

The ATLATL

"Too long have I hunted mammoth alone!"

Rich McWhorter

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD ATLATL ASSOCIATION, INC.
1390 South Paris Court, Aurora, Colorado 80012, USA
BILL TATE, EDITOR

APRIL 1995

VOL. 8, NO. 2

CARE AND FEEDING OF WOODEN ATLATL DARTS

By Lou Becker

Any good longbowman knows that a straight, properly spined, wooden arrow will measure up to an arrow of any other material. This fact is also true of wooden atlatl darts. The trick, of course, is to properly choose the shafting, demonstrate care in making the darts, and maintain the darts during use. Getting and keeping shafts straight is a bit of an art that becomes second nature after a while. During the course of a twenty-five year period, I have experimented with many different woods, both for the atlatl itself, and also for the darts. Over the years, I have made and tested darts of cedar arrow shafts, hickory, ash, river cane, bamboo, red ocher, walnut, fir, spruce, poplar, birch, oak, and ramin. My conclusion after all of this, is that poplar and birch had the best qualities for making superior atlatl darts. My basic target dart weighs approximately 1800 grains (4.11 oz. Or 116.64 grams), and my *Bison*, or hunting darts, weigh close to 4000 grains (9.14 oz. Or 259.2 grams).

With wooden arrows, straightness is much more critical than with wooden atlatl darts. The reason for this lies in the fact that arrows, once they are released, must bend around the handle of the bow and then straighten out. If this does not happen correctly, the arrow will fly off course. With atlatl darts there is no riser or handle to go around, therefore, perfect straightness is not necessary, as long as the dart has been fletched with feathers that are properly matched to the dart. My target darts are fletched with four 6 ½ inch shield-cut turkey feathers, and my *Bison* hunting darts are fletched with three 7 ½ inch turkey feathers.

While perfect straightness is not as necessary with darts as with arrows, I still like to keep them as straight as I can. There are two main ways of doing this; one is the age-old method of heating and bending them over the palm, but this demands a good eye and some feel for the art. Shafts straightened this way seem to have a memory for the bend, and a life-long tendency to return to their "pretzel" ways.

But, there is another way to straighten wooden darts so they will stay straighter than by the hand straightening method. It is called "The Hook Method", and goes way back to the beginnings of bowhunting as an organized sport in the United States. The Thompson brothers used this method to straighten their arrows back in the 1870's.

The hook is simply a steel hook eye screwed into the end of a six inch piece of half-inch dowel. Cut off the outer half of the eye as shown in the drawing.

To use the hook, simply find the outside of the dart's bend, and stroke the shaft with the curl of the hook. This compresses the wood on the outside of the bend and "pulls out" the bend. The trick is finding the bend and then knowing how hard to stroke. It really only takes a couple of pounds of pressure--even less, if you are working with a mild warp. You will eventually develop the technique, and will stroke the hardest during the hook's passage over the center of the warp.

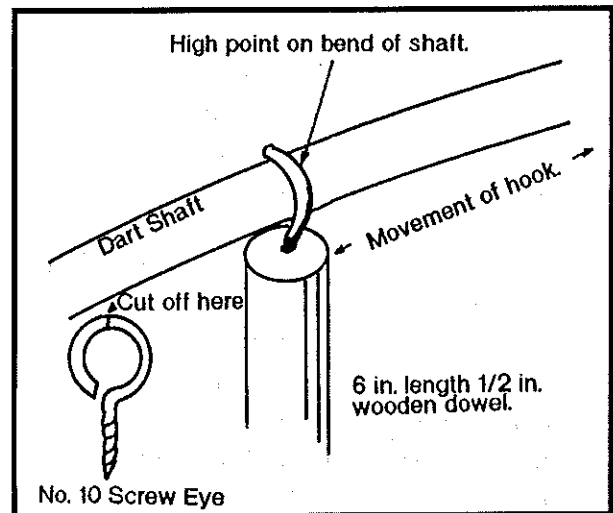
Occasionally, I put darts into the target so close that one strikes another. Close examination reveals the struck dart is often bent around the crease made by the striking dart. Just stroke this type of bend opposite the mark to straighten it.

