



# Sharp News

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Warren Osborne, Editor

## 2006-2007 championship

- Warren Osborne

The ICCT overall points Champion for 2006-2007 is Gayle Bradley, sponsored by Spyderco. Congratulations Gayle for a great year and for all the work and commitment you've put into this. Second was Ted Ott – congratulations Ted, you've worked hard and deserve this award. First in the White Level was Mike Eubanks and second was Donavon Phillips. Great job guys and well deserved. You can see everyone's final standing for the season on page 3 of this newsletter.

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## Schools

- Warren Osborne

There are now two schools available. Jose' Diaz will host the First Annual Northwest Cutting School, Clinic and Competition in Ellensburg, Washington on March 15-16, 2008. Please call him at 509.760.5563 or email him at washclimber@yahoo.com if you would like to attend. The competition on Sunday will be a points event.

Jose' and Ed Schempp are doing a wonderful job up North and have already certified 5 or 6 cutters. Ed has just returned from England where he certified the first English BladeSports member. Thank you, Ed, and congratulations to Ian Allen-Rowlandson. We hope to have his photo and bio up on the website very soon. Welcome, Ian.

I will again host a BladeSports school here in Waxahachie, Texas, on December 1 & 2. We have a few surprises for this school and it should be exciting. Instructors will be Jim Crowell, John Fitch, Gayle Bradley, Gary Bond, and I. For the first time we will be experimenting with the double course event (weather permitting). We will also be cutting 2 x 6's and we will be conducting a seminar on "how good is your handle." Also we will be conducting lectures and demos on safe knife construction. The forge will be open Saturday evening but we need to know ahead of time if you would like to forge a cutter. The competition on Sunday afternoon will be a points event.

## Membership Dues

Our membership year is July 1—June 30 of each year. The 2007-2008 membership dues to BladeSports were due July 1, 2007. If you haven't sent in your dues, please do so.

Dues must be current in order to compete in any event.

## ICCT

BladeSports has completed all of its ICCT obligations to sponsors as of October 1 has no further responsibilities to that corporation or its sponsors.

### ***2007-2008 BladeSports' season***

*- Warren Osborne*

The first BladeSports' competition was in Orlando at the Knifemakers Guild Show. Thanks to the Guild for sponsoring this competition and we look forward to the 2008 competition in Orlando. Roger Breeding from Florida made all the benches for the course cut and we really appreciate his hard work – not only with construction, but gathering materials and hauling it to Orlando. We have a great friend here and we really appreciate him, as well as Alfred Pendray.

Blade Show West was our second competition for the season and a first for Blade West. What a great competition! Jose' Diaz was the lead man here – building all of the benches (with help from a few others) and generally organizing the whole thing. We have a good group in the Northwest folks and we see great things for them. What an enthusiastic crowd we had. It was just great.

Benchmade Knife Co. sponsored the event and we greatly appreciate Benchmade's involvement and support. Thanks guys. There were eleven competitors at Blade West and for the first time we had a woman competing. Rachel Lee Slade competed with one of Gayle Bradley's knives and did very well. Congratulations Rachel. Steve Shackelford was our MC and he did a great job. Steve kept the spectators occupied during set-ups with interviews and explanations of the cuts, the knives and the competition. Thanks Steve, you did a wonderful job and we look forward to next year.

Our third competition for this season was in Texas at the Spirit of Steel Show. There were 14 competitors and it was the conclusion of the ICCT points competition. Everyone had a great time and we had a good crowd to cheer us on. This event was sponsored by Crucible Steel with Scott Devanna as our M.C. Scott and Crucible have always supported us and we really appreciate these guys.



If you have an article you would like to contribute to our newsletter, please send it to Hester Bradley for the

## *From The Cutting Bench....*

- Gayle Bradley

One of the many benefits of participation in cutting contests is the learning experience. Case in point – after the competition at Blade Show West in Portland a few weeks ago, I had some **very** small burrs on my knife. Not enough to be a problem with the rules, but a small burr nonetheless. After the competition Wayne Goddard came by my table to talk about the competition and look at my knives. As he was examining my competition knife, he observed that it had a wire edge remaining after sharpening and that was where the burrs were coming from.

