

The ATLATL

FALL 1990

VOL. 3, No

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD ATLATL ASSOCIATION, INC.
1390 SOUTH PARIS COURT, AURORA, COLORADO 80012, USA

THE SECOND ANNUAL EASTERN SEABOARD ATLATL CHAMPIONSHIPS

by
GARY L. FOGELMAN

The Second Annual Eastern Seaboard Atlatl Championships were held on Saturday, July 21st at the Bob Cowan farm, Julian, Pennsylvania. The day was marred by drizzles, sometimes outright rain, but it did not dampen the spirit of the contestants and the event went on as scheduled.

Thirteen men, seven women and nine children competed, an increase of eight over last year. Only two were from out of state, however, so perhaps the event should be called the Pennsylvania Atlatl championships. Hopefully more from the east will endeavor to take part in this unique, fun event in the future.

After getting the field marked and targets set, the group met to discuss rule changes. Namely, distances in the accuracy portion of the contest were amended. The men ended up taking 21 shots: three each at 50, 40 and 30 yards and six at 20 and 15 yards. The women and children fired off the same number of darts at the 30, 25, 20 and 15 yard ranges. This was done for two reasons. First, 60 and 70 yard shots are mainly lucky shots and scoring is minimal.

Second, by taking more shots, the element of chance was made more remote, and a truer accuracy champion would prevail. This worked out well.

To keep things moving, two shooting lanes were set at right angles to each other. Women and children used one, and the men the other. Dan Lago of the Mudlick Road Atlatl Association provided wonderful targets. Large bale backstops were erected and a refrigerator cardboard box was put across the front. On these, Dan drew a large bison and mammoth. A regulation five ring archery target was placed on the heart area of each animal figure. For the longer throws, over twenty yards for men and fifteen for women and kids, a hit anywhere on the cardboard scored ten. A hit on the animal counted five, and one point was counted for a hit in the hazing zone. At closer distances, the actual archery target scores were tallied. Curiously, scores dropped at this point, much to our surprise. It was felt, the two foot square target was too small, and we plan on trying a three foot square next year.

The accuracy portion was won by GARY FOGELMAN, with a score of 63. Second place went to host, BOB COWAN, with 47, proof that senior members can be very competitive. FRANK SWANCER took third place with a score of 43. For the women,

JOANNE FOGELMAN took first with 65 points, followed by ELAINE SWANCER, second with 40 and LAURA SWANCER third with 35. The kids accuracy was won by BEN LAGO, 58 points, second place, TIM REESE, 41, and third BRETT COWAN with 36.

Part II of the competition consisted of three throws for "closest to the pin." The men's pin was set at 75 yards and the women's at 45 yards. The kids didn't compete in this event. The winning throw for the men was measured 2' 8.5". Winners were, first for men, then women:

1st - JOHN SWANCER
 2nd - LEE HALLMAN
 3rd - GARY FOGELMAN

1st - JOANNE FOGELMAN
 2nd - ELAINE SWANCER
 3rd - KATHY REESE

Part III was the distance event. A twenty yard path was set for these throws which proved to be too narrow and will be changed to about 50 yards next year.

Children:

1st TIM REESE 59 yds.
 2nd BEN LAGO
 3rd BEN FOGELMAN

Women

1st ELAINE SWANCER 120 yds.
 2nd JOANNE FOGELMAN
 3rd KATHY REESE

Men

1st JOHN SWANCER 134 yds.
 2nd GARY FOGELMAN
 3rd FRANK SWANCER

Overall champion was determined by how contestants finished in each event. It was a banner day for the Fogelman family with Joanne taking the Women's Champion trophy, and me being handed the number one place for the men.

A lot of fun was had in spite of the rain. Many thanks to the Cowans, Swancers, Lagos, and Wells families for their hospitality, use of the farm, and participation of the Mudlick Road Atlatl Association. Our thanks too, to all the participants listed below: Lee Hallman, Gary Fogelman, Gary Noel, Dave Cordes, Charlie Cowan, John Swancer, Greg Wells, Bob Cowan, Bob Brand Frank Swancer, John La Hota, Dan Lago, Barry Keegan, JoAnne Fogelman, Elaine Swancer, Laura Swancer, Lois Cowan, Cindy Cowan, Kathy Reese, Patty Wells, Ben Fogelman, Ben Lago, Jesse Hallman, Jessica Cowan, Jared Swancer, Tim Reese, Tony Reese, Brett Cowan, and Jesse Wells.

Where are the other atlalters of the East? We challenge you, nay, dare you to come and compete against Pennsylvania's best. Next years event is scheduled for about the same time and place. For info contact Gary at RD1, Box 240, Turbotville, PA 17772.

