

NWBPA News

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Buggy Boogie Thang III Or "El Mirage 1998 - the not-so-dry Lakebed"

by Dean Jordan

Okay, here we go. Freeman and I get into Vegas, Friday around noon. We get our gear, along with Freeman's ridiculous K-mart blue light special bag that looks like it could hold a small refrigerator, say Hi to Jack Rogers and Bruce Kapstan who are leaving the airport headed for Ivanpah, grab our rental car, and take off. Special attention is paid to getting the rental car just right. White, fast, 4-door, cheap (\$165 a week), unlimited miles, 'nah we won't be leaving the state'- no insurance we definitely don't need that, full tank of low grade gas, and registered in my sidekick's name for plausible deniability. It's raining, not a good sign, but hey, we're here and a long way from El Mirage, surely it will not be raining there, I mean, it doesn't rain in the desert does it?

First, food. As everyone knows, they don't feed you on those long flights anymore, unless a bag with 13 peanuts and another with 6 pretzels is your idea of food, so we are starving. And I know right where to go. Prime Rib for Freeman at \$4.95 and I'm gonna go for the giant T-bone at \$6.95. I'm buying so f*ck it, let's start this trip right! We pig, but gotta fly as it is a 3 hour run at 100 mph to make it to the lakebed by dark.

It's cold out and has rained the whole way, but we're going good, the radio is pumping, and I haven't gotten pulled over yet. We cruise through Victorville and the sky's getting darker. I've got a bad feeling about this! No one in Adelanto that I see, so off to the lakebed. It's about 15 miles and it looks like the darkest cloud is sitting right on the lakebed, 'Damn!'. I'm able to get the rental up to 100 mph again on the road out. It's getting dark fast and I'm scared I'm going to miss Steve Bateman who has told me he is camping there or will leave me a note, I'm not sure where, so I'm hoping I'll find him. Coming out on the flat I see the tall El Mirage sign, so I let off the gas and slide to a stop just past it, right next to 4 guys and some pickups. Cool, it's John Gabby, Steve Irby, Fran Gramkowski, and Steve Bateman! We BS, drink a beer, and talk about the weather.

Steve B says, "most of the lake is wet, but the bottom is dry and it will probably stop raining". Right. It's getting cold and is pretty dark now, but at least it is not raining, so we ask Steve B where we should camp and he takes us off to the middle of the small end that we are used to driving past on our way to the bigger part of the lake. Freeman and I are beat, as our day started around 4 am EST and it's now around 6:30 pm PCT, whew. We set our tents up on the dry lakebed and Steve points out how dry it is. We respect Steve's judgement because, after all, he is a geologist, which means he probably went to college or something. Anyway, it doesn't take long to do and I'm asleep before you can say Steve Shapson.

Suddenly I hear an engine coming at me. When you are asleep in a building made of 3/4 oz cloth, this sound tends to get your attention quickly. Now the sound is skidding! AAAACCKKKK!! I bound out of the tent in time to see a blue AWD Chevy van slide to a stop as

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three certifiable's, with British accents, tumble out. Apparently Andrew has the rental car thing figured out as he and his crew gather round. It's Matt Hurrell and some guy named Walt! Holy cow, they're as crazy as Andrew, and they've been traveling longer than we have and are all talking at once. Next thing I know, Walt brings out the Glenfidich. I immediately mispronounce it, much to the amusement of my British friends, but have a shot none-the-less. Nick-nick-nick. Everyone's up but the party doesn't last long as it is cold and we are all beat. Andrew takes Matt and Walt to the motel but comes back to sleep in the van. Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz.

Suddenly I'm awakened by the sound of heavy rainfall and the blaring of Andrew's horn!!!! Oh shit! it's raining, we have to get the vehicles off the lakebed. You see the only time we are not allowed on the lake is when it's wet, a condition we've been told happens every 6 to 9 years for a few days, no big deal. Well, it is freakin' pouring right now, so we hastily scramble to get our 4 vehicles off the lakebed. Mike Smathers has joined us by now and has pitched his tent along with the rest. We carefully drive over our own tracks on the road and have a hasty meeting in the van to decide what to do. But, just then, it stops raining. Cool.

