

BladeSports

INTERNATIONAL, INC.

We are a Texas non-profit corporation formed to promote knife safety, provide workshops and cutting events for its members, and to inform and educate the public with regard to the safe use of a knife as a tool

One of Jose Diaz's many attempts at the water bottle record, Ted Ott currently holds the record at 20



Thoughts on Record Breaking

By Michael Rader

My first cutting competition was at a Washington State knife show in 2001 and that was where I was able to witness Ed Schempp break the known world record by cutting 11-1 inch ropes with one cut. We started by cutting three, then four, then five and on up until we failed a cut. I tied for second place at that event by cutting 6 and failing on 7. When Ed continued on for the next half-hour cutting and cutting, I was very, very impressed. I just didn't think it was possible to take that 10" knife and cut a bundle of rope as big as my leg. So, for reasons of legacy, I find

the rope cutting record quite inspirational and a personal challenge.

For whatever reasons you compete in the various competitions, for whatever motivation you have, I personally want to challenge you to press the limits of possibility. I challenge you to optimize your blade geometry, improve sharpening, refine your handle, go to the gym – whatever it takes - then break new records on the course. Break the 2x4 cut record at your next competition. Do it! Three



Gary Bond, sponsored by Benchmade Went for the record by attempting 16 ropes at the Northwest Cutting School and Competition last March

cuts under 2 seconds. It should be done by you, so do it.

Line up a case of water bottles and cut them all. Really, what is stopping you from cutting 30 or more? What is the limit? What is your limit? Take a step or two through it. Practice the motion a hundred times a day. Need a thinner knife? Maybe a recurve blade isn't really the best for bottles. Maybe a saber-shape is better. Work it. Break it.

Practice the rope cut with some cheap 1/4" cord. Mark your target zone with a marking pen and clamp a clothespin on the end for weight. Cut that cord with perfect form 25 times a day. It is like dry-firing a pistol, you can feel a good cut just like you know when you jerk the trigger. Maybe once a month, buy some real rope and clamp up a 12-15 rope bundle. Warm up thoroughly, cut your cord 10-15 times and without a hesitation, walk up to your bundle and cut it down.

Now go to your next competition, smoke through the course, and after everyone is done, lay out your 2x4 knife and your rope/waterbottle knife on the bench, call out your official and break some records. There will be a beginner watching you either in the audience or on the sidelines saying that they did not think it was possible to do that with a little 10" knife.

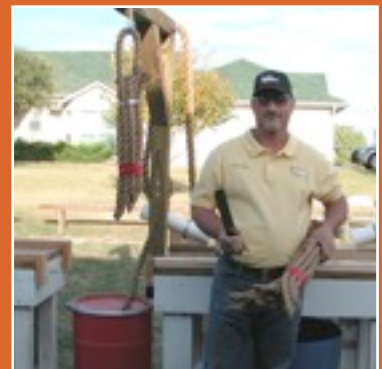
Since running became a sport, no-one believed it was possible to run a mile under four minutes. After it was broken, sub-four minute miles became commonplace. What really was broken? The mile or the mind? Before Mr. Schempp cut 11 ropes, no-one believed it could be done. Now look at the record, what is it 15 now? That's incredibly amazing!

I'm shooting for 20. Care to beat me to it?

Gayle Bradley's success at the waterbottle record inspired us all



THE LONE STAR CUTTING SCHOOL AND COMPETITION



The School and Competition will be 12/ 5-6/ 2009

Contact: Warren Osborne at (972)935-0899
412 Alysa Lane
Waxahachie, TX 75167
Cost: \$135 per person
Includes Lunch and supper on Saturday.

NORTHWEST CUTTING SCHOOL AND COMPETITION



The School and competition

Will occur on April 3, 4, 2010 in Ellensburg, WA. The cost will be \$135 and will include continental breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday. Emphasis will be placed on cross training and injury prevention as well as cutting safety and practice. The competition will be held on Sunday at 2pm.

Contact Jose Diaz at (509) 760-5563

Fun?

By Brian Wagner

So why are you involved in this cutting thing? A question I've been asked several times in the last few weeks, and it's not as easy to answer as you might think. My "knee jerk" answer is: "Well, it's fun!" and that is really the best blanket answer. The follow-up is of course inevitable ... "Why?"

Why indeed! Well, upon more careful consideration, here's what I've come up with.

It's fun to have the chance to "run amok" with a big knife and cut stuff that might not ever occur to you to cut at home; Golf balls? Sure! Tennis balls? Youbetcha! Full cans of soda water? Oh yeah! Water bottles? The more the merrier! Fruit, rope, beach mats, perfectly good pieces of lumber, straws? Bring it!... But (and you knew there had to be one)..... it's more than that.

