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Boomerang Throwing As A Competitive Sport

by Frank Donnellan
(Holder of All Records)

I am prepared to reveal secrets which have made me an International figure in the Boomerang Throwing World. - F.D.

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The HOW - DON'TS AND THE WHY'S of Boomerang Throwing Including Records & Rules for Competition

FOREWORD

Friends, I write this booklet with a thorough understanding of your difficulties, and with an earnest desire to help you quickly and effectively to get the full advantage this fascinating recreation offers.

If I have not anticipated your difficulty and countered it an inquiry will always find me at your service.

FRANK DONNELLAN,
12 Queens Street,
Granville N.S.W.
Australia

BOOMERANG THROWING AS A COMPETITIVE SPORT

If there is one thing that stands as a symbol for Australia, it is the Boomerang. Its origin, its use, and just why it can be thrown to circle a pole 140 yards away and caught on the return, must place it among the amazing implements of all time.

Perhaps more amazing when the time for the full return journey back to hand takes just twelve seconds — and even verging on incredibility when one considers the speed the boomerang would be travelling when it is caught on the return.

Yet it is an established fact, on May 4th, 1934, at Centennial Park, Sydney, this feat was accomplished by me in the presence of "Sun" news representatives.

This, and other feats, to mention a few. — Throwing over Watson's Bay Gap one hundred yards over the water and caught on the return.

Throwing off the "Sun" Office Buildings seventy-five yards out over the city, and caught on the return.

Throwing and catching forty-nine times in succession at a public exhibition in Parramatta Park.

These demonstrations were made with the hope that we in Australia would realise that right here in our own country we had something which, if properly exploited as a pastime would rank among the most fascinating physical and mental recreations in the world. The swing of the body, the loosening up and the strengthening of the arm and shoulder muscles — the reducing and strengthening of the adominal wall, the wrist and grip — the legs too; and in fact, competitive boomerang throwing will find your weakness and strengthen it while you play without the possibility of exhaustion, or strain. A pastime in which dad can be just as expert, and derive just as much benefit as his schoolboy son.

Some years ago I set out with the idea of establishing the pastime in the form of a game which I called "Boomerang Base" modelled much on the lines of the English game of rounders or baseball, only the boomerang supplements the bat and ball.

My first job was to teach people to handle the boomerang correctly and accurately; with this idea in mind I set out visiting the high schools and colleges.

The result was remarkable — the ready enthusiasm of the boys and not forgetting the teachers and even the principals, can be gauged by the fact that eight hundred boys in one college in the North alone availed themselves of my visit.

The fact that struck me most, during my visit was the almost unbelievable ignorance regarding boomerangs — their use, origin etc. among the teachers, principals, and pupils alike — very few had ever seen them thrown.

It is in pursuance of this idea to interest people in this fascinating pastime, that I write this little booklet setting forth instructions for throwing including among other useful matter, rules for competition throwing.

I wish it understood, that while these instructions are more or less elementary (since it would be impossible to deal exhaustively with the art in a booklet of this nature), a wealth of advice is incorporated herein.

THE MODERN BOOMERANG REQUIRES STREAMLINED PRECISION

I would like to stress two points which continue to retard the popularity of boomerang throwing. The first and most serious, is the incredible number of spurious manufacturers that have found a market.

In the past I have always refrained from criticism on this point, since I am a competitor and naturally anything I say would be dismissed as sales talk and possibly prejudice. But the damaging effect these duds have had on the popularity of the pastime are deserving of criticism.

The Jamboree which was held in Melbourne, was only one example. Hundreds of dud boomerangs were sold to the boys, resulting in many accidents, and naturally gave ground for argument against the sport. Even if instructions had been issued with each purchase the result would have been the same—they were ninety-five per cent. dud.

I claim with all modesty, that any accomplishment which has been credited to me as champion, have been only possible through the streamline precision of the "Whale Bone" Boomerangs which I used.

During the twelve years which I have thrown my distance boomerang measuring possibly thousands of miles, I have yet to satisfy myself that the boomerang's performance cannot be improved upon.

Had you witnessed, seven years ago, the first public performance in which I used my present senior competition boomerang and see how it behaves today, after perhaps hundreds of simple but effective. You would realise the possibilities still undiscovered in the perfecting of the boomerang.

I do not altogether claim as my own designing all the little yet effective cuts, twists, etc., etc., that are incorporated in my whale bone boomerangs. Since the science of aero dynamics is a lot older than I.

For instance, I attribute the uncanny flight of my Silver Glider boomerang to the advice and design suggested by the late Sir Charles Kingsford Smith.

Sir Charles could not then throw a boomerang, nor had he ever made one. But he knew aero dynamics and I have to thank him for one tip among many others which immediately revolutionised my glider design, and immediately set me altering other pet boomerangs which I had.

TESTED AT EVERY STAGE

Most of my making is done outdoors; the important stages are tested in an open paddock.

The angle is something, I have adopted as a result of hundreds of tests. Each angle has its varied functions, like the Cambre; the twists, the balance etc., they all have their definite purpose — and therefore determine the class of performance for which the boomerang is required.