I am desperate for more sleep and don't really care at this point, so I opt to go back to sleep in my tent. Freeman has not moved. Everyone goes back to sleep. Next thing I hear is more rain. As I drift in and out of sleep, I'm awakened by Freeman's shaky voice. "Deeeeeeaaaaannnnnnnn, I'm sorry." "What's up Freeman?" "I'm wet." "Are you cold?" "Yesssssss." "Go



No Man is an Island?

Photo by Dave

sleep in the car then, and get dry." "It's locked." "Oh. Here are the keys. Make sure you get dry, you can get hypothermia in this weather!" I fall back to sleep.

Bing! Ah, that has got to be sunlight... I think. The moon has been so bright that it is hard to tell, but I think this has got to be it and there is no way I can fall asleep again. Besides, nature calls. I stand up as I un-zip my

tent, God what a sky!!! I think, 'Oh, yeah what a view', as I scan the horizon. As I gaze around and take in the whole view, I realize that I am now an island in the middle of a very large lake! Holy Cow!! I will not forget to take Steve B off the list of 'he who picks the site'. Looking over my shoulder, I see Freeman's flattened tent looking like a very bad night after the tornado went through the trailer park. No one could have survived that, I think, as I laugh out loud. But Lord it is gorgeous out.

Picking my way across the lake while accumulating huge clumps of mud on my boots, I traverse a couple of hundred yards to reach the shore where Kurt and Linda Anderson's motor home is parked. The view is unreal! I just can not say enough about the beauty of this part of America, it is just breathtaking at sunrise. A few people stir as we take in the sights and we see how many people have joined us in the night. I wake up Andrew and then we wake up Corey, who claims he needs to sleep, so we force Scotch on him and take off at a high rate of speed to drive into town to eat!

It is Saturday, January 10, 1998. What a way to start the New Year. Come to a dry lake full of water in the middle of nowhere with your friends from all over the world. If you haven't been on one of these trips, you don't know what you are missing. Or, maybe you do... anyway, here we all are. Already there must be 75 people, many of them bugging on the edge of the lake. Quite a large area actually, and there are toilets and we overlook the two tent islands. Beautiful.

It doesn't take 5 minutes before someone suggests I take my tent down "hey, it's surrounded by water!" Yeah, I hadn't noticed, thanks. Obviously, it ain't coming down all day now. And my theory is proved over and over as a dozen people let me know throughout the day what I should do. Thanks. Greeting and meeting people begins at once as I grab my buggy stuff and start building. The wind is up and there are plenty of people. Fritz Gramkowski is here along with his friend from San Francisco. The wind is blowing (did I mention the wind is blowing?) so I've got to buggy!!! Meanwhile, there are buggies and kites everywhere. The desert blooms under the colors of nylon. And, thank God, it is not raining. We figure the lake will dry off soon. Optimists, all kite flyers are optimists.

I grab a Comp II and head for the buggy. Yeeehawww, we're doing it now. There are motorcycle trails everywhere and we are exploring them, finding we can go just about anywhere we want, in any direction. Before I know it, I'm on a track that Bateman shows me. It makes a nice circular course and I'm racing around it and am joined at various times by the likes of Andrew and Fritz. Meanwhile, I'm enjoying my new slicks.

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They are the BEST tires I've ever ridden on in the desert - they feel bulletproof!! I'm getting good solid air and landing it!!! Ahhhh, it's better than I imagined, this desert thang. How do you describe buggy heaven? I don't know, but you know it is something good, and special, and aoxomoxoa seeps in, and that million watt grin is on everyone's face, and we are just ripping around all over the place, totally heedless of the problems, just enjoying life at the moment and playing with the wind. It's great. Heaven is here on earth and we've found it once again in the high desert of southern California, the promised land. The sun sets but the party is just starting as I move my camp (finally) and Steve Kent

builds the first fire of the trip. The cold sets in, the party gets going good, and we all party all night till at least, uh, say 9:30 pm or so. Then off to dreamland I go.

Sunday dawns early and it's chilly. There is frost on the cars and on the baggage left laying about. I make coffee on the propane stove as the bright dawn wash's over the desert floor. More people came in the night and the talk leans toward the vision of us being able to get out on the actual lakebed, something we've been unable to do so far. It looks like the race that I've scheduled for today will have to be held in a less than ideal place. So close, yet.... Anyway, the morning seems to be turning into a social situation, with old friends greeting each other as the crowd begins to filter in. We've scheduled the race meeting for 1:30 pm so that as many people as possible can attend, including those who attended the KTA show in San Diego.