A combination of events can cause a warp that spirals around the shaft. This can be caused by a shaft with a natural warp that is struck by another dart. If you analyze these bends you can sometimes "stroke" around the spiral, and quickly correct the bend.

The hook won't prevent a shaft

from bending again. If the dart is left in wet grass, or exposed to heat or pressure, any wooden shaft will take a "set". But once you accept the theory of compressing the outside of the bend, you'll discover a new future for your warped shafts.

I carry my hook in a belt pouch, and it takes up little more room than a pencil. There is a cost, however--about \$1.00! But, you will have a 30 inch dowel left over--enough to make some of the best wooden dart straighteners you'll find anywhere.



Lou Becker is a Director of The World Atlatl Association, Inc., and owner of Bowsport Archer, 5940 Urban Drive, East China, Michigan 48054. He is an expert arrowsmith and atlatl manufacturer.

Your editor's atlatl company, Tate Enterprises Unlimited, received a letter in early March of this year stating that the writer had heard of us via Internet---the past and the future have surely merged!

BILL TO LEGALIZE ATLATL HUNTING IN MONTANA FAILS

Senate Bill #259, which was supported by THE WORLD ATLATL ASSOCIATION by letter back in February, 1995, came under attack by the Montana Bow Hunters Association because it would give atlatlers a special season. The bill was amended, while in the House, to make atlatl and archery seasons the same, which seemed to satisfy the archers. However when the bill, which passed the House 98 to 2, went into Conference Committee to work out differences in the House and Senate's version, it was killed and cannot be re-introduced for at least two years.

Past WAA member, Bob Perkins and WAA Director Troy Helmick, along with Montana State Senator Don Hargrove deserve an "A" for their efforts in this ground-breaking legal maneuver.

IDAHO ARCHAEOLOGY WEEK 1995

Among the planned activities will be an atlatl contest and demonstration April 29, 1995 at the Celebration Recreation Area 4 miles south of Melba, ID. This event, sponsored by Canyon County Parks and Recreation, is the third such annual event.

COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION WEEK

Amid posters expressing a need to *SAVE THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE*, archaeologists throughout Colorado will be presenting talks and giving demonstrations during the week of May 14--20, 1995. Your Editor will

be out there with his atlatls and darts giving visitors to a dig near Denver, a chance to experience the thrill of the hunt against cardboard game.

NEW DIRECTORS ANNOUNCED

At a special meeting of the Board at Valley of Fire State Park, Nevada, several new Directors to the Board were voted in. The complete listing, with new officers names in capital letters, is:

President Bonifacio Cosyleon, 3750 Overton Rd., Pueblo, Colorado, 81008 USA

Vice Pres. Tim Boucher, P. O. Box 2508, Dillon, Colorado, 80435 USA

Secretary Leni Clubb, P. O. Box 56, Ocotillo, California, 92259 USA

Treasurer Heidi Daetwyler, P. O. Box 1633, Dillon, Colorado, 80435 USA

Editor Bill Tate, 1390 S. Paris Court, Aurora, Colorado, 80012 USA

Directors Keith Abernathy, 8170 West 13th Ave., #3, Lakewood, Colo., 80215 USA

Lou Becker, 5940 Urban Drive, East China, Michigan, 48054 USA

Wayne Brian, 824 West Kiva, Mesa, Arizona, 86210 USA

LORENZ BRUECHERT, 3018 West 7th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6K 1Z8

PASCAL CHAUVAUX Ave ru Roil-Soleil, 1B-5660, Mariembourg, Belgium

WILLIAM GOOD, Rt. 2, box 457, Elkins, West Virginia 26241, USA

Kenneth Gramstad, P. O. Box 395, Ocotillo, California 92259, USA

TROY HELMICK, P. O. Box 303, Townsend, Montana 59644, USA

Chris Judson, Bandelier National Park, HCR 1, Box 1, Hse 20-B, Los Alamos New Mexico 87544, USA

Scott Leslie, 188 Paseo Drive, Carbondale, Colorado 81623, USA

Charley Lilly, 8800 State Highway 133, Carbondale, Colorado 81623, USA

LLOYD PINE, 5858 Berkshire St., Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806, USA

Appointed Safety Officers:

Marcia Tate (Addr: See Editor)

Halle Cash (Addr: See Secretary.)