There must be no hit or miss. If the boomerang is to be a distance one, a definite design is adopted at the outset. If I am making a competition boomerang, in which catching plays an important part, rules must be adopted that will make the boomerang, do a complete circle at an even

altitude within a given area and finish overhead like an autogyro and slowly descend inside the home circle to be caught.

As I mentioned, every stage is tested. But the final test is made under the actual conditions after the boomerang has been either polished or ducoed.

I take great pride in every boomerang that passes through my hands — for believe me, there is something akin to sentiment which stimulates my desire to at least help the purchaser to do justice through the following instructions:

HOW TO THROW A BOOMERANG ACCURATELY

(1) It is necessary to have confidence in your boomerang, remembering that properly constructed and properly thrown on a moderate day the boomerang can be made to return to the thrower's hand.

Secondly, that if you can throw a ball you can be taught to throw a boomerang accurately.

Thirdly, do not place too much emphasis on the word "throw" — which suggests a ricked shoulder, torn muscles etc. But rather substitute the word "spin" — for spin it is which wilt in the final analysis crown or clown your effort.

(2) Poise or stance play an important part. Take a step forward with your left foot to preserve your balance, allowing freedom of body swing to accentuate your delivery.

(3) The boomerang is held almost vertically thus (/) between the thumb, first and second fingers of the right hand (in the case of the right hand thrower). The round side of the boomerang facing inwards, the point projecting away in front of the thrower.

Since the second or index finger causes the boomerangs to trip or spin with equal importance to the pliability of the wrist — make sure it overlaps the end of the boomerang from the flat side.

The idea is to grip it as close to the end as securely possible at the same time allowing the boomerang to fall back parallel with your forearm, which in all, combine to give it the maximum spin.

(4) Rule four brings you to the most important "don't" in boomerang throwing. The boomerang must be delivered almost vertically thus — /, particularly if there is a strong breeze.

Mark a throwing point and each time throw from that point. Pick a direction about 30 degrees to the right of the wind, making a tree or something an object — let the height of your aim be in the vicinity of fifteen to twenty feet at an object one hundred yards away.

If the boomerang was delivered flat, thus — as you might scale a piece of tin or a plate, the boomerang will be seen to rise up in the air and swoop down on the return and cut away to the left, or it might loose its

balance in the air and tumble without any sign of returning to the right. Such an effect you can take as a definite warning that in spite of your protests, you are throwing flat, thus (—).

(5) Having assured yourself that your throw was almost vertical, (thus /) and your spin and general effort was according to instructions, note the result. It may be that the boomerang came back over a course and landed away to the left of you — which will mean that you are throwing too close into the wind. maybe your next throw will return across your front and veer to your right, which will mean that you have thrown too far away from the wind.

By experimenting this way you will more or less strike a good medium. But do not throw at all unless you have a plan in your mind.

(6) The rules I have outlined are entirely confined to right hand throwers. To left handers, (who by the way, must have a left hand boomerang) it will be necessary to apply the same rules with one exception — that of direction — which shall be the reverse. The left hand thrower will throw to the left of the breeze.

In conclusion, do not be too hasty to blame the boomerang — because if you re-read these rules you will probably find you have overlooked one important "don't", or you have misinterpreted one.

If after perseverance you find that your boomerang still rises in the manner resulting from throwing flat, reverse the boomerang so that the point instead of projecting out in front of you, points back over your shoulder. But still apply the other rules with that one exception.

You will probably make a good throw—don't let this induce you to abandon the correct way, because you will never reach any degree of accuracy or judgement. ?

EACH BOOMERANG HAS SPECIAL ADAPTABILITIES

Do not be deluded by the popular belief that a boomerang in the hands of an expert can be made to do any number of tricks —certainly there are a limited variety of trick shots possible to each boomerang.

For instance a distance boomerang is purely for the purpose which it implies. But an expert can make it do the figure (8) and the dive, in which the boomerang is made to gain altitude and after a quick turn swoop down on the return to within a couple of inches of the ground and swoop up into the hands of the thrower.

Then there is the bounce and catch, in which the boomerang is thrown at the ground about twenty yards in front of the thrower —causing it to bounce and complete the circle to be caught on the return.

This particular shot can be done to good effect with the Senior Competition boomerang.

There are other throws, lots of them, but after all, the result would always be a poor imitation of the neatly executed trick that is only possible per medium of the boomerang specially designed for the job. I mentioned these facts, because it should be the aim of any enthusiast who really wants to go in for the game seriously, to get together a set of boomerangs, each constructed for a special purpose, just as the potential golfer would.

THREE GOOD REASONS

To explain all the circumstances and research over a period, which have produced the "Whale Bone" boomerang would require a volume on its own. I will, however, just give three good reasons which will be readily appreciated and understood by the beginner as well as the expert.

One point alone is worthy of recommendation. I do not know of one recognised expert who has not adopted them. I have the distinction of supplying expert throwers, who are in some instances makers themselves in almost every country in the world.

