the AYYA

627 163rd S. - Spanaway, WA 98387 (415) 871-4197

AYYA LOGO

Almost two years ago I sent a letter to Duncan Toys with two different logo designs asking for their support. The sales manager wished me luck with the association and said that they could not offer any financial support at that time. I made the mistake of thinking that since he didn't object to the designs, that there was no objection. NOT! At least not when upper management saw the eagle design (in August). They (Duncan Toys) have requested that the AYYA stop using the eagle. I do want to acknowledge and thank Mike Caffrey (sales mgr. for Duncan) for their support for the contest in Las Vegas. (YOMEGA also.)

Now we have to use another design for the AYYA. The YO design (as seen on the front of this issue) will be used until a design is voted on by the membership. It can remain as the YO design or be a design submitted by any member. If you want to submit a design for consideration by the membership, get it to me by November 1st, 1995.

Transaxle Yo-Yos

For those of you who might not have experienced them yet, transaxles are 'sleeping' Yo-Yos that do not spin in the open loop at the end of the string. Rather, the string is locked around a ball bearing or a plastic sleeve bearing that encircles the central shaft of the Yo-Yo. This allows the Yo-Yo to spin on the bearing, greatly reducing the amount of friction, resulting in incredibly long spins. They also 'sleep' more easily and string adjustment can practically be ignored. Their best use is for teaching intermediate players tricks that require long spins.

These Yo-Yos generally do not loop well since they tend to 'sleep' when they reach the end of the string even when it is thrown out. In the hands of an expert, they do engender a different style of play and some players are using them for freestyle performances. In AYYA competitions, the freestyle is the only regular division in which transaxles are allowed. Transaxles can be found in a select number of upscale toy and kite stores or from YOMEGA - 1-800-338-8796, TOM KUHN - 1-800-US YOYOS or Infinite Illusions sells them all at 1-800-54 TORCH.

Prices run from \$7.50 to \$100.

Yo-Yo Ratings

What's your favorite Yo-Yo? There is no "One Yo-Yo fits all occasions.". If you want to know how I rate your favorite, let me know and I'll be as objective as I know how and give you reasons for the rating. Scot Rans of Minnetonka, MN requested my rating of the Original Silver Bullet. I'm glad to do the rating but unfortunately Tom Kuhn has discontinued that model so if you have one, hang on to it. You still see quite a few top players using the Silver Bullet as their Yo-Yo of choice for competitions. The Silver Bullet is a dismountable (you can screw it apart) metal (aluminum) Yo-Yo with a wood axle sleeve. Spin duration is above average due to

the enhanced rim weight distribution (centrifugally weighted) String tricks are easier than most Yo-Yos due to the radial entrance to the string groove making it a bigger target to hit (halfway between a butterfly and a regular Yo-Yo). For looping, that same radial entrance makes loop control a bit more difficult, something that most players won't notice until they start looping with both hands. The Silver Bullet, at almost 2 oz., is a bit heavier than most. This makes it a bit more wearing on the finger and somewhat more punishing (ouch!) if not caught correctly. The biggest problem to watch for is over tightening the Yo-Yo when it is screwed together. The wooden sleeve is used as the stop (spacer) and if compressed, will distort, affecting play and axle life. Another minor problem in using the wood sleeve as the stop is the difficulty of maintaining precise measurements with wood. If the length of the sleeve is slightly over length, the Yo-Yo will tend to 'climb' while looping and the return response from a spinner can be sluggish. If the sleeve is slightly short, the Yo-Yo will tend to 'bite' while doing string tricks. This does not happen often. I only mention it so that if you encounter one of these problems, you know what to do (change the axle). When all is said and done, the Silver Bullet ranks as one of the best Yo-Yos ever made with its biggest problem being price, \$30 to \$60.

Overall rating, a 9. For looping, a 6

New Tricks

There are two new tricks on the AYYA trick list. Warp Drive and Time Warp. Warp Drive is an inside loop into around the world. This is continued for three circuits in competition. Time Warp is around the world forward into hop the fence into around the world backwards. These tricks are important regeneration tricks for building freestyle routines.