AGE IS NOT IMPORTANT UNLESS YOU ARE A CHEESE!

ON TARGET

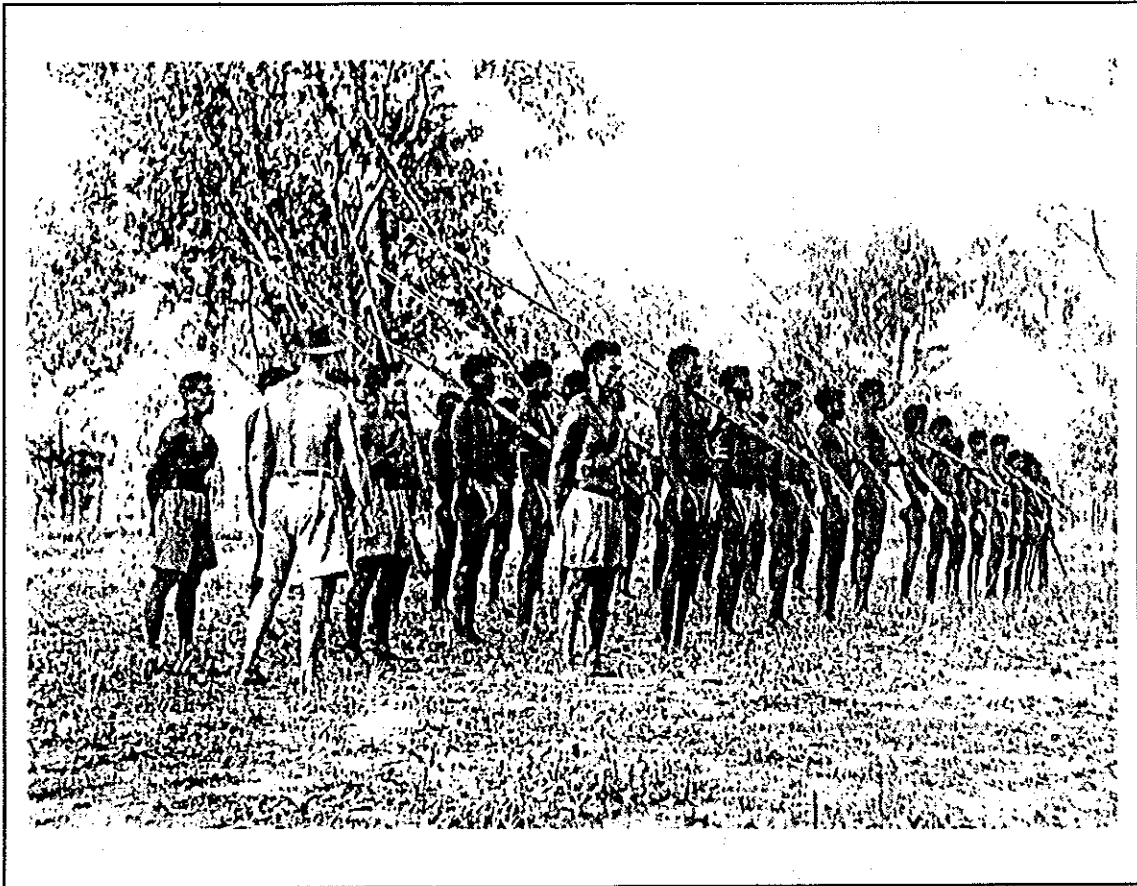


Be sure to check the upper right hand corner of your mailing label for the expiration date of your membership. Those of you whose memberships expire in January, February, or March will have a reminder attached to this issue. We are sure you don't want to miss a single issue of *THE ATLATL*. Don't delay, Send in your membership dues today!