Joao Carlos, my friend from Portugal, is telling me that Robert Graham is here now. I've never met Robert, although I sure have heard of him. I see his name every time I open my kite to fly it. Joao offers to introduce us, so we walk over to where he and his friend, also from Switzerland, are assembling their very large buggies. These buggies reminded me more of landsailers without bottoms. Same size wheels, just wider wheel span and longer wheelbase. Robert and Jeff Howard are talking about parasail design. Jeff is wondering about the effectiveness of the triangle rib design in certain sails. This is great stuff for a tech head. Robert turns out to be very personable and speaks English very well. Later he is seen going very fast with kites that look similar to the new Q series.

Soon the talk turns to the racing and what course we're going to run. I still haven't gotten back in my buggy, although there is good wind and there are a lot of people about. I talk to Fritz and Jeff about the conditions and the possible racetrack set up. They've been getting in as much practice as they can - I think Jeff was flying a C3 at the time. Finally a race meeting is held (right on time), heads are counted, and the race start time is moved back due a lack of enough of wind and with the

hope that others might join us. This proves to be a good decision since the wind slowly begins to build, increasing the buggy speeds through the course end of the lakebed. A triangular shaped course is set with the long leg running just off of the wind and parallel to the edge of the lake on the flat. The second leg goes to the right, up a bumpy hill with various tracks almost like a light mogul field. Then on around the state built, "brick" shithouse, the perfect place for a turn, and downhill to the start/finish line. The track is very fast and bumpy. I practice going around until it feels right and fast and then go get ready. I still haven't learned to have all of my equipment near at hand.

The next race meeting begins on time. Excitement is high as the course is explained, some learning of our method of racing for the first time. The course is an upside down pyramid with the wind coming off of the lake and with the start line at the bottom left of the pyramid. It is a slightly upwind run to the first mark. Racers are to complete two full laps rounding all three marks and then, on the third time around the first mark, go straight back to the finish line without rounding the second mark. Many racers express concern that this will bring the entire field face to face. We explain that it sounds crowded but is actually one of the fastest ways for a lot of people to get by one another quickly, and that the kites all sort themselves out.

In the first race, I got a very good start and actually led the field for 2 or 3 seconds before I got to the first mark. Somehow, by the time I rounded the mark, someone else wrapped around me and took me down. Damn, but that's okay, 'cause there are 4 more races to go, and I was going real good', shake it off. The second race doesn't start as smoothly, but I manage to get down to turn one, hook my kite far out, and get major air (without wanting to). I land it sideways and bend my rear wheel under. Dang! Finishing the race is all I can think of at this point. But I am really getting vexed. I steal a wheel off of my other buggy and barely have time to line up for the next race. I'm using a C2 now and am really going good, when I can get going. There are a lot of foreign racers and their styles are completely different from ours so there are a lot of traffic problems. I know this will diminish with experience on both our parts, but for now, it is a problem, since someone always seems to be coming from nowhere and wrapping your lines. All of a sudden, in the midst of dealing with all of the traffic frapplefrappleshlapleprttttt, I get a flat tire. My first thought is 'I can still go on! I'll run the rest of the race like this, c'mon let's go!' But reality sets in at the next turn as I round the very immobile second mark and can't hold the turn at all. I just slide right off of the course. Those aluminum wheels are kinda expensive too, I think. Oh well, there are two races left.

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I never had a real problem in the fourth race, other than I couldn't seem to hook up well and never really seemed to find a groove. In the fifth race, I got a bowtie (twisted kite). And that was my much anticipated, waited for, dreamed about, couldn't wait to go, race day at El Mirage BBTIII! Sometimes you get the bear, and sometimes he gets you. That track was a bigger bear than I thought.

The racing was very good from my seat. There were a lot of people around the track cheering on their favorite racer and giving general encouragement to others. The competition was intense, the pace very fast. For me it was only the second time that I had raced internationally. Overall, I give high marks to Fran Gramkowski, David Arnold, John Gabby, and the many others who helped keep the corners clear and kept track of all of us and how many laps we had done. We learned a lot and are encouraged to keep doing it. It was great fun and I think everyone who does it is a better buggier for it.

The rest of that day was a blur. I couldn't believe how hard I had been on my equipment. I ended up using all three Comps, though I wasn't effective at all with the C1. Meanwhile, as the race was going on, more people arrived and the place filled up with buggies. As far as you could see, up into the edge of the mountains, way down the road, there were kites. What a sight. What a night.