Bylaw Changes

Of the nine bylaw changes submitted for members vote in the last issue of the AYYA news, numbers 2 through 8 were adopted with numbers 1 and 9 being defeated. Following are the changes in the bylaws:

Article V #3. First sentence changed to; [The number of elected directors shall be no less than five or more than fifteen.]

Article V #8. Change of quorum to [two-thirds of the total number of directors].

Article V, #9. Remove the word present wherever it appears in #9.

Article VI, #6. Change last line to [the general membership].

Article VI. Add a #8; A statement of Board Members' limited liability and/or a statement of possible blanket liability coverage. (This will be taken up at the annual meeting.)

Article VII. Add; Board members may not hold AYYA paid jobs.

Article XII, #2. Change first sentence to; All amendments proposed by a member shall be in writing and may be presented to any Board Member.

After Article VI, #8 has been composed and accepted by the board, that and the other changes will be incorporated into a new printing of the bylaws and disseminated to the membership in the following AYYA News.

YO'ER FORUM

Got something you'd like to tell the Yo-Yo world about or something you'd like to see discussed? Write it in to the AYYA's Yo'er Forum. If it stays in good taste, we'll print it.

Here is a joke sent in by six year old Mikaela Krantz of Edina, MN. "Why did the Yo-Yo cross the road? ... because the chicken was out walking the dog." How does a six year old think this way?

Casey Cardwell (I think Casey is about 13) of Redmond, OR turned in this poem when assigned to write a poem about an object in the shape of the object. He received 12 points out of a possible 10 for this effort.

If you have trouble reading it, it says;

Walk the dog, around the world, creep around the corner. Reach for the moon, hop the fence and you'll be a great performer. Up and down loop the loop is a three leaf clover. Now that you've done it once, can you do it over?

Nice job Casey.

The AYYA Trick List

A copy of the updated trick list is enclosed with this issue. Members are invited to submit changes and additions for discussion and/or approval. One of the main considerations in structuring the trick lists is to create a logical progression as the player moves up through the various divisions. In each division there should be tricks that build upon what the player has learned before as well as new tricks that introduce new moves that will be used in the next, more difficult division. Some examples of how this works are:

Walk the dog with 2 tics becomes walk the length of the foot, becomes creeper walking back to the hand, becomes creeper out and back.

The Breakaway evolves into Man on the Trapeze, then add the somersault and on to Double or nothing.

Forward pass to loop the loop and with the spinner becomes skin the cat and on to three leaf clover then with around the world becomes warp drive which introduces regeneration and on to the freestyle.

Division Changes

There were some division changes instituted at the World Champion contest in Las Vegas in July. This was brought about through observing what has happened over the last few years in the better competitions. As the players got better and better, the tricks got harder and two handed tricks were introduced not just as tie breakers but as compulsories in the championship division. This created a huge gap between the advanced division and the championship division. Players that had reached the point where the advanced division no longer challenged them found themselves with nowhere to go unless they had become good two handed players. It didn't matter how good a one handed player they were, if they couldn't do a lot of two handed tricks they didn't have a chance in the championship division. In order to solve this problem, a Masters division was inserted that consists of ten difficult one-handed tricks with two handed tricks reserved as tie breakers. The Championship division became the Pro/Am and consisted of the Masters compulsory tricks plus a freestyle performance. For competitions where there are no freestyle judges available, the ten Master tricks plus the ten two-handed tricks can constitute the Pro/Am division.

Club News

The most active club that I know of remains the Willie Bird's Flyers in Santa Rosa, CA. They have monthly meetings and put together some of the best competitions you've ever seen. Contact John "Pookie-Yo" Stangle to get on his mailing list or for upcoming club dates. I'm planning to be at their meeting in October.

Hey! You folks out on the east coast. Particularly if you live in the D.C. area. There is a new club that has just started in Springfield, VA. They are having Yo-Yo share, show & practice get togethers and have also set up a series of Yo-Yo contests to start on Sept, 23rd through Nov.