We now have 234 members in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. A couple of our good members are encouraging their friends in Australia as well as other parts of Canada and Europe to sign up. How about you? Do you have a friend in a foreign country that might be interested in joining us in the "perpetuation of the atlatl/spear thrower as an ancient hunting weapon and modern sporting device," as set forth in the Objectives of our organization? Send me their address and I will mail them one of our brochures and application form.

Minutes of the April 8 Board of Directors meeting are available from me. Please send SASE for a copy.

Leni Clubb



Did you know that Aboriginal people (with spears and spearthrowers) were enlisted into special force during world War II. The Northern Territory became the northern frontier in Australia's war with Japan. Photo taken at Roper River Mission, Northern Territory.

Pascal CHAUVAUX

ATLATL SEASON IS OFF TO A RESOUNDING THWACK!

Southeastern Moundbuilders Atlatl Contest and Clinic

Ray madden traveled all the way from Joplin, Missouri, to take part in the atlatl contest at Marksville, Louisiana on April 1st. He was rewarded for his effort, as he won the WAA Grand Champion Trophy, as well as both the men's distance and men's target contests. I believe that makes him the first person to receive the new Grand Champion Trophy.

Fourteen people took part in the morning clinic where each built and learned to use a primitive atlatl and dart. A total of twenty-six people took part in the afternoon competition. First place winners in each class were:

MEN	Ray Madden
WOMEN	Sue Olin
BOYS (13-16)	Ray Dailey
BOYS (under 13)	Ryan Ewing

Distance winners, in addition to Ray Madden were: Sue Bordelon, Ray Dailey, and Charles Lanier.

This was the third atlatl program at Marksville to be sponsored by the Louisiana Parks Service. Participation was up over both of the earlier events.



WAA MEMBER, RAY MADDEN WITH HIS GRAND CHAMPION TROPHY, AS WELL AS HIS OTHER TWO FIRST PLACE AWARDS



FIRST PLACE DIVISION WINNERS. L TO R: RAY DAILEY, CHARLES LANIER, RAY MADDEN, RYAN EWING, SUE BORDELON, AND SUE OLIN

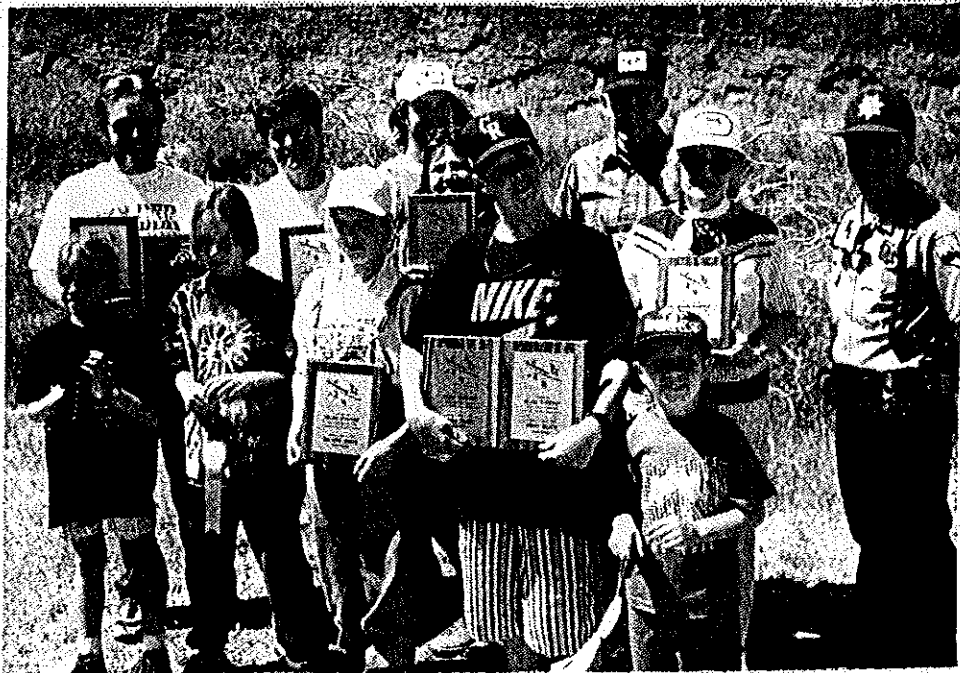
February 5, 1995. The morning TV magazine show *SUNDAY MORNING* featured a piece on Indian rock art of the Texas Pecos River drainage with Terpin, et al. Not only was the atlatl shown, and pointed out in some of the rock art, but there was a demonstration of its use by an unidentified person.

