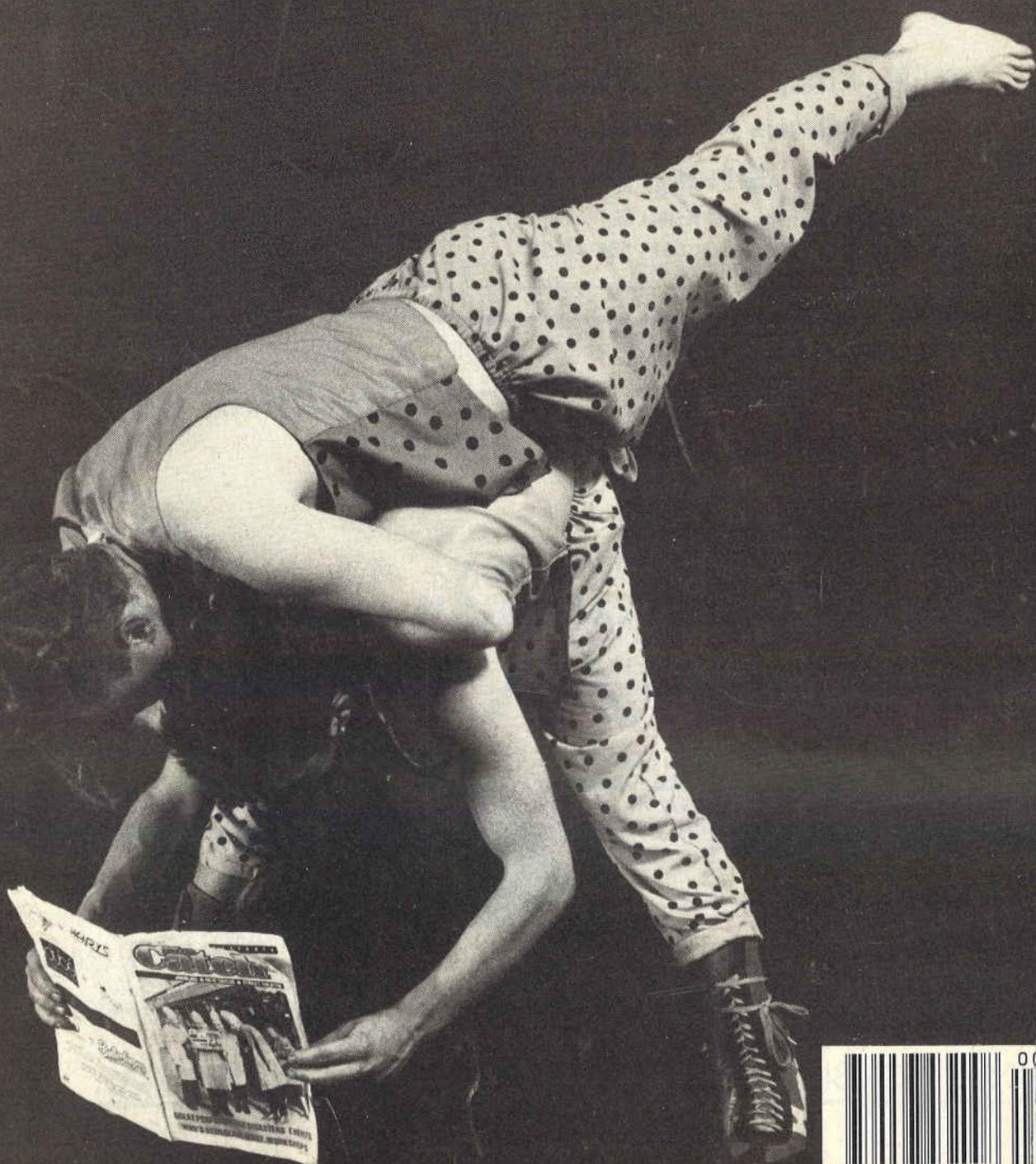


The Catch

ISSUE 3
MAR - MAY
1993
VOLUME 1
£1.50

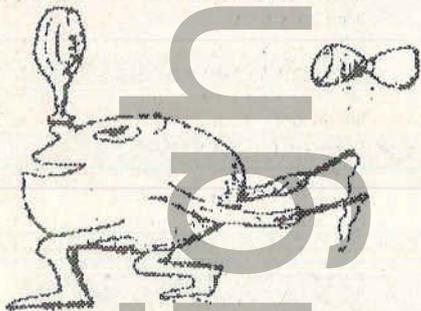
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The Catch

Moorledge Farm Cottage Knowle Hill Chew Magna Bristol BS18 8TL

We like it really, if we're honest... whether it's trapeze or unicycling or juggling with fire, the apparent risk of injury is one of the biggest thrills there is, and one of the most effective ways of drawing an audience into involvement with an act that you could devise. It's a mutual conspiracy (sometimes involving a certain suspension of disbelief, it must be said) between audience and performer, all in the cause of having more fun. And even alone and offstage, it can be a spur into increasing complication of tricks and routines.