11th. The meetings are open to anyone who wants to learn, practice, show off or trade Yo-Yos.

Contact Dick Stohr @ (703) 451-3439

If you have a Yo-Yo club, let us know and we'll plug it for you.

CONTEST REPORT

Bill Alton says they had a great time in Portsmouth, N.H. for the N.E. Regional and the Yo-Yo Olympics. The contest was held on Sept. 9th and was a test for Bill's new events. The winners of the standard competition were:

Beginners;

1st. Dana Perkins

2nd. Mr. Bay

3rd. Scott Makar

a

Advanced;

1st. Taro Yamashita

2nd. Ron Frank

3rd. Bonnie Matthews

The Olympic events:

Shooting Gallery;

1st. Mr. Bay

2nd. Ron Frank

3rd. Bonnie Matthews

Dragster;

1st. Ron Frank

2nd. Taro Yamashita

3rd. Bonnie Matthews

Hockey;

1st. Taro Yamashita

2nd. Bonnie Matthews

3rd. Mr. Bay

Yo-Yo Pharmacist;

1st. Mr. Bay

2nd. Ron Frank

3rd. Dana Perkins

Yo Dash;

1st. Ron Frank

2nd. Bonnie Matthews

3rd. Taro Yamashita

Looks like Bill has put together some fun events.

Upcoming Competitions

1995 National Championship will be held Saturday, Sept. 30th in Chico, CA at the Downtown Park.

This remains one of the best attended competitions in the world and a great place to hang out with some of the best players in the country. The popular pre-contest Friday night dinner will be held as usual. Call Bird in Hand, 1-916-893-0545 for info.

WA State and the N.W. Regional is in Spokane, WA this year on Saturday, Oct. 21st at the Northtown Mall on Division and Wellesley starting at noon. Call Rick Stoneman, 509-535-2120 for

additional info.

A series of contests and lessons are coming up in the D.C. area culminating in an championship competition. They all start at 1 PM.

Sept. 23rd. at the Springfield Mall, Springfield, VA.

Oct. 7th. at the Shops of Georgetown, 3222 M St., WA D.C.

Oct. 21st. at the Chevy Chase Pavilion, 5335 Wisconsin Ave. NW in WA, D.C.

And the championship back at the Springfield Mall on Nov. 11th. These contests are being sponsored by KNOCKIN' WOOD TOY STORES.

These competitions will feature a brand new division for youngsters 8 years and under. This beginners contest has only non-sleeping tricks. Throw down, hop the fence, forward pass, loop the loop and over the falls. This is a great way to get the younger ones into the action. Bring the kids and join in. This is a great family pastime. You can also get in on the Yo-Yo Share, Show and Practice get-togethers on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Contact Dick Stohr @ (703) 451-3439 for contest or meeting info.

The Las Vegas Open will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 9th, 4PM at the Showboat Casino during the Winter IJA Festival. Contact Bob Baab, 702-399-3217 for info.

Collectors Corner

There is a collectors price guide out. Something that has been talked about and eagerly awaited by many collectors and would be collectors for quite some time. But, unfortunately, I rate this particular guide as POOR. It is obvious that it has not had the input of any serious collector. It has been mentioned that it is a good thing to have when you go to swap meets and antique stores. The reason being that some really rare Yo-Yos are listed at quite low prices. It also lists some real dogs at high prices as well as some that can still be purchased at your local toy store for less. It by no means is anywhere near complete. It does also list many spinning tops. You may order this publication by phone. L-W Book Sales 800-777-6450. \$14 including postage.

Chris Cook, a name recognized by most serious collectors, has a book coming out but it won't be available till next year, possibly in the spring but probably not until the fall. He does have a publisher but the photographs are not finished yet. Look forward to it.

As usual, Lucky Meisenheimer has some interesting tidbits on collecting for us. A FYI flash on a recent forgery being sold. Can you believe it? Now we have to watch out for fakes. What flake started this rip-off? Lucky has also put together this nifty little Size, Shape and Grading Guide for us. Thanks and three cheers for Lucky! Whatta Guy!