A chance to "show off" in front of a crowd? Maybe for some, but

everyone I've competed with (to include myself) has "butterflies" and some "concern" about not looking like an idiot...(I've come to terms with my "inner idiot" but don't really like to let him out in public). Then there are the questions you ask yourself while you wait your turn...What if I miss the straw? What if my board is full of knots? What if I get the board they "set aside" for Gary Bond? Is Mike gonna take off that tie? Will he let me cut it (no.)? What was Jose thinking?!! If I'm on a unicycle while I do this, will anybody care that I'm slow and "fanned" half the cuts? Where am I gonna get a unicycle!?!..... Showing off? Maybe not so much, but the shared tend to foster a certain "group dynamic" if you will, and that's worth while.

Having a chance to build and use a totally purpose-driven knife design is certainly a factor. When you design a "cutter" there is very little thought given to aesthetics. All you're looking for is a knife that will do a 2x4 like a buzz saw then slice a hanging sheet of paper immediately



Brian Wagner's wharneckliff chopper of A2 steel and Terotuff handle material



**JOSE DIAZ SPONSORED BY
SPYDERCO STARTS HIS
CUT AT ROUND ROCK, TX**

Fun? Cont.

afterwards. I suspect that more than a few of us enjoy that sort of challenge. Equally, guys who use another maker's blade just have to be juiced to try a new knife they've helped design. I'm sure there's another article on building a knife in here, but I'm thinking it's best saved for later....

I mentioned a "group dynamic". The folks you get to "play" with is, I think, a HUGE factor in what makes Blade Sports fun. There's a bit of "trash talk", but of a very mild sort. Plenty of jokes about hidden iron rods in someone's plank, or frozen water bottles, but when it comes time to cut I've noticed that everyone is cheering/encouraging and even shouting "hints" to the guy on the course at that moment. We all want that guy to do his best even if it means he beats us. In fact, if a competitor's knife doesn't pass the inspection at the beginning of the event (rules for which are applied ruthlessly and without regard to reputation), there is no shortage of guys willing to loan him theirs. Those are the things that truly set us apart from other "competitions" and makes cutting what I consider a "gentleman's pastime".

So, a short answer to "Why is cutting fun?" Great people, cool toys and a level playing field. Those are the makings for some serious fun!

"We all want that guy to do his best even if it means he beats us."



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KEN CARDWELL MAKES A SPLASH AT BLADE SHOW WEST. STEVE SINGER AND GARY BOND LOOK ON.



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My Impressions as a Newcomer

By Ken Cardwell

I realized in my training that it is easier to focus on one cut but a lot harder in the competition or circuit to do all the cuts and keep your focus on each individual one as you go around. I really enjoyed the competition at

“I am safer in using knives”

Blade West and Jose did a super job in organizing it. The competitors impressed me as great individuals ready to help at a minutes' notice. This sport is so unique and requires technique, power, and a good blade. It has taught me how to sharpen steel to a finer edge, I am safer in using knives, and have a new focus where a knife can be used as a tool in something fun. I hopefully will do better at each competition as I learn.



www.dmtsharp.com

Diamond Machining Technology

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Marlborough, MA 01752 USA

Designing a Cutting Competition Knife.

By José Diaz.

Race cars that compete on the track are constantly pushing the edge of technology and design. Race tracks are proving grounds for ideas that improve performance. Like the racing cars on the track, cutting competition knives prove themselves in competition at cutting competitions sponsored by Blade Sports international.

Sometimes cutting competition knives, just like their vehicular brethren, are sometimes not necessarily appropriate for every day use. These knives are designed for competition use. The things that we have learned on the cutting course do translate into things we do in the wilderness. By pushing the edge of design and technology, cutting competition knives can provide new innovations for performance.

Designing a cutting competition blade, or any other tool for that matter, requires a little planning. Sure, you can copy a design made by another maker. But to do that, you need to get permission from the original maker, or simply steal it. Borrowing from traditional working tools, you can also find inspiration for design. My preference is to complete an original tool, full of form and function.

Starting the design process from the edge makes the most sense to me. The edge is the functional part of the tool, and where the work gets done. There are several mechanics to cutting. Tools with linear edges are used to make flat cuts, are usually not made for penetration, but rather are made for slicing, chipping, or planing. Recurve, edges are made for gathering the material and compressing the material into the edge. They're traditionally used to cut softer materials, or materials that are rounded. Convex edges are made for slicing, and penetrating cuts. Tools

with convex edges are usually used to chop, and slice.

In a cutting competition, you are required to cut a variety of materials. Wood, golf balls, rope, hardwood dowels, drinking straws, cardboard tubes, golf tees, gummy bears, cigarettes are all examples of materials that may present themselves in a cutting competition. This variety provides quite a challenge to the design process. Coming up with a compromise for each cut, yet seeking the performance that will get you through the course.