Monday and another early rise. Now all of the talk is about how dry the lake is and 'lets move up on it.' Soon we get the okay from the rangers and people drive up the side of the lake to move camp farther up, with thoughts of more of the lake drying. I hook up the tandem and take my friend Molly for a ride up to where everyone is. The wind is good and we are cranking. You can really get a tandem going when the wind is up! After riding on the motorcycle trails for two days, this is a welcome change, even though you can see water right up to the edge we are working. I finally make the decision to break camp as almost everyone has moved farther up by now, although something kept nagging at me not to get my hopes up. Soon there was a full on 'nother camp and even more people with the likes of Andy Preston and Chris Matheson checking in. "WANKER!" -"LOSER" is yelled back and forth, as we greet one another. Ah it's good to see your friends.

Pretty soon Fran has gotten it together for the endurance race and a course is measured out. I take Ty's bike out to set up the cones, only to discover that the water has been pushed farther down the lake by the wind. We remeasure, but the water is coming at both ends now in giant rivulets. Meanwhile the ranger comes and orders us off. Doesn't look like there is going to be a race. Too bad, we sure had the wind.

Moving everyone takes some time and by the time we get moved and the officials confer, we are allowed to go on the smallest bit of dry stuff down by the road where we had previously camped and are now recamped. It's small but it's fast, though by now it is too late to get anything together for a race, much to late. So everyone plays and plays until yet another buggy day is past. Even more people come and now there are two fires. Everyone gives me a hard time, but I still manage to stay up till 9:45 pm - I'm going for a record!

During the rest of the trip, the lake never did open up more. We were able to buggy, but we had low wind conditions after the first of the week. By Thursday, many people left, but not the wind. We took to the trails and went far from camp. At one point I spotted a couple of kites up the lake a bit but off in the brush. It didn't take me long to catch up to Corey and Dan Rubesh having a session. The winds were high, so cutting around the thornbushes and making your own way was no problem. I didn't want to have a tangle so I went past them to wait. Meanwhile Freeman arrives and we putter around waiting for those guys. It doesn't take long before I've landed my kite to adjust my buggy, but it gets all tangled in a thornbush. Corey is bugging now and comes up to help. I warn him that in this high wind it's risky, but he manages to free my kite anyway and then promptly crashes his! Shit. Somehow I find a place to park mine and go look at Corey's mess. We relaunch but something is wrong and he breaks a line, BAM! Now we have a real mess as it lands in the thorns. Meanwhile Freeman has crashed his kite. Did I mention the wind was high? Soon Corey and I begin to sort out his spaghetti, figuring it can't take more than an hour or so ;-) to fix, man what a mess! After a while John Gabby drives up in his pickup and we use the front of it for a wind break. John notifies us that there is some medicine in the truck if any of us need it. Dang-gone right we do! Corey pulls out the tequila and margarita mix and never misses a beat, making margaritas in everyone's mouth! Now that's a good margarita! We untangle, re-tie, and away we go, fast up into the trails. Buggy till you fry, die or try, I don't know, but buggy we did, right until the sun set and the moon rose and the cactus cooled and the fire burned low!

Later we found some great motorcycle runs that were great for jumping. Jeff Howard showed us all how to do it, landing 3½ feet of air and jumping over Walt, while Matt snapped pictures. He tried a few 180's and kept jumping until his footpeg broke off! Jeff spends entirely too much time in his buggy and is way to good. He's also way to nice a guy, I suspect he is up to something, so watch out if you meet him.

Mostly we buggied. There was a good time had by all. Rick Kinnaird even showed up! Dave Arnold and I got a

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freight train like ride going in the tandem, creating an instant post card with his Hi-40 and my C2 framed in a perfect blue sky, passing anyone who came near. Travolinni, Max, Dave and I explored the far lake side and found that seagulls had moved in! It was a cornucopia of buggy and wind fun. So many faces and all smiling. It would be hard to find someone who didn't have a good time I think. I was the last buggier on the lake on Friday when the motorcycles started rolling in for the weekend.