I have two Yo-Yos that I picked up on my travels as a Yo-Yo pro some years back and I have never talked to anyone who has ever seen one like them. They are from Sweden made blanks (wood). One is painted like a Duncan Super with a contrasting stripe and is gold stamped with DOUBLE DOOZER OFFICIAL RAINBOW on one side.

The other one is painted rainbow style (sprayed from the right and left with different colors) and has a whistle cap in the side and is gold stamped with DOUBLE DOOZER WHISTLER. The opposite side of both Yo-Yos has a large cavity (1 inch in diameter) tooled out of the center with a yellow plastic cap filling it inscribed with the words "Patents applied for". Does anyone out there have any info on this one?

I recently made some carrying cases for my Yo-Yos. I had been told that one of those hole saw blades that you install door handles and locks with, would cut the right size holes in foam rubber but that you had to file the teeth all the way down or they would just tear the foam.

That sounded like way too much work. I found that if you have a reversible drill, that running the blade backwards works like a charm. I bought cases from a gun shop with the foam already in them. Someone said they had seen the same case in 'K' MART.

Do you have any questions about collecting? Ask Lucky at 7300 Sandlake Commons Blvd. #105, Orlando, FL 32819

Yo-Yo HALL OF FAME

Well again, Lucky follows through as others fall down. He wrote the enclosed page entitled Pedro Flores as a nomination to the Yo-Yo Hall of Fame. This is the way it is done folks.

Anyone care to pick up the gauntlet? How about relatives of Yo-Yo men? Anyone have old pictures of Yo-Yo greats?

Yo-Yo RECORDS

Let's see what's out there. THE record book, Guinness, hasn't seemed interested in publishing new and different Yo-Yo records other than the old endurance type of "How many days can you Yo-Yo without stopping" or "How many thousand loops can you do". The last one has created a question that I've been asked over a hundred times. "How can they do so many loops. Doesn't their string come unwound or kink up?" The answer is they do these loops in a manner that is illegal in Yo-Yo competitions. They either alternate their loops inside-outside or in most cases they install a swivel in the string next to their finger which keeps the string at a consistent torsion. I did try for the record one time a few years ago. I got to a little over 6000 loops when my string broke. After doing that many loops. I decided that I could find better things to do with my time. This all brings me to the reason for this heading. Let's start our own record book, right here in the AYYA News. How about two formats. One would be claims (unsubstantiated) and the other would be official records. Official records would have to be witnessed by some type of official in front of other witnesses i.e. a contest judge or news reporter or school official etc. Aside from the loop records there can be records for spinning time, spinning speed, around the worlds, reach for the moons, two-handed reach for the moons, two-handed loops, longest walk the dog, most Yo-Yos working for 15 seconds(one person), the most people Yo-Yoing at one time, the fastest 100 yard dash while Yo-Yoing, etc. For all spinning tricks there will be records for regular Yo-Yos and records for transaxle Yo-Yos. Because of the many variables involved in getting the Yo-Yo back to the hand, spinning records should be timed to extinction of the spin. Submit your claims and/or official records (accompanied by officials' affidavit) to the AYYA.

Board of Directors Election

The results of the last election are as follows: Donna Duncan, Lucky Meisenheimer, Dale Oliver and Ben Serkin were elected to serve for two years. Jim Johnson, Steve Speegle and Hans Van Dan Elzen to serve one year. From now on, board members will all be elected to two year terms with four positions coming up one year and three positions the next year. There are three positions to be filled in this upcoming election. The three outgoing Board Members will be on the ballot (if they choose to run again) as well as any nominations sent in by the membership. Send any nominations for the board to AYYA - 627 163rd S., Spanaway, WA 98387 There will be a ballot sent out with the next AYYA News for the members vote. All nominations need to be sent by Nov. 1st, 1995.