With any luck at all, your editor will locate the results of the "ATLTL WORLD OPEN" in time for the Winter issue, 1991.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE FIRST ATLTL CONTEST AT ATLTL ROCK--VALLEY OF FIRE STATE PARK, OVERTON, NEVADA. FOR FURTHER INFO, CONTACT LENI CLUB, PO BOX 56, OCOTILLO, CA 92259, PHONE (619)358-7835, OR VALLEY OF FIRE STATE PARK, PO BOX 515 OVERTON, NV 89040 PHONE (702) 397-2088

**SUPPORT THE GAMES
 COME ON DOWN
 APRIL 13, 1991**

OLD AND NEW WORLD ATLATLS: A STUDY OF SIMILARITIES IN FORM AND FUNCTION CENTERING ON THE NAZCA CULTURE OF SOUTH AMERICA AND TRIBES OF PAPUA, NEW GUINEA

By William R. Perkins

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One of the most common, and potentially destructive, mistakes made by the atlatlist is to "miscue" the dart. Miscuing occurs when the dart socket is not fully seated onto atlatl's spur, (Fig. 1).

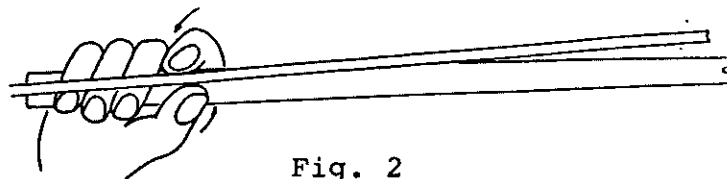


Fig. 2

When the swing is initiated with a miscued dart, the atlatl and arm travel inboard to the dart. The dart travels slightly forward, independently, and disconnected from the atlatl, because of the momentum imparted to it by the thumb and finger prior to release. When the atlatl travels through its normal swing, its spur strikes the dart at the midpoint. (Fig. 3)

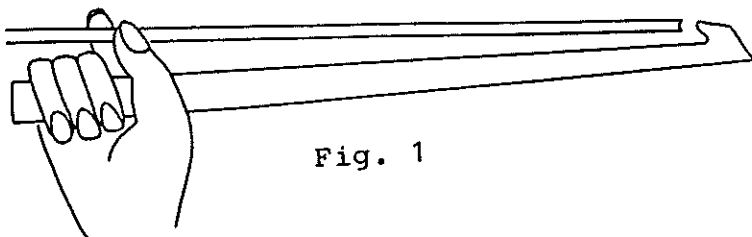


Fig. 1

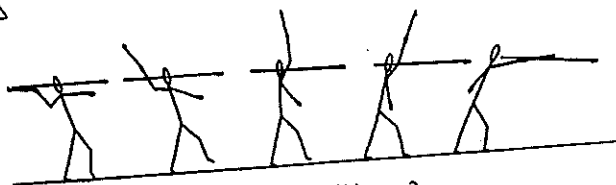


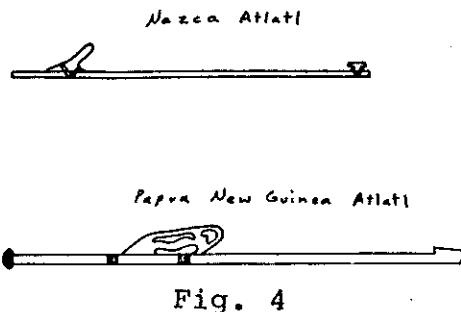
Fig. 3

Due to the lightness in weight of the dart, and the distracted concentration when preparing to swing the atlatl, the atlatlist is often unaware of the fact that the dart is not properly seated. Counter clockwise forces (right handed thrower) given by the first finger and thumb to the dart tends to offset the dart to the outboard position, (Fig. 2).

The impact velocity has been estimated to be in the neighborhood of 100 miles per hour which, predictably, causes destruction of the dart, and as the 100 mile per hour speed is exceeded, the atlatl itself. Destruction of equipment is quite common and uniformly consistent throughout hundreds of experiments and observations. Injury to the atlatlist by a miscued dart has

not been heard of or observed.

The value of a device to prevent the occurrence of a miscued dart is obvious, and I believe, was invented long ago and has been rediscovered here. The Nazca and other South American cultures using the atlatl along with tribes of Papua, New Guinea, did in fact, solve this problem with the innovation of, what I refer to as, a "dart guard" (Fig. 4).



This suggests, at the very least, a common experience and solution for a common problem (independent invention), and the remote possibility of contact and collaboration (diffusion) between Old and New World peoples. I present this latter suggestion as "food" for further research to those better qualified. BPS Engineering is interested only in the mechanical aspects of the atlatl system and leaves investigation of the human experience to anthropologists.