On Freeman and my last day we went to Ivanpah. We got there around 2:00 in the afternoon, called Scott Dyer, got the combination and went out on the lake. It was huge. After being cooped up on the smallest part of El Mirage all week, Ivanpah looked bigger than ever. The wind was light but enough to roll with using a C3. Freeman took a 10m² UL peel out. Soon the wind built up so we were getting some real speed and had to go down a size, but not before I had a speed run. I went as fast, if not faster than, I had the whole trip using the C3 to go downwind back to camp. I was going so fast that I hardly slowed down as I lifted the wheel to two-wheel it on home. We had the whole place to ourselves. It wasn't as smooth as the glass like surface of El Mirage, but there was a whole lot more of it and it was clean. Soon the sun set and we had to take our buggies apart for the last time before going home. What a way to end a perfect trip. The glare of Las Vegas seemed so surreal after the splendor of the desert.

Now, a week later, it is almost dreamlike in my memory. Image upon image fleeting through my mind, laughter still in my ear. What a classy group of folks these buggiers are and how wonderful to be a part of this wacky world. Can't wait till the next time we get together and raise it one more level. All names mentioned are real people, some wackier than others. Facts are often misconstrued after too many margaritas. If you have never been to one of these boogies, you owe it to yourself to come. The next one may start earlier so that we can bring in the new millennium from our buggy seats. Stay tuned for info. Thanks for reading and aoxomoxoa.

BBTIII Racing Results

by Fran Gramkowski

This was probably the best field of competitors ever assembled in North America for a buggy race. Twenty-two racers participated in the racing with seventeen completing enough races to place. The circuit was set up over both smooth and bumpy terrain making the race physically demanding on both the pilots and the equipment. Several racers finished with a wheel ready to fall off. Quick repairs were made between races but, because of the intensity of the competition, almost no one changed to a smaller kite as the wind increased. A

challenging 25 mile race (1.8 mile lap) was set up on Monday but never happened because the ranger moved us to another part of the dry lake due to shifting water.

Sixty percent of the lake was closed on Friday when I arrived and the remaining third flooded on Friday night because of more rain. Just ask Dean, his tent was in the water when I arrived Saturday morning and it was not a mirage. Saturday and Sunday we were restricted to using the "beach" and off road area. Most people discovered that making your own paths through the brush was a lot of fun. Kites could be seen on the hillsides miles away. Some great new pucker bumps were found and Jeff Howard managed to keep going airborne until he destroyed his buggy.

Circuit Racing Results From Sunday, January 11, 1998

1 Jeff Howard	USA
2 Steve Bateman	USA
3 Mark Schradle	Germany
4 Fritz Gramkowski	USA
5 Robert Graham	Switzerland
6 Steve Kent	USA
7 Steve Albright	USA
8 Mike Delfar	USA
9 Thomos Drumm	Germany ?
10 Dean Jordan	USA
11 Matt Hurrell	Great Britain
12 Max Awadrom	USA
13 Kurt Anderson	USA
14 Ute Nissen	Germany
15 Linda Anderson	USA
16 Joao Carlos	Portugal
17 Eric Brackenbury	Canada

Hope to see everyone again at Spring Break Buggy Blast 1998, March 11-17, Ivanpah Dry Lake, Primm, Nevada.

Fran Gramkowski
Race Director

Spring Break Buggy Blast 98

by Mark Davis

John Matteson & I loaded up our buggies (after breaking them down and stuffing them and what we thought we needed buggy engine wise into a travel bag). You should have seen us trying to pick up these bags! We flew down to Las Vegas and drove 42 miles southwest to Primm Valley. It's on the California/Nevada border. On one side is the dry lakebed of Ivanpah and on the other side is Roach. We had great weather, in the 60's - 70's. The winds came up mid-morning or early in the afternoon. Anywhere from 10 to 25 mph every day. Being used to buggying at the beach, I brought all my

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BIG buggy engine kites. WRONG!! I left most of my small kites at home. I had to go to BFK Las Vegas to buy a small buggy kite on the second day there.

People came from Europe, British Columbia (Calvin Yuen), and all over the United States. Overall there were about 50 buggies on Saturday for the big 50 mile enduro race. Steve Bateman won in 1hour 54 minutes. Brett Kielekas took 5th place, John was 9th, and I came in 11th. There was even a tandem buggy with 1 kite engine. There was talk about having a tandem buggy class for next year. Thirty buggies started and twenty finished. One buggy did it with a Trick-N-Track stunt kite. We also had pursuit races. You want to stay out of their way when they're racing. Jeff Howard won 3 out of 5 races.