THE FIRST WAA TOURNAMENT OF THE SEASON -- VALLEY OF FIRE STATE PARK, NEVADA -- APRIL 8TH 1995

By Lenl Clubb, photos by Bill Tate

If you missed the first WAA atlatl contest of the season, you really missed a great time at the Valley of Fire State Park. We had twenty-nine contestants ranging from five years old to eighty years young, throwing at three dimensional deer and antelope targets. This was a *first* for most of us, as we are used to throwing at animals painted on cardboard targets set against a hay bale background. But, after making a few changes to our Official Rules, we all had a wonderful morning of throwing. The weather was perfect, not too hot or cold, and not too windy. (Tent campers will not soon forget the nighttime winds, however. Ed. Comment)

Six states were represented: Colorado, California, Utah, Michigan, New Mexico, and Montana. Four divisions were established: under 10 years old with 3 contestants, 10 - 14 also with 3, Women, 6, and 17 men made up the last group.



BACK: Charley Brown, Fran Oldroyd, Robert Hamilton, Patti Thompson (Hiding), Troy Helmick, Shirley Helmick. **FRONT:** Gwen Leslie, Michelle Luneau, Paige Luneau, Allen Oldroyd, Miles Luneau, with Ranger Jack Trebble far right.

UNDER 10

1st	Gwen Leslie, Carbondale, CO
2nd	Michelle Luneau, San Diego CA
3rd	Miles Luneau, San Diego, CA

10 TO 14

1st	Allen Oldroyd, Monroe, UT
2nd	Paige Luneau, San Diego, CA
3rd	Mitch Oldroyd, Monroe, UT

WOMEN

1st	Shirley Helmick, Townsend, MT
Tie	Chris Judson, Los Alamos, NM
2nd	Fran Oldroyd, Monroe, UT
3rd	Patty Thompson, Sandy, UT

MEN

1st	Charley Brown, Arvada, CO
2nd	Troy Helmick, Townsend, MT
3rd	Robert Hamilton, Ogden, UT

Grand Champion (Modern)
Troy helmick

Grand Champion (Primitive)
Charley Brown

Valley of Fire Park Ranger Jack Trebble
made the award presentations.

6th OPEN BELGIAN SPEARTHROWER CHAMPIONSHIP

By Pascal Chauvaux



Bringing together before the rush, under supervision of Fernand Collin, Prehistosite Director.

We use wooden darts of 200 to 270 cm, with bone or reindeer antler points. The most represented spearthrower model is without doubt French paleo one: wooden shaft and reindeer antler hook. But we use too Australian ones (all in wood).

The throwing distances represent ethnographic attested hunting distances. As you can see on opposite photo, we have been in situation of hunting gesture in forest environment.

For the first time in Europe, a "Grand Champion" Award (presented by the World Atlatl Association) went to ... me! (I am sorry).

Results

Place	Name	Score (150)	Hits (30)
1	Chauvaux Pascal (B)	86	28
2	Maxence Alain (B)	69	24
3	Cabaraux Steve (B)	55	23
4	Stodiek Ulrich (D)	49	16
5	Van Mallegheem J. (B)	46	16
6	Cocchi Didier (B)	41	15
7	Collin Fernand (B)	39	15



Martin Street (GB) in a strange posture: target or tree?



Next rencontre will hold in Samara (France) May 28. And why not a competition among European and North American spearthrower buffs?