This issue we decided to spotlight the most dangerous and thrilling phenomenon of them all (no I don't mean editing a magazine) - **Fire!** We have also taken the possibly controversial decision to run an article explaining how to blow fire. It's not because we want to start a craze for this act, which whilst visually stunning can be extremely dangerous, but it's because we've heard too many stories of what happens to people messing around with fuel and equipment when they don't know what they're doing. Education being the best route to enlightened behaviour, we feel if we let an expert explain what to do we're preventing accidents not encouraging them. Some people are going to try anyway, and we'd rather they had some good advice rather than thinking they know what to do. Let me take this opportunity to repeat what is said several times during the article - **DON'T try this one at home, kids.** Fire blowing should NEVER be attempted except under the expert supervision of someone who knows how to do it in a responsible (which usually in this case equals 'professional') manner.

Parents and teachers please take note! Be aware of the contents of this issue before circulating it around groups of children. The Catch is first and foremost intended to address the interests and questions of the adult hobby performer and the professional. The fact that we run a kids page as a separate item is in itself an indication that we don't feel the rest of the magazine is aimed at children (just like a newspaper children's page); in our experience so far, young kids don't read it anyway (the level of contributions to the kids page sort of bears this out!). I also mention this in response to suggestions that some of our humour and language is a little strong for a 'family' publication. It is, because it's not! None of this means that teenagers, for example, won't find material to interest them in these pages. But learning any new skill more complicated than three balls really requires a live teacher. Your local workshop or course centre should always be your first stop, we can only provide a few hints that could help you once you're there. Please give this magazine, particularly this issue, a relevant "health warning" when passing it on (as we hope you still will do) especially to children and young teenagers.

There is a debate in progress about fire safety, kids, teenagers, and the responsibility of retailers, workshopers and others. The Catch would like to be part of that, and this is our opening. We're also arranging to distribute a safety leaflet with new purchases of all fire equipment. Please use our letters page to tell us all what you think!

If you ask me, kids should be discouraged from juggling anyway. Not 'cos it stunts their growth or anything, just the opposite - too many of them get too good too quickly and put the oldies to shame. In another ten years they'll have to have special veterans conventions just to keep the jealousy level down.

"A child of six could do it," indeed. But apparently plenty of adults don't understand some fundamental things about this magazine. Listing your events, gigs and workshops is done FREE. All you have to do is contact us, the sooner the better. Even Diabolo himself is not omniscient, though admittedly astoundingly smart. We'll only know about your event if you tell us. Look at the deadlines down the page and act accordingly. Now!

This issue, whilst being bigger and better-looking than ever before, also includes an insert with forms for classifieds, subscriptions, the Birmingham Convention, and this decade's essential fashion item, the Catch T-shirt. People complained about having to cut up such a beautiful magazine. I think in that case you should buy two, but this concession was finally wrung out of me. If you lose the insert you can always write what you want on an ordinary piece of paper (if you can write, that is) and send to the relevant address. Finally, on the subject of T-Shirts, our incurable elitism means there is also a limited edition of the latter with a Robbie cartoon on the back as well as the front. These are not to be had for money, even the traditional hefty bribe, but are exclusive to Catch contributors (the ones we publish!), so if you want one you'll just have to join that august company. Probability-wise, dropping clubs onto a keyboard at random will eventually come up with the works of Shakespeare. How else do you think we write this?

Diabolo

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- 8 **A RIGHT SHOWER**
Is The Catch a magazine for kids? (see diabolo column, left). This page certainly is.
- 11 **WHY DON'T WE DO IT IN THE ROAD?**
Bim Mason knows more streets than the A-Z. He's even written a book on street performance. We reckon that just about qualifies him to hand out advice to our precious readers.
- 12,13,15,16 **BURNING QUESTIONS**
To blow or not to blow (stop laughing at the back there). Fire is a thrilling effect but chillingly dangerous. Pof!, Grillo Parafuso and others say there's too much arson around. These anecdotes are not for the faint-hearted, but neither is playing with fire.
- 17 **PREMIUM GRADE**
In our ceaseless quest to make the important-but-boring understandable, we give you the bottom line report on insurance for performers.
- 19 **FLAMIN' GROOVIES**
Kate Merser gets fired up about FireNoise.
- 19 **SPOT THE BALL**
...and win sets of Spotlight silicon balls. Easy!
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- 26 **BALLS**
...in which we blag all the new books and say nice things about them. Next please.
- 27 **UNI-VERSITY**
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Stars before our eyes. Re views and responses from the bottom of our hearts - and, in one case, guts.
- 33 **CATCHPHRASES**
The British Juggling Foundation have done a few conventions between them. Here's a bit of history and a bit of organisation for you. They all need a bit of both!
- 34,35 **DROP BACK LINES**
Catch readers become Catch writers. For the duration of a letter, at least.
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Adventures of the circumferentially-challenged in the buskin' trade, with Robbie.