Since recurve edges gather material, the edge may bind as it compresses harder material while cutting. Also recurve edges may not penetrate deeply enough to cut through a rolling golf ball on a flat surface. Flat edge profiles can cut deep, and also have the ability to reach the bottom of the cut through a rolling sphere. Convex edge profiles cut deeply, and also provide several other advantages.

Convex edge profiles are round. This provides an increase in strength. Convex edge profiles also provide a mechanical advantage to cutting, as they push mass away from the edge as they cut through the material. They also present more surface area in the same distance as a flat edge profile. This is especially helpful during the heavier cuts like the 2x4 chop, the most physically challenging and time-consuming cut.

The other part of the design process is the handle. This is the interface between you and the blade. Gayle Bradley, one of our top cutters, once told me "If you can feel the handle, rethink the design. In other words, if the handle is not comfortable or you feel edges, bumps, or shapes you don't like, it is distracting. A handle with the best shape is one you don't notice." Our hands are not square. Rounding all shapes on the handle will decrease hot spots.

Another legend in the cutting competition world, Ed Schempp, taught me that a 17-20% drop in the handle improves ergonomics. This allows for the knife wielder to cut more efficiently with less wrist movement. The wrist is the weakest joint in the arm. Leaving your wrist in a more natural position during strenuous or heavy chops improves performance and decreases wasted movement.

Lastly the handle's shape should aid in keeping the blade in your hand. Subtle flares and bulges make friction points that keep a knife in a closed hand. A death grip on a handle will keep a knife in your hand but will also fatigue your hand as well and will cause the inevitable disaster. A handle should give you a confident grip during heavy chops and light wrist flicking movements. The handle should almost grip you back.

All of this design translates into a better race knife. But it does also translate into a great camp knife, a blade that gives you the confidence and performance that you can take on anything. We at Blade Sports International do the research and development in our competition blades and translate that into the knives we make for our customers.



www.petersheattreat.com

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Tell us what you need

There will be a board meeting at Warren's school in December. The board members have asked for any input from the membership be submitted to the board in writing. Well, here's your opportunity. I am hoping to receive comments, suggestions, concerns, compliments from our membership. Please email or write to me anything you would like me to present to the board meeting. We need your input to grow. We need folks to tell us what you want or need to help us get what you want out of Blade Sports.


- Jose Diaz
Executive Director



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FUTURE CUTTING COMPETITIONS	MARCH 27, 2009	NOV. 7, 2009	MAY 8, 2010	JUNE 5, 2010
	<p>Texas Knife Makers Show</p> <p>Austin TX Contact Gayle Bradley at (817) 781-1087</p>	<p>Volente, TX</p> <p>Contact Steve Singer for more info. (512) 335-7563</p>	<p>Ozark Folk Center</p> <p>Contact Jose Diaz at (509) 760-5563 Mountain View, AR</p>	<p>Blade Show World Championship</p> <p>Contact Warren Osborne at (972) 935-0899 Atlanta, GA</p>

Do you have anything to add?

We are always looking for articles, photos, and essays for the newsletter. The newsletter content is dependent on contributions from the membership. The more content we get the more newsletters we can have. So, please send those along to Jose Diaz @ washclimber@yahoo.com.

Charitable contribution

As an organization we feel that it is important to contribute what we can to those who need the help. Thanks to increased membership and being more efficient in our finances we were able to donate \$1000 each to the Polycystic kidney Foundation and the St Judes Children's Hospital.

BLADE SPORTS INTERNATIONAL.

PO Box 205
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751068

ROAD TO ATLANTA

Many are wondering how it is you can qualify to compete at the Atlanta Blade Show World Championship. Well, here's the scoop.

First, you must compete in at least four competitions. You can compete in more if you'd like.

Then your best four competitions will be tabulated using the points system we use for placement. This can be found on the website, in

Not competing at Blade West and want to help out? Contact Warren Osborne at ossie1@worldnet.att.net

the **Standings** section under, **Points System**. For example.: first place gets 180 points, second gets 170 points, third gets 165 points, fourth gets 160 points, fifth gets 155 points, sixth gets 150 points, seventh gets 146 points and eighth gets 142 points.

The four events are then added up and the eight best contestants will qualify to compete at the Blade Show World Championships. As with Last year there will be 2 contestants invited from our UK affiliate organization.

No Show/ Can't Go

If by chance or opportunity someone from that best eight cannot go or does not show up to the competition, the next qualifying individual will be invited to compete.

Blade Sports UK will have 2 slots for their best competitors at the World Championship



P.S. - if you don't qualify and your planning on being at Blade Show, we always can use the help to organize, set up, judge and officiate the event at Blade Show. We try real hard to let those competing, only compete. It helps decrease the amount of stress in an already high pressure atmosphere.

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