Fritz and Jeff put on a trick clinic Photo by Fran Gramkowski

Thursday night we had a barbecue on Roach lake along with night buggying. Glow sticks on the kites and flashing lights on the buggies. Dean Jordan was there making a promotion buggy video - it will be out at the kite stores around June.

On Monday we were treated to a fantastic desert lighting show. We were sitting around waiting for the winds to pick up on a sunny, warm morning. At one of the mountain top areas there were dark black clouds forming. You could tell that the clouds were sucking up the warm desert air and pushing the rain clouds back at us. At the same time there were lightening bolts flashing all around the mountains. You could see the rainfall coming closer and closer. Finally, when it got to us, we left the lakebed. We didn't want to get caught on the lake-bed when it turned to muck. Overall we had a GREAT time and are looking forward to going back next year. Hope to see some of you down there next year.

SBBB98 Racing Results

by Fran Gramkowski

30 buggies started the race, 20 completed it. The first 6 place times were better than the winning time from last year.

Steve Bateman continued on to do 10 more laps for a total of 75 course miles and, I think, a total of 82 actual miles. This distance was completed in under 3 hours.

Congratulations to Steve and all of the other competitors who completed or participated in the Enduro.

50 MILE ENDURO RACE - Saturday March 14, 1998

1	Steve Bateman	1:54
2	Eddie Petranvk	2:01
3	Jeff Howard	2:03
4	Vino	2:07
5	Brett Kielekas	2:10
6	John Smith	2:10
7	J D Sansaver & Tim Siriannr	2:12 Tandem w/1 kite
8	Dennis Findley	2:17
9	John Matteson	2:18
10	John Ruggiero	2:19
11	Mark Davis	2:30
12	Terry Gerwick	2:37
13	Dana Du Mond	?:??
14	Larry Navarro	2:44
15	Larry Stiles	2:44
16	Tim Hauprich	?:??
17	Sam Ritter	3:10
18	Wayne Brunjes	3:23
19	Bruce Kenkel	3:23
20	Keith Anderson	3:25



Steve Bateman takes 1st in the Enduro Photo by Fran

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Circuit Racing - A series of 5 races were held on Sunday, March 15. The scores from the best 3 out of 5 races were totaled to determine the final placing.

1 Jeff Howard	1	1	2	2	1	Q Comp/2000
2 Steve Bateman	2	2	1	1	2	self made 2 line
3 Fritz Gramkowski	3	3	3	3	4	Q Comp
4 Dean Jordan	10	10	4	4	3	Q 2000
5 Steve Kent	4	6	8	5	5	Q Comp
6 Matt Helberg	5	10	5	6	6	?

6 other people entered but did not complete 3 races.

The racing was very exciting with a few people being pulled out of their buggies on the reaching leg of the course. Most people changed the size of their kites during the races. The first place finish was determined on the final leg of the fifth race. Jeff and Steve were back and forth in first and second during the entire race.

Congratulations to the winners and to all of those who participated in the event and the racing.

The dates for Spring Break Buggy Blast 1999 are March 11th - 16th.

Sunset Beach-Bum Buggy Riders

by Kurt Anderson

HI ALL! Here is a bit about what we're trying to do to get some buggy racing going here in the Northwest.

We will have two basic courses. The short course will be a three corner race with four cones. Two cones will mark the start/finish line and the other two cones will be corners to be rounded on the outside. I enjoyed the format at El Mirage, a heat race of two and one half laps. I think we'll try this as a basis. There will be a pilots meeting before each set of heat races, a set being three to five races, depending on turnout. Due to some information received from the local authorities, we might have to limit the number of pilots per race. There will be NO dune races. The long course will be two marks anywhere from one mile to three and a half miles apart. Pilots will round the marks on the outside and the number of laps will be determined at the pilots meeting. We are trying not to make more rules than necessary but a few are required.

1) Blocking will result in a penalty. Blocking can take place a few different ways - coming from behind a pilot and preventing that pilot from turning jibe or tack by crowding or stalling. Or possibly by just milling around the start line.

2) Starboard has the right of way. Some folks do not like this, but here is a way that you can use this to your advantage. Say you are running hard downwind

and a pilot is in an upwind tack on your right (starboard side). If you have room, you fall off wind and loop your kite to gain speed and pass in front of the other pilot. Or, if you do not have room, scrub a little speed, cut into the wind a little, and after passing behind the other pilot, you will have plenty of room to loop your kite and gain a lot of speed. In an upwind tack situation, if someone can out tack you from the right, then let him pass. I hope this is not to confusing.