ISSUE THREE - March-May '93

The Catch is published every three months from Moorledge Farm Cottage, Knowle Hill, Chew Magna, Bristol BS18 8TL.

Edited by Diabolo, Catch's Cradle, c/o the above address.

Designed, set and produced by Howard Vause, 0272 553387.

Cover Photo of Chuck & Tumble by Adrian John, all c/o Captain Bob's Circus, (0225) 446685.

Cartoons by Robbie Macintosh and Lugs Wellington.

Printed by Wiltshire, Badminton, Bristol.

Advertising: Jan & Stuart Ashman, phone & fax 0275 332655.

Trade Sales c/o The Catch office.

Deadlines - please try to get information to us as soon as it is available, and no later than six weeks before the first month on the cover - i.e. we're putting together the issue marked "June-August" at the beginning of May, and we want your material by the middle of April, the 15th. Late adverts, amendments and additions over the fortnight following will be greeted with much

wailing and gnashing of teeth. You'd better have a good reason or lots of dosh. All photographs and contributions remain the copyright of the authors and artists. If you want to join the two-dimensional performers (oops, I sound like one of our reviewers) on these pages, send your articles, ideas, cartoons, photos or letters to the Catch office and we'll mercilessly rip them to shreds at our next meeting. We're very jealous of people with talent. Keep a copy of everything you send. If you must have photographs or transparencies returned, please enclose an SAE.

The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publishers, editor, advertisers, JTF, B.J.F., M.I.S., or M25, and we didn't wish to suggest anything untoward about the Prime Minister, honest. The Catch exists through the sheer opportunity and greed of its editor, selfless dedication and days of unpaid work from Stuart, Jan, & Pippa, and the immense goodwill of Robbie, Claire, Pearse, and the other contributors who do so much for so little, sweet FA in fact. If you must one, buy 'em a drink, they deserve it. Speaking of which, thanks to the Hat & Feather for turning the lights down when we were trying to judge the photo competition.

Another....

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from

3.3.10



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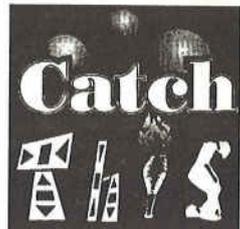
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6th BRITISH JUGGLING CONVENTION incorporating the 1st British Unicycling Convention

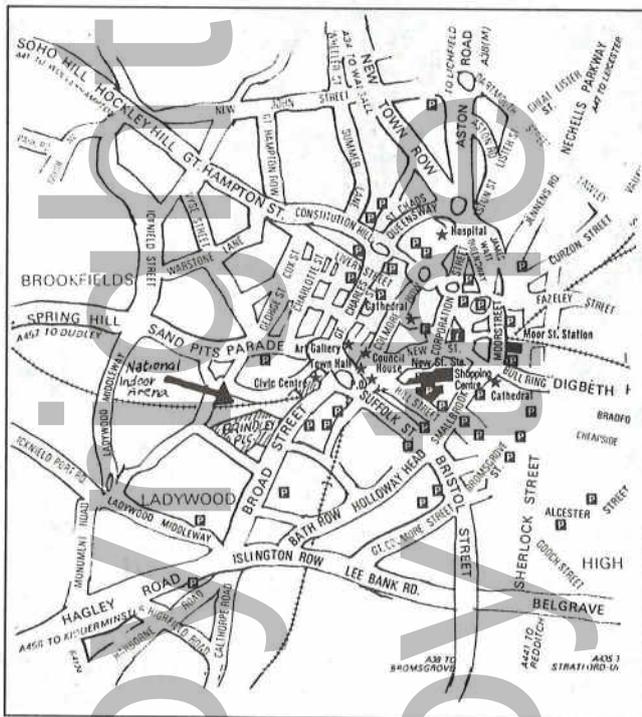
when?
2-4 April

where?