Build a Memory

By Val Krantz

Face it, we all have at least one thing in common; that being the love for the little round

disk we call the
yo-yo. We also all know that some of our fondest childhood memories revolve (no pun intended)
around
the fun that we had with our yo-yos - on the playground, with our friends, and following that
infamous
"yo-yo man" around town. I dare say that each of us has someone we could thank for bringing us
into the
world of yo. Kids today have different things to occupy their time and energy, but what kind
of memories
will they have? Somehow I doubt whether the thrill of making a high score on a video game will
ever
compare to the high we all felt the first time we nailed a good 'Spinner' or 'Walk the Dog'
with our yo-yo.

The physical and mental benefits of yo-yoing are many. The most obvious physical benefit is
that it is an
excellent trainer for eye-hand coordination and thus enhances basic motor and catching skills.
Unlike playing
catch with a ball, yo-yoing can be done independently and the yo-yo is always attached to the
hand,
eliminating the frustration of chasing after it when the child misses the catch! With basic
tricks such as the
Power Throw or Forward Pass, the yo-yo stretches to the end of the string and returns to the
hand.

Regardless of whether the yo-yo is caught or not, kids can feel successful. And the beauty is
that after
the hand gets touched at the same moment in the sequence of the trick over and over, it's as if
it says
"Oh, I get it! I'm supposed to close now!" and soon kids are catching the yo-yo!

Yo-yoing also teaches sequencing, patience, and the benefits of practice. All of this and at
the same time,
it's lots of fun. Obviously, older children will progress faster and gain more skills than
younger children,
but all children from about age 5 can be successful at some level of skill with the yo-yo.
Even kindergarten
and first grade children can be successful doing tricks such as Gravity Pull and can begin
internalizing the
rhythm of yo-yoing. In addition, yo-yoing has been found to be a stress reliever for children
and adults
alike. Yo-yoing has even been experimented with in helping children who have difficulty
concentrating.

Children today need something to motivate them and to raise their self-esteem. Yo-yoing can do
that for
them. It is an individual sport where size, speed, physical prowess and gender don't mean a
thing. Kids
can enjoy building their skill and begin teaching their friends. Older children can instruct

the younger children. This cooperative learning is exactly what schools today are looking to teach kids, and we've got a great tool right at our fingertips. (oops, did it again!) Even with television, video games and other non-physical activities growing in popularity with our young people, kids are as intrigued with the yo-yo and its unlimited tricks and challenges as we were. A favorite toy of our youth, its appeal is timeless. And so, what's the point? The point is that there was someone who introduced us all to the yo-yo. I challenge you to build a memory. Pass on the joy that someone gave you. Make it a goal to pull a kid aside, show him or her some yo-yo tricks, and TEACH them how to do something - ANYTHING! Better yet, with the holidays coming, give children a yo-yo and then be sure to show them how to use it! It will be the gift that keeps on giving - not to mention, one that keeps coming back!

Val is a wife and the mother of four girls in Edina, MN. She has recently joined the ranks of the professional Yo-Yo community and is now running in-school programs in MN. She and her brother, Forest Larson, were Yo-Yo and spinning top champions in the Duncan contests in the early 60's. Her build a memory theme is what the spirit of the AYYA is all about.

THE FREESTYLE

Bill de Boisblanc has had a great year. He won the nationals in Chico last Oct. , the West Coast regional in Santa Rosa in June and the World Championship in Las Vegas in July as well as the International title in Burlington, Vermont in July of '94. A little bit of explanation here as far as the freestyle goes. The freestyle is part of the World Championship competitions, that is, it is not a separate division. In the Chico and Santa Rosa competitions it was a separate division. While Bill won those championships, it was Dale Myrberg who won the freestyle divisions in those contests and Dale did not enter the other divisions. This is certainly not to take anything away from Bill but to point out the very tight competition between the two. In fact, if you look at the three times that the two have competed in the freestyle, Dale Myrberg has a greater point total than Bill; 236 to 212. This is a function of the fact that Dale has stayed, more or less, in the same range while Bills scores have improved by about 35%. Bills win in Las Vegas proves the old adage of practice makes perfect. If the freestyle is going to grow and flourish, it will be necessary to have more people that can judge them. In other sports, as the top competitors get older they drop out of competing and many become judges. Yo-Yoing doesn't seem to be working that way. It seems to be almost an ageless sport, they just seem to get better with age, like great wines. So who are going to be the judges? The only solution I can come up with is peer judging (the top players judge each other) or over a period of time we train judges in the art. To that end, here's a start.