Another point, they are practically unbreakable, I personally have boomerangs twelve years old that are even better than when I first made them.

One other reason is that they are practically the same price as the genuine returning wooden ones —but immeasurably cheaper in the long run.

MAINTENANCE

Keep boomerang always coated with enamel or the like to avoid dampness. To avoid warping it is always advisable to lay boomerang down flat side up and place a couple of books or some weight on top of them.

To those enthusiasts who would follow my advice a little further, I would ask them to cut the shape of their boomerang out of ply wood half inch thick and lay boomerang on it round side down — holding it intact with a few elastic bands equally spaced.

A rack can be sent with boomerang should you desire to purchase a boomerang at the additional cost of from 2/6

Retrueing Boomerang A Boomerang out of true is an undoubted embarrassment to the thrower, and no matter what the material, with the exception of metal, they will warp under certain conditions — The "Whalebone" type is unhappily no exception, if left off the rack when not in use.

To Retrue the boomerang — just lay on the ironing board Round side down cover with a hot moistened cloth and iron out to within two inches of both ends.

RULES FOR COMPETITION THROWING

Weight of Boomerang: Senior Competition boomerang must not weigh less than 3 ozs., Junior, 2 ozs.

Distance: Senior Boomerang must be capable of circling a pole 30 yards away; Junior, 25 yards.

THE HOME THROW A CATCH

Each competitor is allowed three throws in which to find his direction. He then has three throws from the throwing circle, the diameter of which is three yards. The lowest aggregate number of yards at the conclusion of the three throws after penalties, and awards are added or deducted wins.

PENALTIES AND AWARDS

If a competitor catches the boomerang outside the circle he is allowed 10 yards off the distance from the point of the catch to the circle.

If he attempts to catch it and touches it or otherwise fouls it, but does not catch it, 10 yards are added on to his distance from the farthest point of the boomerang where it stops to the circle.

If the boomerang is caught inside the circle 20 yards is deducted from tally, viz.— 10 yards for catch and 10 yards for the "home throw".

If the competitor throws and catches the boomerang in the circle three times, he is allowed an extra throw and so on until he misses the catch in the home circle.

AN ILLUSTRATION

The competitor's first throw was caught 12 yards away from the circle. Result: + 2 yards.

Second throw, touched but not caught, 10 yards from where the boomerang stopped to the circle. Result + 20 yards.

Third throw, caught inside the home circle. Result: — 20 yards.

Summary of scores:

1st throw	+	2 yds.
2nd throw	+	20 yds.
3rd throw	-	20 yds.
<hr/>		
Aggregate	+	2 yds.

Record: F. Donnellan, Parramatta Park, June 4th, 1936. Minus 69 yards, 4 throws.

FROM HAND TO HAND

The competitor has three throws, as in other competitions, and commences on the fourth throw. The winner is the competitor who throws and catches the most consecutive times.

The competitor must catch on the fourth throw to qualify, and is out on his first miss catch.

While the thrower must throw from the circle, it does not matter where he catches the boomerang on the return.

Record: 49 consecutive catches, F. Donnellan, Parramatta Park, May 6th, 1939.

HAND TO HAND DISTANCE THROW

Weight of Boomerang Optional

Boomerang must be caught on the return to qualify as a hand to hand throw.

Boomerang must have duly circled a pole or object to signify its distance.

Deductions shall be made for the distance it falls short on the return — and additions shall be adjusted for the overthrow.

Record: F. Donnellan, 140 yards, Centennial Park, May 4th, 1934 .

DISTANCE THROW

The same rules cover the distance throw, with the exception of the catch. The boomerang need not be caught to qualify.

Record: F. Donnellan, Centennial Park, May 4th, 1934 160 yards.

THE CONTROL TEST

Boomerang to be used is optional, although the Competition design is most suited.

The competitor takes up a position 30 yards away from the throwing circle; after the customary three throws. He has not more than five minutes to catch the boomerang in the home circle. He can have as many throws as he likes in the time limit, but he must touch the boomerang before the return landing of each throw. Failing to touch the boomerang he must revert back to the starting point where the last throw was touched with no time allowed.

The award is made to the competitor who caught or touched the boomerang at the closest point nearest the home circle in the five minutes time limit.

Record: 3 minutes, 10 seconds, caught in home circle, F. Donnellan, Parramatta Park, 8th July, 1940.

TRICK THROWING

Is a matter for the individual. The competitor first nominates his trick throw which is left to the discretion of three judges. My best tricks are the bounce and catch, and the two and a half to the hand.

James & James, Printers, 209 Liverpool Road, Ashfield

THE GOLDEN RULE

Have confidence in your Boomerang and throw it as often as you can. The Donnellan "Whale Bone" Boomerang will inspire that confidence.

Let the Boomerang be the Symbol of Australia and Clean Sportsmanship

WHERE TO BUY BOOMERANGS

Usually the company distributing this booklet will have quality boomerangs for sale. We urge the company to affix its address and telephone number below.

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If you enjoy boomerangs as a sport or hobby, please visit Boomerang World at:

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