On Sunday I went to Wayne's table and we discussed the wire edge and a way to test for it. He explained to me how he would use a brass rod and how to stone the edge. The next week I tested the edge on my cutter, as Wayne had described, and discovered a small wire edge on about one-third of the blade. When I carefully removed the wire edge the small burrs disappeared as well.

To back up a bit, Warren Osborne, Jerry Halfrich and I have found that, in using CPM M-4 steel, the wire

edge is very difficult to remove due to the toughness and flexibility of this material. Almost from the beginning of my involvement in cutting contests, I have used a cork belt and green chrome rouge for the final edge. Because of the blade grind I use on my competition knives and the extensive cork belting, I thought the wire edge was removed. Surprise! Surprise! – it was not.

After this revelation and to prepare my knife for the Spirit of Steel contest, I very carefully and lightly stoned the edge, then cork belted and stropped the edge. At the SOS contest I cut three very hard boards and 10 other cuts. Upon examining the knife very carefully with magnification after the competition, I found no burrs.

The point of this story is to never stop testing, talking to other makers, or think you have found the ultimate answer. There is a vast amount of knowledge yet to be discovered from cutting competitions, e.g., knife design, materials, sharpening, and cutting techniques. Please, everyone, share your ideas, successes and, yes, your failures with the other competitors. This will help the sport and knives as a whole. Remember – think outside the box!

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## *2006-2007 — Final Standings*

The 2006-2007 season ended at the Spirit of Steel competition on September 29, 2007. The Overall and Red Level winner was Gayle Bradley, and the White Level winner was Mike Eubanks. Following are the final standings, in order of finish:

Bradley, Gayle	Schempp, Ed	Burton, Jason
Ott, Ted	Hinds, Vance	Lairson, Don
Bond, Gary	Winkler, Daniel	Heaney, John
Crowell, Jim	Diaz, Jose	Bauer, Mike
Barker, Reggie	Devanna, Ray	Steck, Van
Eubanks, Michael	Knight, Jason	Dincaue, Eric
Osborne, Warren	Shadley, Eugene	Lyons, Bill
Devanna, Scott	Laughridge, Jeremy	Pollock, Wallace J.
Phillip, Donavon	Schempp, Martin	Scott, Shawn
Fitch, John	Lairson, Jerry	Davidson, Edmond
Singer, Steve	Branton, Bobby	Jordan, Andrew
Ellis, Shawn	Wiggins, Bill	Vice, Brad

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## *Heat Treating - Safety*

- *Scott Devanna*

We have all heard how important it is to properly heat treat steel. I know I have heard it many, many times and I know as a metallurgist that I have said it many, many times. Since safety is our number one priority proper blade design along with steel type and proper heat treating is extremely important.

I have told customers for years that it is not enough to send a piece of steel to a commercial heat treater and simply tell them that we want a specific Rockwell hardness. Always tell the commercial heat treater the aim hardness range but give the commercial heat treater a specific heat treatment procedure. For example, there are numerous ways of heat treating D2 tool steel to 60 HRC but there is always an optimum heat treat procedure to achieve 60HRC depending upon the specific application for the D2 tool. If the heat treater has followed the optimum heat treat procedure but the tool might be a point soft it is nor-

mally OK to use the tool. If they are off several points in hardness, then that is cause for concern.

Whether you are making your cutting competition knife by the stock removal method or by forging, never short cut the heat treatment procedure for that particular steel. If you are doing the heat treatment yourself and you need advise or assistance – ask for it ! Contact someone who knows and benefit from their experiences. If you are sending your blade to someone else to heat treat or to a commercial heat treater, always discuss the heat treatment procedure with the heat treater. Get it right the first time!

Remember, it doesn't matter how good the steel or how good the knife design. If the heat treatment is suspect or less than optimal, the end product will not perform properly.

Safety is our top priority and we do not want or need a competition knife failing – this would compromise safety! If you are not sure how to heat treat a particular steel ask for help.