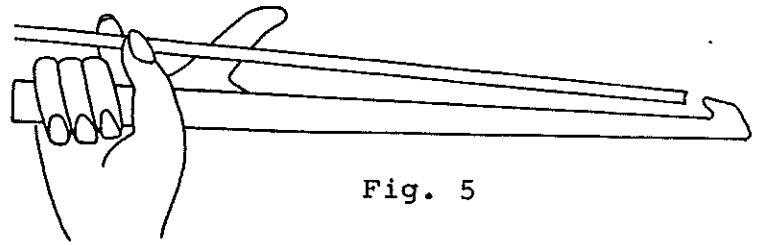


Fig. 5

The addition of the dart guard structure to the atlatl (Fig. 5) allows the dart to rest against that surface and, when unseated or miscued, causes a reverse action to the outboard force imposed by the thumb and finger. (Fig. 6)

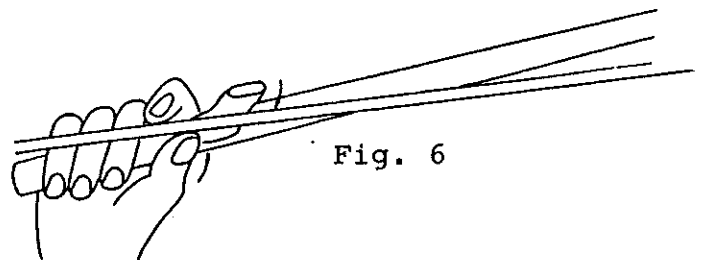


Fig. 6

This action forces the dart inboard, reducing the possibility of destruction of equipment. Additionally, the atlatlist becomes acutely aware that the dart has become unseated and can rectify the situation. The dart guard is a simple solution to a potentially destructive problem.

13,000 YEAR OLD ATLATL

Readers are encouraged to search out the archaeological report by Tom Dillahey from the University of Illinois, on his work at Monte Verde, Chile. This report pushes the date for atlatls in the New World back to about 13,000 years ago. Among the artifacts found well preserved under a peat bog were fragments of animal hide attached to poles, stone tools and wooden articles. Also found, were bones and a chunk of mastodon flesh, remains of economically important plants, and even a human footprint. (we would like to know more about the atlatl found. If any of our readers has access to this report, please send WAA the portion on the atlatl for reprinting on these pages.

Don Fisher, of "Nearly Native" an outdoors skills consultant, and member of WAA informs us that the atlatl contest winners in a class he held earlier this year in Zzyzx, California (no, that is not a "typo."), were given memberships in WAA for prizes. They are: Jim Duncan (for distance), and Mike Hryniewich, (for accuracy).

Excerpt: The Australian Aborigines by B.A.L. Cranstone, published by the Trustees of the British Museum, London, 1973:

"The weapons used in hunting are spears (often thrown with a spearthrower), throwing sticks and boomerangs. The aborigines are expert at tracking and stalking game and knowledgeable about its habits, and even in open country are

often able to approach to close range."

"The simplest spears are made from a sapling, the point of which is hardened by charring. Sometimes the head is barbed. Heads consisting of stone flakes are used locally and in the kimberley district of Western Australia beautifully finished heads of chert or chalcedony (in recent times of bottleglass or porcelain) are fashioned by an advanced pressure-flaking technique, small flakes being pressed off with a bone tool. In south-western Australia a row of small quartz flakes was set in vegetable resin below the head. Spears with several heads are made for spearing fish, and on the north coast harpoons are used for catching turtles and dugong."

"The spearthrower has the effect of adding an extra joint to the arm and increases the power and accuracy of the throw (Fig. 5). At the end opposite to the grip is a projecting peg which fits into a hollow in the butt of the spear. It was used over most of Australia but was absent locally, for instance in much of southern Queensland."

WINNER OF THE "WORST PUN HEARD THIS YEAR" AWARD: You cannot have archaic and eat it too.

From the BBC film, Discoveries Underwater, shown on PBS this past summer: The drawing is of a spur of an atlatl found in Florida's Mineral Spring sink hole. Stated to be the oldest known in the New World, at 10,240 years before the present. (See notes on

Dillahey's discoveries in Chile elsewhere in this newsletter). Made of antler or bone, the spur appeared to be about three and a half inches in length and still had pitch clinging to it presumably to affix it to an atlatl shaft.



The WORLD ATLATL ASSOCIATION now boasts a roster of over 100 members. Small, but growing fast, just as the sport of atlatling is growing. Keep up the good work. Atlatl contests have sprung up across the United States, and at least one annual event is held in Europe.

World Atlatl Association Board of Director's member, Barbara Snobble has resigned from that post. This will become a point of business at the next annual meeting of the Board this summer. Note that all WAA members are invited to attend the Board meeting at the annual Colorado Archaeological Society Encampment held on or about July 4th.