NO MORE RULES. I hope! For the most part we are adults and I hope we can resolve any problems in an adult manner.

Now, as for a schedule. We would like to race as often as possible, but logistics are a problem. So, the third weekend of every even month we will race all comers at Sunset Beach, OR. Some events will interrupt or add to the schedule so flexibility is certain. Being a kite retailer has serious drawbacks, for instance Memorial day is very hectic so we might not make it to Alvord.

One more thing and then I must go. EQUIPMENT for racing buggies should be inspected including the kites and lines. HELMETS WILL BE REQUIRED FOR ALL PILOTS, no exceptions. Long pants, shirts, shoes, and pads are recommended.

The worst day buggy riding is still better than the best day working. Buggy on, buggy safe!!!!

Current 1998 race schedule:

April 18 & 19, June 20 & 21, August 15 & 16, October 16 & 17.

Other good tides will be:

May 2 & 3, 16 & 17, 30 & 31
 July 4 & 5, 18 & 19
 August 1 & 2, 29 & 30
 September 12 & 13, 26 & 27
 October 2 & 3.

Got any comments or suggestions? E-mail kitesnw@seasurf.com or call 503-861-3833. THANKS & FAIR BREEZES. tfbg (aka Kurt Anderson)

Letter from the President

Recently I received an e-mail asking me why we couldn't buggy at the Copalis Beach or Roosevelt Beach accesses, especially since these are in an area where cars can't go and there are not any clam beds.

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

The "official" line is that there is ONLY one area on the Washington coast where it is legal to buggy, through the permit process. That is at Washaway Beach, south of Grayland.

Unofficially, on many beaches (with the exception of those in the Ocean Shores area), there is a "tolerance" policy. Since it is unofficial, it is subject to change without notice. If you buggy on these beaches, it has to be at your own risk and with the understanding that you may be ticketed or fined a hefty sum. This could also put the kibosh on where we can buggy legally as well as on all of the work we have already done to get more beaches opened to legal bugging.

The Parks Department has delayed presenting the proposal to expand the buggy beaches to their board until next fall. Based on this, there will be no change in the buggy permit process for this year. Therefore, if you plan to buggy at Washaway, call Twin Harbors State Parks at (360) 268-9717 and ask them to send you a "sand sailor" permit. This is the ONLY beach in Washington where you can buggy legally.

Although the weather in the Northwest has not been particularly good for bugging, there have already been two major events this season held in another part of the country.

In January, it was El Mirage Dry Lake in California for the Buggy Boogie Thang III. El Nino dropped lots of water on the lake leaving a very small area for the crowd of buggiers from around the world. However, this did not dampen their enthusiasm. This event happens every other year after the Kite Trade Association show. Because of its tie in with KTA, there are a lot of kite industry people from all over the country and the world who come to this event.

In March, the Spring Break Buggy Blast was held at Ivanpah Dry Lake on the California/Nevada border, where bugging and casinos go hand-in-hand. This event occurs every year in March during what used to be Fritz Gramkowski's spring break from college. Even though Fritz has graduated and gone on to work, Fran still holds the event in March. This event grows bigger each year and boasted 60 plus buggiers in 1998.

If anyone is interested, we have some stickers from the Spring Break Buggy Blast 1998. They are \$2.00 each and the NWBPA gets part of the proceeds.

Kurt Anderson has planned a series of buggy races for this year. If you're into competition or are interested in watching competition, check out Kurt's article in this newsletter.

In the last newsletter we published a list of members names along with their addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses (where available). If you have a new e-mail address or if any of the printed information is incorrect, drop us a line with the updated information. If we have everyone's e-mail address, we can broadcast important information between newsletter issues.

That's about it for now, hope to see you on the beach soon!

Classifieds

Announcing my transition into a retail business specializing in Traction Kiting equipment, Buggys, Buggy Parts, Traction Kites, Line Sets, Alum / Stainless Wheels.

Still have some Spring Break Buggy Blast 1998 shirts left. Extra large short sleeve \$15 and extra large long sleeve \$20.

There are also some window stickers available for \$2 each. Contact Morrie Williams at (360)268-0318 or e-mail: williams@techline.com.