The community hall of the National Indoor Arena (NIA) will be the main juggling area with trade stands, exhibition and workshop spaces. The Grand Show top and additional tented space for juggling and workshops will be on Brindley Place, 150 yards away. Follow signs for the NIA, then our signposts. There are plenty of municipal car-parks around the site. Head for the main registration area on arrival, at the centre of the Convention site.

What?

Continual workshops throughout the weekend; several good pedestrianised busking areas; crêche for younger jugglers (please book in advance); Renegade cabaret show Friday night; Grand Saturday Night Show in a Big Top; Carnival Parade Saturday afternoon (please bring bright clothing); Juggling Olympics Saturday afternoon; Gladiators at any excuse; and the **FIRST BRITISH UNICYCLING CONVENTION** to keep the injuries all in one place (see below).



1st BRITISH UNICYCLING CONVENTION

First British Unicycle Hockey Championships, 16 teams of five. You want to be in on it? Send £5 registration fee per team (payable to Annual Juggling Convention Ltd.) to Uni-Conv/Uni-Hockey Team, c/o Oddball Juggling Co., 323 Upper Street, London N1 2XQ. Copy of the International Rules and confirmation sent by return (or your cheque back if you're too late). Please enclose an SAE. Uni-Conv visitors still have to pay the main Convention entrance tax.

Amongst other diversions, there will also be a **WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT!**

The world record for the longest Uni-Cycle chain currently stands at a paltry 191 riders (Unicorn VI, Quebec, Canada, 1992). We're sure we can beat that, and stave off the threatened competition from Eurocycle 2 in July, in fact we're going for 300 unicyclists! You need to do three things to be in the record books.

- [1] Be able to ride a unicycle through a 7 ft. by 3 ft. gate.
- [2] Be at the Convention on Sunday 4th.
- [3] Let the organisers know in advance c/o the above Uni-Conv. address. Send an SAE for a copy of the regulations.

THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO ALL STANDARDS OF UNICYCLISTS, BEGINNERS AND ADVANCED!

Unicon will also include:- workshops from Sammy Hellwig of the Cologne Unicycling school plus a display/workshop team of all-american all-stars courtesy of SEM CYCLES; Uni-basketball (*sounds pretty foolhardy... do you have to jump too? - D*); the First British Unicycle Championships (bringing all the titles out, eh wot?) over the three days; and finally a meeting of all unicyclists to discuss the rules of uni-hockey (thought you'd written those already, Lee), set up a national league, and convince someone else to run the convention next year. All the usual races, etc., will take place as part of the main convention games.

COURSES

CIRCUS SPACE SPECIALISED COURSES

- February 13-14 (mornings) Skills of the Peking Opera with Rachel Henson, who spent a year there learning! Spear spinning and hammer twirling included! Watch out! £25.
- 13-14 (afternoons) Club swinging, also with Rachel Henson. £20.
- 15-19 (10.30-3.30) Children's half-term course - skills and games with a performance for parents & friends on the end. Age 7-10, £50.
- 20-21 Western Skills, Whip Cracking, knife throwing, lasso, etc. with Kenny Brinkman, £50.
- 22-26 Juggling with Sean Gandini & Kati Yla-Hokkala. Inc. 1-ball manipulation, ribbon & rope twirling. £55.
- 27-28 "The art of accidents - Circus collides with Theatre" with Kevin Brooking, one of the smartest and funniest maniacs in the known world, £50.
- March 1-4 Balancing Juggling and Comedy with Steve Rawlings, concentrating on content and presentation of performance routines, £45.
- 1-5 Acrobatic Balancing with 'Ijs en Weder' of Archaos fame.
- 6-7 (afternoons) General skills weekend, beginners welcome. £30.
- March 8 - April 16 Six-week Intensive on acrobatic and aerial skills, free practise time included, perfect for preparing for the summer or for aspiring performers wanting to develop skills. Many instructors including Sarah-Jean Couzens, £250.
- April 5-16 Two week clown course with 'Commo-tion'
- Mid-May 'Jazz Circus' choreographed circus to jazz!
- Circus Space also run weekly courses in Static and Flying Trapezes, Tumbling, Acrobalance, Clowning, Juggling, Trampoline, Tightwire and general skills courses, specials for children and for youth as well as adults, too many for us to list here. Drop in at United House, 39-41 North Road, London N7 9DP, phone on 071 700 0868 to book or for more details, and for the April/May programme.