Extracted from THE INDIAN TRADER, March, 1988, submitted to us by Joe Grgurich of Omaha, NE.

Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, near Cortez, Colorado is again offering a series of

research programs, teacher's workshops, field schools for high school students, symposia on the Anasazi and a number of week-long field trips.

Located 10 miles from Mesa Verde national Park, Crow Canyon is at the heart of one of the most significant archaeological regions in the world. The Anasazi flourished here for fourteen centuries, leaving their pueblos, pot sherds and tools as evidence of a highly-developed civilization.

Crow Canyon archaeologists are directing research at several anasazi sites, including Sand Canyon Pueblo, a vast 13th-century complex of over 400 rooms, kivas and towers. It is hoped that careful study of these sites will provide new insights into the Anasazi culture.

Professional and amateur archaeologists, or people with no previous experience at all can participate in many of the programs at Crow Canyon. Actual on-site excavation as well as laboratory research is available to those who have always had a dream, or "yen" to explore or discover the unknown. All work is done under careful, professional supervision.



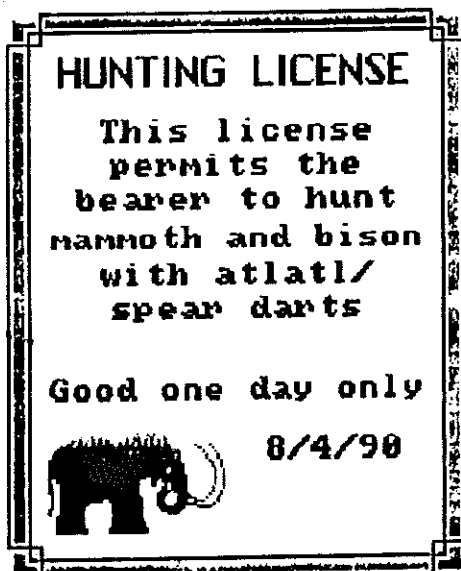
ARCHAEOLOGIST RICKY LIGHTFOOT TEACHES A RECENT PARTICIPANT TO USE THE ATLATL. THESE ANCIENT TOOLS ENABLED ANASAZI HUNTERS TO HURL SPEARS WITH GREAT POWER AND PRECISION.

For more information on tours, field programs, and how you can participate in hands-on archaeological excavation and research, contact: Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, 23390 County Road K, Cortez, CO 81321. Their phone number is (303) 565-8975, in state. Their toll-free number is 1-800-422-8975.

AVOID CLICHES LIKE THE PLAGUE.

SECOND ANNUAL
MONTANA ATLATL
MAMMOTH HUNT
BY LENI CLUBB

August 4, 1990 was a beautiful day in Helena, Montana. Fourteen contestants walked out on the target course on the White Ranch, after first picking up their "Hunting Licenses."



Over mutterings about "sexist" ranges, the women threw three darts at targets 45, 40, 30, and 20 meters distant with men throwing 90, 75, 60, and 45

meters. Point scoring was used with accumulative scores. There was also a long distance competition--best of three darts, and the "Mightiest Hunter" category for overall skill.



WHITE RANCH ATLATL RANGE

WINNERS:

Women's Division:

- 1st Charmin Helmick
- 2nd Leni Clubb
- 3rd Cherei McCarter

Men's Division:

- 1st Lynn "Wish" Holland
- 2nd Bob Perkins
- 3rd Manuel White

Long Distance Throw - Men:

- 414 ft. Paul Leininger
- 392 ft. Larry Dolan
- 390 ft. Manuel White

Long Distance Throw - Women:

- 168 ft. Charmin Helmick
- 158 ft. Cherei McCarter
- 130 ft. Leni Clubb

First Place Overall--Mightiest Hunter was awarded to:

Bob Perkins

During the contest, two late prehistoric obsidian projectile

A NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR

Some of you may have noticed that this newsletter is late. I take full responsibility for that, and apologize to you all. We spent the fall of 1990 moving to a new home and cannot find anything anymore. Our new address is: 1390 S. Paris Court, Aurora, CO 80012.

We have some good stuff in hand for the next newsletter, but need more. Please submit materials to the above address.

We have re-ordered XL size T-shirts and can fill orders for S, M, L, XL and 2XL. \$10.00 each includes shipping.

BILL TATE

point artifacts were found on the course and identified by Dave Schwab as probably coming from the Yellowstone area. Guests attending the contest included the Chief of the Blackfoot tribe and several members of the Flathead tribe.

Following presentation of the splendid awards, Penny White and her helpers served a delicious barbecue picnic. It was a great day and good fun. We are glad we drove the 2500 miles to take part. Montanans are wonderful hosts!

Leni Clubb, WAA President



SOME OF THE WINNERS