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## *2007-2008 — Current Standings*

After three competitions (Knifemakers' Guild, Blade Show West, and Spirit of Steel), following are the current standings:

Ott, Ted  
Bradley, Gayle  
Osborne, Warren  
Bond, Gary  
Eubanks, Michael  
Devanna, Sott  
Diaz, Jose  
Crowell, Jim  
Rader, Michael  
Laughridge, Jeremy

Barker, Reggie  
Schempp, Ed  
Shadley, Eugene  
Burke, Bill  
Phillips, conavon  
Steck, Van  
Schemp, Martin  
Devanna, Ray  
Davidson, Edmond  
Slade, Rachel

Hinds, Vance  
Singer, Steve  
Lyons, Bill  
Jordan, Andrew



## *My First Cutting School*

- Steve Singer, December 2005

I just came back from a weekend at Warren Osborne's place up in Waxahachie, Texas. I had enrolled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Cutting School and Competition. What a great time it was! There were lots of personal instructions on knife making and cutting plus hands-on student participation directed by some of the best bladesmiths in the United States.

Some of the highlights:

Scott Devanna talked about metallurgy and how people are quick to blame the steel instead of the heat-treat.

At lunch Daniel told us tales of movie-making.

Jim Crowell was there with some fantastic words to keep you moving forward.

Reggie Barker was so funny that he kept us all laughing.

Warren Osborne with his personal tutelage opened up his house and shop to us all.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone there for all their words of encouragement and the cheering support they gave this aspiring bladesmith and neophyte cutting competitor. Although I had never before cut a 2x4 without the aid of a saw, because of their genuine desire to see me succeed, I was able to get it done.

I also believe that the world champion, Reggie Barker, could give up his day job and become a respected stand-up comedian. And I really mustn't forget to mention Gayle Bradley's "thong" bit. Pretty Funny Stuff!!

So Thanks Warren and all the crew for a great time. Hope to see ya'll next year.

*P.S. Man is my arm sore!*

## *Competition Apparel*

- Warren Osborne

Just a reminder. At any BladeSports competition we are permitted to wear our own shirts and hats, with our own names on them; our sponsor shirts and caps; or BladeSports shirts and caps. We are not allowed to wear any kind of camo, or any non-sponsor shirts or headgear. If you do not have a sponsor, you are not permitted to wear any other apparel other than your personal gear or BladeSports., except competitors may wear the shirts and caps supplied by the sponsor of that particular event. We would like everyone to at least wear something with BladeSports on it for promotional purposes. BladeSports logos can be obtained from Hester Bradley upon request. Also we have some T-shirts, golf shirts, and caps for sale. We have a demonstration of the course cut on DVD that can be purchased for \$20.00.

## *New Ideas*

- Warren Osborne

We have developed and tested many things since we started this school – safety lanyards, rubber handles (we weren't first); the course event, and multiple bench events, and new steels. If any of you have an idea for a new cut, a new event, more efficient methods of set-up, etc., do it! Think outside the box, be creative and be safe! We look forward to new ideas and concepts that will help us grow in knowledge.





## ***Instructors***

- Warren Osborne

In the near future, the Board will be reviewing the criteria for instructors. Initially we grandfathered some instructors which was necessary to get the ball rolling so to speak. Some of the areas we will be addressing will be: (i) personal competence in all the cuts; (ii) knowledge of all aspects of BladeSports rules and safety protocols; (iii) ability to teach not only the cuts, but to address knife construction, sharpening, etc.; and (iv) ownership or access to a cutting bench for instructional purposes, and availability of materials to take a student through every cut they can think of for certification. Any current instructor not able to fulfill these criteria may be asked to undergo additional training for recertification.

A BladeSports instructor needs to be able to help and assist in every area of this sport. He should be able to observe a student or a fellow competitor and recognize errors or areas where improvement can be accomplished. Last year, at the school in Texas, was the first time some of us felt we were

competent enough to instruct. Until that point, we were instructed for a couple of years by John Fitch, Jim Crowell and Reggie Barker. They forged here, they stock removed here, and they sharpened and cut until we were proficient in all areas. So with that, we will not be asking anyone to do anything we have not done ourselves. If all you have done is forge – do stock removal, if only to gain the knowledge and experience to help others who don't or can't forge. If all you have done is stock removal, step up and learn to forge. Expand your knowledge and skills. Join the ABS and attend some schools or hammer-ins. You'll find that the knowledge gained is well worth the effort. The three instructors mentioned above can do it all; we should expect no less from future BladeSports instructors. Can you do it? Will you?