FOOL TIME

- Jean & Pauline Palacy are returning in May with High Fly (30 ft.) and Petit Volant (17 ft.) rigs.
- They're offering two full weeks of courses, two hours a day, five days a week, May 17-21 and 24-28, £60 per person per week, discounts for two weeks. On Saturday May 22 there will be two-hour individual sessions suitable for all levels, £12.
- Fool Time, Britannia Road, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 2DA. 0272 478788.
- The audition for the 93/4 one-year courses (all levels) beginning in September will be held April 15-16. For prospectus, full details and application form write to Motria Tynkiw von Schreiber at the above address.

SKYLIGHT SHORT COURSES

Broadwater Centre, Smith Street, Rochdale OL11 1HE, 0706 50676

you mean you want to sleep?

Free camping and park-up space from 6pm Thursday till 6pm Sunday. Free floor space in a school hall from Friday night. Both 20 minutes walk away. B&Bs or Guesthouses in the immediate area can be got through Birmingham Convention and Visitor Bureau 021 780 4321 (be sure to mention the convention). There should also be mooring available right next door to the site - 021 373 5104 for details.

How much did you say?

Pre-Registration (up to March 22)
£18 (under-16 £9).
Registration on the day £20 (under-16 £11).
Day rate:
Friday (inc. Renegade Cabaret)
£8 (under-16 £4)
Saturday (inc. Grand Show)
£10 (under-16 £6)
Sunday £5 (under-16 £3)
Under-fives are free.
Registering in advance helps the work-load no end!

How?

Use the form on the sheet enclosed with this issue of The Catch. Or if you've managed to lose that already, write enclosing cheque to:- **Annual Juggling Convention Ltd., c/o 8 Redwood Court, 567 Chester Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 5HU.**

Can I help?

They were hoping you'd ask that. Stewarding, workshoping, performance - Please indicate on the form or offer on arrival.



February 14, Aerial Taster
 March 6-7, Music & Circus with Chris Weaver
 13-14 Acrobatic weekend
 27-28 Aerial weekend, tutor TBC, maybe Pauline Palacy.
 April 3-4 Still masterclass with Scarabeus.
 17 Rhythmic juggling, Pete Z
 17 Rhythmic Diabolo (how did he hear? -d) with Brendan Broily.
 18 Peking Opera object manipulation with Rachel Henson.
 23-24 Clown weekend with Angela de Castro.
 May 16 Ropes & Wires with Pete Z & Jim Riley.
 8 Cloudswing.
 9 Globes & stilts with Jim Riley.
 22-23 Acro weekend.
 Skylight's introductory four-week course in Circus and Performing Skills runs May 3-29.
 Regular Skylight sessions:-
 Adults Circus, Monday 7pm, £2/1
 Youth Circus Tuesday & Wednesday 4pm, £1.
 Aerial practise Thursday 7.30, £2.50.

CAPTAIN BOB'S CIRCUS

Specialised workshops at Captain Bob's Circus, wherever they may be... Sunday Afternoons, ring Fay at the Boggle juggling shop (0225 446685) for further details.

RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND

with Jim Semlyen & Anna Jillings of Cosmos (see FireNoise article page 19). Introduction to Circus skills of all sorts, with special emphasis on fire and U-V work. At Lower Shaw Farm near Swindon, Wiltshire; lovely accommodation, veggie & vegan food, relaxed atmosphere. £80 waged, £65 un-, £40 children 9 and under.
 Friday April 30th to Monday May 3rd, also advance notice of same workshop at Monkton Wyld Court, Dorset, 9-10 October. Jim or Anna, 0904 430472.

KITE EVENTS

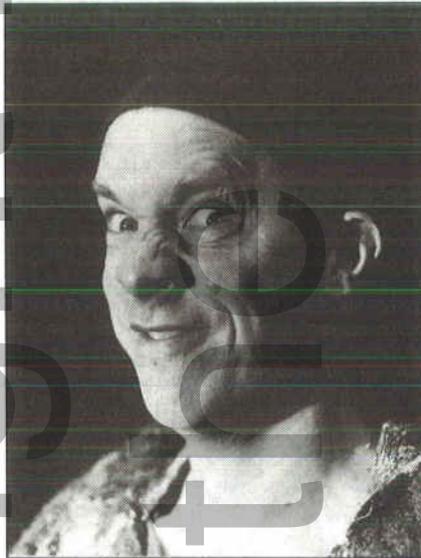
Other ways of moving objects in the air!
 April 10-12 Blackheath, London.
 17 Vienna, Austria.
 18 Old Warden, Biggleswade!
 24-25 Le Toquet, France.
 May 2-3 Weymouth, UK.
 4-5 Stunt Kite festival, Cervia, Italy.
 8-9 Swindon, Wiltshire.
 15-16 Brighton
 22-23 Capstone Park, Maidstone, Kent.

ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Jugglers and frisbeeings have a lot in common! Toby Green (0865 69789 / 511722) could put you in touch with your nearest club, the only number we have direct is for Bristol Samurai, every Thursday at Bristol Grammar School Sports Centre, contact Bud Tilton 0272 738255.
 Or try national tournaments like the Samurai Fiesta, Chew Valley School, Chew Magna near Bristol, June 19-20; or Warwick Indoor Tournament, University Sports Centre, March 20-21, contact Sam or Derek 0203 691330.

JONATHAN KAY

'Who's fooling Who' workshops, no experience necessary. Jonathan is well known for his individual blend of physical, mime, impro and alternative comedy.
 Exeter Two day, February 15-16, Exeter & Devon Arts Centre, 0392 219741.
 Frome Five day, February 17-21, Merlin Theatre.



Heeere's Jonny! Jonathan Kay on the road

Limited accommodation available, 0373 461360.
 Southwest Scotland Eight day Residential, April 3-10, Laurieston Hall people Centre, Castle Douglas, 06445 633.
 Aberdeen Two day, April 17-18, Lemon Tree, 5 West North Street, 0224 642230.
 Bristol Five day, May 17-21, Hope Centre (0962) 863966.

SHEFFIELD CIRCUS SCHOOL

Winter season of courses in their big top in Meersbrook Park and other centres.
 Workshops include:- Mime & Acrobatics, tightrope, trapeze, acrobatics, Mime & Physical comedy, still dance, general circus skills; all at introductory and higher levels - special sessions for under-11s, girls & young women, women's circus workshop, and a course aimed at youth workers.
 Priced at a very reasonable £2 for 1½ hour sessions. Full details and booking as below.

SHEFFIELD SPECIALISED WORKSHOPS

February 20-21, 10-4, Tumbling, acrobalance, trapeze.
 27-28, Chinese Opera I, movement, manipulation, juggling.
 March 6-7, Chinese Opera II, movement, manipulation, juggling.
 All courses run at Meersbrook Park, 10am-4pm, price £12/15.

Further details and booking (do it quickly, these fill up quickly) from Community Circus Company, 56 Garden Street, Sheffield, S1 4BJ. (0742) 731398.

coming soon:- more workshops May-September; women's performance training April-June including Rachel Henson on Chinese Opera.

SHEFFIELD CIRCUS CARNIVAL

Sunday March 14th, Meersbrook Park, Community Circus 3-4pm, Swamp Circus Comedy Show 7-8.30.



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GIGS

CIRCUS SPACE CABARET

every other Saturday, 8.30-10.30, doors open 8, £6/£5.

February 27

Squark - Kevin Brooking & Rachel Ponsonby's surreal clown show.

Anna & John - The Wave. See "Pack" review, page 29.

Rodney & Jonathan - ditto!

Sue Brent - Archaos Cloudswinger.

Heap & Wall - knockabout comedy.

March 13

UltraVision - John Blanchard (see p. 19)

Fluke - illusionist

Lila Lively - U-V trapeze

Annette - aerial surprise.

March 27

Sauerwein - Devilstick to Mozart, as seen at Banyoles public show.

Exstatic - Doubles trapeze

Howlett Your Pickens - juggling double-act others TBC

April 10

Ra Ra Zoo - Cabinet of Curiosities full show, TBC.

Steve Rawlings - eccentric (not the word!) balancer.

...for details after this point ring Circus Space, 071 700 0868

HULLBALOO CABARET

Fortnightly, Saturdays, opens at 8, first act 8.15, £3.50/£2.50.

The Haddon Hall, Bankfield Road, Leeds 4. Info. on 0532 789437.

Top quality circusy acts, New Variety, Alternative Comedy and 'fun music', starring:-

February 27 - PeeWee

March 13 - Le La Les

March 27 - Brendan Broolly

April 10 - Old Rope String Band

April 24 - Lee Evans

...anyone interested in appearing on the next series (autumn '93) should ring Pete White on 0532 789437.

RA RA ZOO

in 'Cabinet of Curiosities', see page 32.

BEDFORD - Bowen West Community Theatre, February 27

LIVERPOOL - Bluecoats Arts Centre, March 5-6

STEVENAGE - Gordon Craig Theatre, March 8-9

SINGAPORE - Young People's Theatre Festival, March 12-19

FRANCE - Saint Fons, Lyon, April 3-8

FROME - Merlin Theatre, April 23

GERMANY - April 25 - May 2

PRESTON - Charter Theatre,

May 4-5

BARROW - Forum 28, May 6-7

U.S.A. - 9-31 May.