This looks like a serious challenge to me. (Editor)

Award presentation: (from left to right) Steve Cabaraux (B), Alain Maxence (B), Pascal Chauvaux (B), Johann Tinnes (D), Ulrich Stodiek (D) and Fernand Indiana Collin (B)

LETTERS, NOTICES, NICE THOUGHTS, AND STUFF FROM ALL OVER

I attended the WAA tournament in Valley of Fire in Nevada, and had a splended time, not only in competing, but in meeting the other WAA membrers. I highly recom- mend anyone to attend next year. Congratulations to all for a fun, smooth running event. My only suggestion is to increase the num- ber of tragets in the "golf" round.

Jim Gilligan, Brighton, MI

As an archaeologist whose main area of research involves pre- historic tools and weapons, I feel that there is much to be learned from modern-day practitioners of so- called "lost arts". My current re- search involves spearthrowers, spe- cifically, weights and measures of the equipment, the materials of construction, and velocities and distances that can be achieved. Little reliable data exists in the acadamic literature, and what there is is often contradictory.

Perhaps your members would be interested in participating in an informal survey of the equip- ment they find "works best" for them (as this is undoubtedly the way people in the past arrived at working solutions). To this end, I would like to invite anyone wishing to participate, to contact me at: W. Karl Hutchings, Dept. Of Arch- aeology, Simon Fraser Univ., Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6 CANADA

Enclosed is my \$10.00 for renewal membership. There has been great interest in the womera of Australia. I have made good friends with an Aborigine from Australia, and we hope to be selling boomerangs, womeras, spears, fishing spears, fire sticks, and stone knives soon. I am also a Native American, and we found much in common. The Indi- ans of the Southwest also used a stick very similar to a boomerang.

Clayton Brascoupe, Tesuque, NM

The new "ATLATL" looks great! Sign me up for another year. For members passing through the Ozarks, a stop at the Outback in Branson is highly recommended. This theme restaurant has collected some womeras, nine foot spears, boomerangs, throwing clubs, and

other "Abo" artifacts that look like the real articles to decorate with. They also have an "Aussie" gift shop with pricy imports. Looking forward to Fort Osage--the first throw in my area.

Jerry Hatch, Southwest Mis- souri State University.

Hi Ho Leni, Received my "ATLATL" (whenever I write it, I must pronounce it wrong to spell it right.) today, and Pm half through it. Reading, even with my closed circuit TV reading machine is labori- ous. I am now legally blind. Enyhooo--"The ATLATL" gets better each issue. Please sign me up for an- other year.

Ada Jackson

(Editor's note: Ada is one of the real atlatl pioneers, hav- ing almost singlehandedly organized the Atlatl World Open many years ago.)

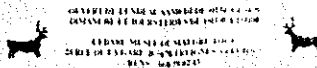
TRIGNES
MUSEE DU MALGRE-TOUT
EXPOSITION TEMPORAIRE

LE PROPULSEUR

DES CHASSEURS DE RENNES
AUX CHASSEURS DE KANGOU ROUS



DU 19 FEVRIER AU 30 AVRIL 1995



This great poster sent by Pascal Chauvaux hangs on the wall of my office.

LONG DISTANCE ATLATL CAST ATTEMPT TO BE MADE IN DENVER IN MID-JULY.

Dave Engvall of St. Joseph, Mo will be visiting your Editor July 15th and hopes to surpass Wayne Brian's Guinness record. Arrangements are being made for the Press and qualified surveyors to be present.

Persons wishing to reach Lorenz Bruchert about spearthrower re- search or data, can make contact through E-mail: bruecher@sfu.ca.



ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE ATLATL LICENSE PLATE CLUB! Jim Gilligan proudly displays the Michigan atlatl plate on his Ford Pickup. Jim is also the Editor of the Michigan Atlatl Association's newsletter *THE CAST*. We received his first issue a short time ago, and it looks great. From time to time, we will be excerpting bits and pieces for these pages. Those of you who would like to join the Michigan Atlatl Association may do so by sending \$10.00 with your name and address to: President, Lou Becker, 5940 Urban Dr., East China, MI 48054 (1-810-765-4623)

Another newsletter we are receiving is *BOOMERANG NEWS*. This publication is produced approxi- mately 10 times a year by Ted E. Bailey, P. O. Box 6076, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. An eight issue subscription is just \$10.00, USA and Canada, and \$20 overseas. Ted and I have been corresponding for several weeks now, and an exchange of publications has been arranged. Thus we have still another source of material on related subjects. Those of you wanting to increase your throwing fun might contact Ted as he markets and manufactures high quality competition boomerangs. His newsletter lists 47 boomerang contests in seven countries. We atlatlers have a way to go.



COME JOIN US AT THE THIRD ANNUAL
ATLATL COMPETITION AT FREMONT
INDIAN STATE PARK, SEVIER, UTAH

June 16, 17, 18, 1995

The contest will be held at 10 AM on Saturday,
June 17th and will be conducted by the
WORLD ATLATL ASSOCIATION.

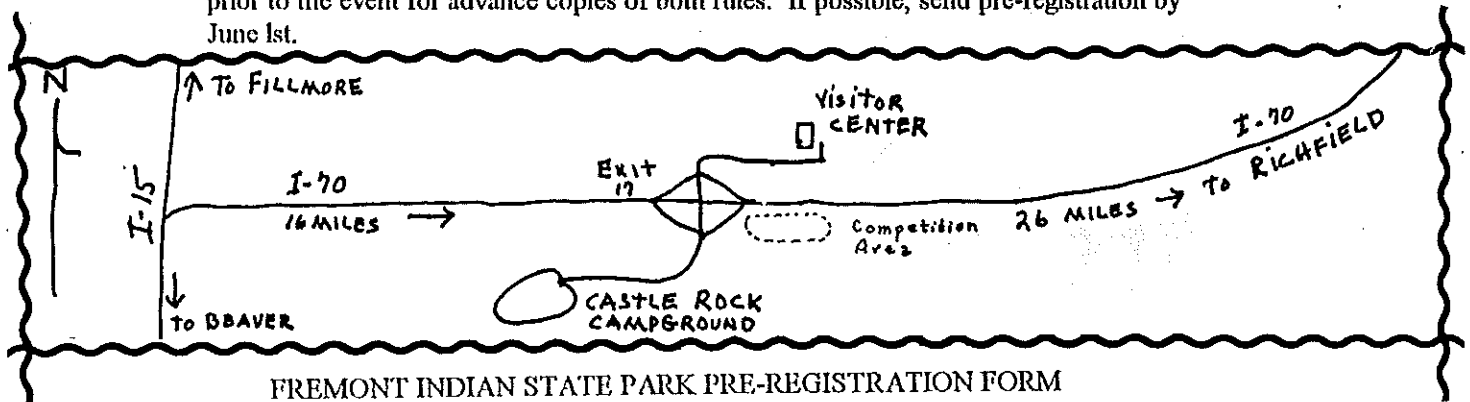
Categories are: MEN, WOMEN, YOUTH (11-16), and CHILDREN (10 & Under)

Members of the Association will be on hand with suggestions and techniques for beginners and there will be a limited supply of atlatls and darts for loan to be returned to WAA after the contest. Official World Atlatl Association Contest & Safety Rules will be followed. The contest area will be available for practice on Friday afternoon, the 16th.

Awards for FIRST, SECOND, THIRD PLACE will be presented by Fremont Indian State Park to winners in all four categories. The World Atlatl Association will present a GRAND CHAMPION award in both PRIMITIVE and MODERN equipment types. The contest for the Grand Champion awards will be between First Place winners in Men, Women, Youth categories.

Camping is reserved in Sites #27 & #28 for contestants and their families in the Castle Rock Campground. See map. Camping will be free to WAA members. Other campsites may be reserved by calling 1-800-322-3770 or can be arranged for at the Visitor Center on arrival. There are commercial campgrounds in the nearby towns of Joseph, Monroe, and Richfield. The closest motels are in Richfield - 26 miles east on I-70.