Fran Gramkowski
 High Fly Kite Company
 Phone: (609) 429 6260
 FAX: (609) 429-0142
 E-mail: frang@voicenet.com

The Kite Buggy Of The Future

A review of what innovations are taking place in Europe
by Dave Lord

While we have a respectable number of kite buggy people both here in the Northwest and on the East coast, with a few scattered ones in between, it is small potatoes compared to Europe. This greater number of participants has resulted in more innovative attempts to improve the kite buggy. The innovation centers around making the buggy more stable, providing some type of suspension, and changing the number of wheels. A German buggier came to World Cup to race and demo Jojo traction kites. His buggy was longer, wider and had the seat moved forward. At El Mirage in January, the European women's racing champion, Ute Nissen arrived with a similar buggy with the addition of canted rear wheels. The rear wheels of Ute's buggy were angled in the vertical plane about 30 degrees inward on the top. Land yachts have used this technique for years and it is just now starting to show up in buggys. The longer buggy should be more stable at speed, and with the seat forward, the center of gravity moves forward so there is less tendency for the front wheel to slip sideways.



Notice the canted rear wheels.

Several suspension devices have been introduced and, although I have not personally tried any of them, I am intrigued by the simple ones using only rubber pads. It seems these would be ideal to absorb the high frequency vibration you get in the desert from the shrinkage tile cracks. The larger, heavier shock/spring systems adapted from motorcycles and the like seem, to me, to be more useful for larger amplitude bumps. We don't get these big ones on the beach or on the dry lakes, but the poor folks inland who must use soccer fields and pastures undoubtedly do encounter them.

European buggiers have designed both two and four wheeled buggys. Andrew Beattie from the U.K. brought a two wheeled buggy to El Mirage, but neither he nor anyone else there had the skill to really do well on it.



Think you could handle this two wheeled buggy?



And here is the latest in four-wheeled models.

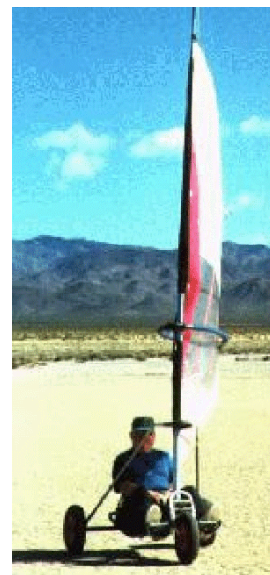
Oh! I almost forgot my own contribution. I modified my wife's buggy to take a 3.5 m² wind surfer sail as a means of propulsion. Included is a picture of it being used at Ivanpah dry lake.

BUGGY SAFE!

BUGGY HARD!

BUGGY YOUR

BRAINS OUT!



Here I am on my modified landsailer/buggy.
Photo by Carol Lord.

Mark your calendars for these events:

- May 23-25** - Spring Buggy Blitz, Alvord Dry Lake, Fields, OR
- June 20-21** - Buggy Racing, Sunset Beach, OR. Contact Kurt Anderson at 503-861-3833
- July 10-12** - Westport Windriders Kite Festival, Grayland Beach, Cranberry Rd. approach. There will be bugging at Wash-Away beach that weekend.

For more information about any of these events, contact *Morrie or Kelci Williams* at: 360-268-0318 or williams@techline.com.



BOOBS Banter

by Kelci Williams

Now that Winter has past and Spring is busting out all over, it's time to for us **BOOBS** to sally forth and buggy on.

I'm in the process of making a **BOOBS** t-shirt with the graphic (left side of the logo) on the front and the words (right side) on the back. I'll be making transfers and then ironing them onto the shirt. Let me know if any of you would be interested in buying some transfers - if so I'll come up with a price.

NWBPA Membership Application

NWBPA, c/o Kelci Williams, Treas., P.O. Box 1358, Westport, WA, 98595-1358

Name _____ Hm Ph. _____

Address _____ Wk Ph. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ e-mail _____

Please Check One: New Renewal Date _____ Method of Payment _____

Please complete this form and mail it along with a check or money order for US\$10.00 to the above address.

NorthWest Buggy Pilots Association

c/o Morrie and Kelci Williams
 P.O. Box 1358
 Westport, WA 98595-1358

Mailing
 Address
 Goes
 Here

ARE YOU DUE TO RENEW?
CHECK THE EXPIRATION DATE ON YOUR LABEL!