For more details ring the venues

or 071 487 4823.

NO FIT STATE CIRCUS

start their summer show jaunt (always worth catching) by

visiting

MACCLESFIELD - Bollington

Festival, May 1-2

NEWTOWN (Powys) - Festival

May 7-9

GLASGOW - Castle Milk, May

20-22

NATURAL THEATRE

in 'Nutcrackers', the anti-panto

HEXHAM - Queens Hall,

February 15-16

BUDDLE - Arts Centre, February

18

BATH - Rondo Theatre,

February 19-20

HAMBURG - St. Pauli Theatre,

March 9-14.

JONATHAN KAY on a Minatour

spontaneous emotional mime,

impro, comedy... wild!

EXETER Arts Centre, February

15, 8pm 0392 219741

FROME Merlin Theatre,

February 18, 8pm 0373 465949

ABERDEEN The Lemon Tree,

April 17, 8pm 0224 642230

BRISTOL Hope Centre, May 21-

22, 8pm 0272 215271

PAUL MOROCCO

is at 'Jongleurs', Battersea or

Camden, March 5/6, 12/13, 19/

20. Otherwise he's in Australia

and Germany, tho' don't be

surprised if he pops up on more

London gigs in the gaps.

STEVE RAWLINGS

is also hanging out and hanging

over at 'Jongleurs' March 5/6,

12/13, 26/27. He does a

workshop and a show at Circus

Space (see relevant sections)

and at the Birmingham

convention. And the lucky lucky

fellow has a summer season in

Scarborough in July to look

forward to. I expect it'll rain.

FLIPSIDE

Crazed Scottish comedy

juggling trio have some London

cabaret dates -

Red Rose Cabaret, W7, April 2-3

Up The Creek, SE10, April 9 &

11

CIRCADELI

Patchwork Circus annual

community circus show... a

momentary lapse of gravity!

CAMBRIDGE Drama Centre,

Covent Garden, 0223 312027

MARCH 19 (7.30), 20 & 21

(2.30 & 7.30)

It's small, so book early!

convention diary

FEBRUARY

21 - NATIONAL UNI-HOCKEY

TOURNAMENT ("NUTS", in fact) Cardiff, 11am.

Room for 16 five-a-side teams only, final (7pm) in front of a guaranteed big crowd

('cos it's part of a major basketball event!). Participation fee £5 (payable to

UK UF) write to 2 George Street, Barry, South Glamorgan, Cymru, SL6 6NN. A

copy of the International Rules can be sent if required. Another tournament is

planned for June.

21 - SECOND LIVERPOOL CIRCUS

CONVENTION, Toxteth Sports Centre,

Upper Hill Street, 10-10, only £3.

Details from 051 727 1074, 051 734

4831.

MARCH

14 - Three Ball Mini-Convention at

Circus Space, London. 11-10, £5.

17-22 - NATIONAL CLOWNS

CONVENTION Bognor Regis. Details

from Bluey on 0703 869076.

MAY

1 - PORTSMOUTH

JUGGLING OLYMPICS II

University Sports Hall in the morning for

workshops, stalls, videos etc., Guildhall

Square after-noon for the Olympics, and

Portsmouth v. Rest of the World Uni-

Hockey. Evening Show (including Sean

Gandini Juggling Project, UltraVision,

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860893.

24 (maybe 25 too!) -

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the same lot as last time -d). More details next ish.

Contact Absolute Balls, Lucy's Cottage, Trigg Street,

Newdigate, Surrey RH5 5DA, Dave or Steve 0403

273466.

AUGUST

14-15 - CRAWLEY CONVENTION (two-dayer),

Sussex. Games, Workshops, performance, party, Fire Show,

more party.

Sally & Nigel, Minfford Mess, New House Lane,

Salfrons, Surrey RH1 5RA 0293 786143

27-29 - SCOTTISH CONVENTION

Stirling University. Contact Mark Segal, 041 945

2641.

SEPTEMBER

1-5 - 16th EUROPEAN JUGGLING CONVENTION,

LEEDS. Anyone interested in performing, lending

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Holland, at Circus Space, United House, 39-41

North Road, London N7 9DP. Full details in the next

Catch.

INTERNATIONAL

SECTION

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28-6 - 9th HAWAIIAN

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MARCH

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686.