FREESTYLE JUDGING

Freestyle judging is divided into three major areas:

Technical execution

35 points possible

Degree of difficulty & Originality

50 points possible

Performance style

15 points possible

Technical execution points are judged on a deduct format. The contestant starts with 35 points and deductions are made for errors in execution; 1 point off for a fault. (Break in the flow of the trick, like the Yo-Yo flops over or a string is missed). 2 points off for a missed catch. 3 points off for a blown trick (Trick is not completed and Yo-Yo has to be rewound or flipped around to get it to return to the hand). When two-handed tricks are being attempted, a blown trick deduction can be 6 points (3 for each hand).

Degree of difficulty points are awarded for individual tricks, transitions and maneuvers throughout the performance. Points are awarded by set criteria and are only given once for any particular maneuver during a performance i.e. 3 minutes of two handed inside loops will only get 7 points (1 for the two handed loops & 6 for 180 seconds without stopping to catch, not a very impressive score.

1 for each form of regeneration used (the Yo-Yo comes back toward the hand but is looped around into another spin) The types are: inside loop, outside loop, inside hop the fence, outside hop the fence, reach for the moon (bottom and top regeneration). Extra point for over 30 seconds of continuous regeneration.

1 point for 180 degree body turns during a trick (executing the same thing a number of times will not give additional points, only the first time it is done during a particular maneuver).

1 point for controlling the Yo-Yo through a 90 degree change of plane, 2 for 180 degrees.

(example; starting with the spread eagle {two-handed loops with Yo-Yos going opposite directions [like east and west, you're facing north]} and then each brought forward 90 degrees so that they are both pointing north, followed by switching over to outside loops and bringing them around to flowing east and west again but 180 degrees from where they started. Confused yet? It's a hard trick. How many points for it? 1 for two-handed loops, 2 more for bringing them through 90 Degrees {1 for each hand}, 2 more for switching them over to outside loops {1 for each hand}, 2 more for getting them through another 90 degrees {again 1 for each hand}) 7 points for one trick. Whew!

1 point for each new trick done during the performance (note: Most one-handed tricks other than regeneration, body turns, changes in plane of spin and original or extremely difficult tricks will not win points. In the future I foresee that any trick found in the compulsory divisions will not receive points).

Tricks where one hand is doing loops and the other hand is performing other things are a point each. When both hands are doing something (at the same time) other than inside loops, 2 points are awarded (1 for each hand).

Originality points are awarded for new stuff. This does require a considerable amount of familiarity with what is out there but new moves and tricks are turning up all the time. I continue to give originality points to the inventor of a particular move even after I have seen it.

Performance Style points are the only ones that I think are subjective. It is after all what

appeals to you. I look for stage presence (playing to the audience), how the performance fits the music and how much fun it seems like they are having. In general, how pleasing the performance is to the audience. Many times this part is the only thing the audience reacts to, sometimes completely missing the technical aspects of the routine. I think we have all seen this happen in skating events.

I realize that this sounds very complicated but once you try it a few times it gets simpler. A group of us tried judging the same performances during the 1993 internationals in Fargo and all the scores fell within a 12 point range which I thought was really good. If compared to a 10 point system like gymnastics, it is like the scores falling between 7.7 and 8.9 which is not uncommon.

The freestyle is presently listed as a two and one half to a three minute performance, preferably choreographed to music. These rules (or guidelines) can be modified considerably for lower levels. I have seen some good one-handed routines worked out by some of the Yo Cobras in Virginia and they are exciting to watch.

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