Information regarding contest rules and safety rules will be available at registration and check-in. Check-in for the contest at 9 AM at competition site or at Visitor Center, or you may write to the address on pre-registration form below. Call Leni Clubb, (619) 358-7835 prior to the event for advance copies of both rules. If possible, send pre-registration by June 1st.



FREMONT INDIAN STATE PARK PRE-REGISTRATION FORM
Mail to: World Atlatl Association, P. O. Box 56, Ocotillo, CA 92259

Name(s) _____ No. of Throwers _____
Address: _____ Phone _____

Division entering: Men ___ Women ___ Youth ___ Children ___

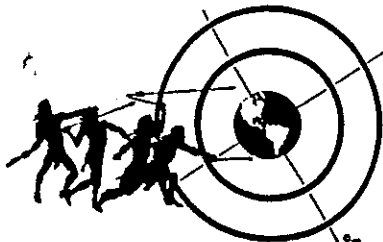
ATLATL EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD - 1995

Apr	1	Louisiana State Commemorative Area, Marksville, LA
	8	WAA Contest at Valley of Fire State Park, Nevada
	9	European Spearthrowing Championship at Ramiol, Belgium
May	19-20	Primitive Weapons Contest and Knap-in, Ft. Osage, Independence, Mo. Contact (816) 650-5737
	28	European Spearthrowing Championships, Samara, France
	26-27-28	Primitive Archer Magazine Atlatl Tournament, Marshall, Michigan, Contact Lou Becker (810) 765-4623
	27-29	Flint Ridge Runners '95 Memorial Day Weekend, Includes a presentation of papers in atlatl weight study and "throw", Mason's Campground 15886 Flint Ridge Rd, Newark, OH, Contact Carl Fry, (216) 794-8879
Jun	3-4	Michigan Atlatl Assn. Tournament, Byron, Michigan, Contact Lou Becker (810) 765-4623
	10-12	Spear Throwing Contest, Barunga Festival, Northern Territory, Australia
	16-17-18	WAA Contest at Fremont Indian State Park, Utah, contact Leni Clubb, (619) 358-7835
	17-18	European Spearthrowing Championships, Les Eyzies-de-Tayac, France
Jul	24-25	World Open Atlatl Contest, Fort Caspar Museum, Casper, Wyoming, Contact (307) 235-8462
	1-2	European Spearthrowing Championships, Le Grand-Pressigny, France
	1-3	Colorado Archaeological Society Annual Encampment, McPhee Reservoir, Dolores, Colorado
	15-16	Eastern Seaboard Atlatl Championships, Waterman Conservation Education Center, Apalachin, NY, Contact (607) 625-2221
Aug	12	Montana Mammoth Hunt, 3212 York Rd., Helena, Montana, Contact Manuel White (406) 227-5599
Sep	3	European Spearthrowing Championships, Oerlinghausen, Germany
	?	Michigan Atlatl Assn. Tournament, Byron, Michigan (Tentative), Contact Lou Becker (810) 765-4623
	24	European Spearthrowing Championships, Treignes, Belgium

A final letter to the editor: This Winter, many of us have been doing research on the atlatl and atlatl weights, to better understand the effects on the dart when thrown. We hope that you will join us on this project. We need to know how and where the atlatl was discovered, were they in caves, burials or what? Also the type of weight, bannerstone, boatstone, birdstone, etc., and averages sizes or weights in each category. We solicit any help your society may give. Please contact: W. Carl Fry, 1391 Tioga Ave., Akron, Ohio 44305. (Editor's note: See Flint Ridge Group May 27-29 above)

WAA MEMBERSHIP IS STILL JUST \$10.00 PER YEAR... SEND ALL INQUIRIES AND MEMBERSHIP DUES TO THE WORLD ATLATL ASSOCIATION SECRETARY:

**LENI CLUBB
P. O. BOX 56
OCOTILLO, CA 92259 USA**



The WORLD ATLATL ASSOCIATION, Inc.