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## ***Handles***

- Warren Osborne

How good is your handle? Due to the introduction of the "safety lanyard" we can sometimes depend on the lanyard rather than handle design. At the school you'll be asked to cut a 2x4 without the lanyard, so bring extra lanyard material. Why do this? The purpose of our lanyards is basically to protect the spectators, and the competitor. In outdoor, practical use of all kinds of knives, I've never seen a lanyard used; never used one myself, and would not recommend using it to cut brush or trim trees, etc. In the outdoors the only practical use for a lanyard is rock climbing, over water or up

a tree. Even in those circumstances, lanyards can be difficult to use. We are being watched; our knife designs will be copied, and we will sell some of these knives to the public, and some of them may become production knives. We need to provide the best and safest handle designs we can. More likely than not, the general public will never see the need for a lanyard. I would recommend that you test your handles without the lanyard. We will at the school.



## ***Keep on Cutting...***

*- Gary Bond*

First, I would like to congratulate Rachel Slade on being BladeSports' first female cutter. What a great deal for Rachel and BladeSports. She had a fantastic showing at Blade Show West making a lot of the finesse cuts look easy. Thanks again, Rachel, and welcome to BladeSports International, Inc.

Also, congratulations to Gayle Bradley and Michael Eubanks BladeSports/ICCT's Overall points Champion and White Level points Champion. Both are fierce competitors and deserve these awards. Without a doubt practice does payoff! Being the champions and great people that they are, I would like to thank them and congratulate both on a great 2006 - 2007 season.

Over the past six months or so a lot has happened – the Board of Directors has been established, with each member having certain responsibilities; membership is up; and sponsorship is growing. Good things are in store for BladeSports in the near future. We also have a new design for the award medals with BladeSports' logo.

Lone Star Cutting School is coming up soon. I would encourage everyone to attend and bring someone with you. This school just gets bigger and better every year. Warren Osborne and his instructors do a fantastic job helping each individual find what weight, design and cutting technique best fits that person. Make plans now to attend – I promise we always have a good time. Come to Lone Star Cutting School and see what's new.

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## ***2007-2008 Championship***

*- Gayle Bradley*

In a continuing effort to create a level playing field for competitors in all areas of the country, the Board has changed the points system for 2007-2008 and we have changed the way of determining the season's champion. For each cutter to travel to all the competitions is time-consuming and expensive, so the decision was made to use a competitor's best four (4) events to qualify for the season's championship at the Blade Show. The points for those four events plus the points from the competition at the Blade Show will determine the champion.

We will have three competitions in the Northwest this season. This will give competitors in the Western states a better chance to qualify for the championship.

Guys, we need someone in the Eastern part of the country to pick up the ball and run with it. At this time, the Board members are all located in Texas

and it is too far to drive, as well as too expensive to travel all over the country, for all events. We have Jose', Ed and a few others in the Northwest, and interest is growing in that area. Gene Shadley is working in the North Central area at this time, but we need help in the East.

Anyone interested in becoming involved in cutting, setting up a school, instructing, or putting on a competition, please contact me or any other Board member for information.

It is not necessary to be a cutter or interested in competing to be involved in BladeSports.

Cut Safe!



## *Website*

Our website has moved to [www.BladeSports.org](http://www.BladeSports.org), Daniel Winkler is our webmaster and updates the site for us. Daniel was responsible for setting up the site, initiating a lot of the documents and handbook for the ICCT. We owe Daniel a debt of gratitude for his many, many hours of sacrifice to accomplish this.

While we are on the subject of the website, every competitor has the opportunity to have a photo and bio on our website. If you can send Daniel a photo and some information about yourself, he will be happy to add this to the site. This is a great opportunity for everyone.

## *Thank you*

- Warren Osborne

We are nearly halfway through the 2007-2008 BladeSports season. It has been quite a ride so far, but I believe we are becoming more organized with most of the paperwork completed thanks to our Secretary, Hester Bradley. I can't say enough about Hester, but I want you to know that without her, BladeSports would not exist as it is today.

I must thank all of the Board members for their commitment and hard work in making BladeSports International, Inc., a successful venture. Thank you to all competitors and sponsors for your support. Without you, none of this would be possible.

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