APRIL

8-11 - 5th SPANISH CONVENTION

Oikina, Gipuzkoa (Basque Country). Contact Pabi

Fadrique, Oikia Plaza 3, E 20759 Oikina, Gipuzkoa,

Spain. (010-34) 943 143090 / 529703

MAY

6-9 - NORDIC CONVENTION

Odense, Denmark. Price 175 K. Svendsen, Skjoldsvej

41, DK 5200 Odense V, Denmark. (010-45) 65923131

JUNE

26-27 - SWISS JUGGLERS FESTIVAL

Aarau (Suhr), Switzerland. Contact Schweizer

Jonglierfestival, Postfach, CH-5001 Aarau,

Switzerland. (010-41) 64223880.

JULY

2-4 - EUROCYCLE 2

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Germany. International Unicycle Mania! Contact

Marcus Mensel (010-49) 02151 313911.

20-24 46th INTERNATIONAL

JUGGLERS CONVENTION

Fargo, North Dakota, USA. Pronounced well worth the

visit by young James Brommage in an enthusiastic

letter (about last year's) to Catch's Cradle. Considering

the skill gap between Europe and the States, there's

bound to be plenty to learn from the stateside stars.

But even over here it's possible to get videos with

them all on, which could be a bit cheaper! More info

from Ginny Rose, PO Box 122, Montague, Mass.

01351. (010-1) 413 367 9398.



WORLD EXCLUSIVE

The Formation of the JUGGLING TRADE FEDERATION

Not bad, just into our third issue and we get a major scoop. At the spectacular location of Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, on a windy January weekend, a shower of the UK's juggling traders and manufacturers got together.

Well, we were very keen to be there. You can imagine what gossip we could pick up, with the bonus of the meeting having all the potential to be the fight of the year, know what I mean, Harry? Or could it be (and I know you were thinking this as well) the formation of a cartel?

It wasn't any of those things. Looking around the room the faces were a Who's Who of people that have played key rôles in promoting the hobby/profession/way of life, for so many who have discovered juggling in recent years. Now for the first time they were spending the weekend together. But what was the real reason?

"H" of Beards fame had promoted the gathering, to share each others' knowledge and experience, and to create the JTF's 1st Annual Convention and Trade Show. He got everyone into workshop groups and from then on it was up to us. What developed was concern that jugglers are getting a fair service, and that traders are getting good back-up from wholesalers and manufacturers. So a Code of Ethics is being drawn up with details of minimum standards for returns and refunds of defective goods, payment terms etc. The larger group can use its larger clout for negotiating costs on carriage, insurance, and promoting juggling generally.

Safety, especially fire products, was a key issue, as well as the all-important environmental stuff on the materials that equipment is made from - remember Dan Zero's letter in Issue 2? JTF will report on this in the next Catch.

Will the JTF happen? The answer was a resounding YES! After lots of tea and other Yorkshire liquids, everyone agreed the weekend was a huge success as the smiles on the photo prove. Even the scheduled bitching workshop - yes, really, we had our pens poised - produced nothing of note. If you are a trader and you missed it, "H" apologises, he tried to contact everyone. But if you knew about it and didn't bother - shame on you - it's not too late, join now. Contact Sally Bateman, Minfford, New House Lane, Salfords, Surrey RH1 5RA.



Would you buy a used unicycle from this lot? The JTF in persons.

Thanks to all at the Circus Factory for a great time.

Those present were:

Up for Grabs, Barbara Goody, Mushy Pea, Cascade, Ice-9, Flare Fluorescent Products, Firedance, Butterfingers, Playing with Fire, Juggling Junction,

LazyDaze, The Brighton Juggling Store, Boggle, Beard, The Catch, Absolute Balls, Ark Games & Juggling, Carousel, Spotlight-Bath, More Balls Than Most (London, Preston, Saltaire), 3.3.10, Anti-Gravity, Cascadia, Stuff and Nonsense, Wind Things, Tossspots.

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Streets and drunks and cops and rôles...

Solo, with Mummerandada and a dozen other projects, Bim Mason is more than just another roadside attraction. But there are more characters on the streets than just performers and audience, as he recounts....

The streets are not the ideal location for performance - noise, interruptions, bad sight-lines and unreliable weather can all be avoided indoors. However, one of the unique advantages street theatre has over indoor theatre is the possibility of synchronicity - when unexpected events, external to the show, fit so perfectly into the action onstage that a truly magic theatrical moment is created. On one occasion Knee-High were performing their 'Tregeagle' show at the Limburg Street Theatre Festival in Holland. A storm rumbled in the distance, providing a perfect backdrop as the story of evil unfolded. The sky drew darker, and at the exact moment when the Devil appeared a bolt of lightning struck nearby and the earth shook. Magnificent!

This was a rare moment - most interruptions are hardly welcome, although, if well handled, they can make an ordinary show become special. Here is a selection from the book* dealing with some familiar interruptions.

.....

There is a certain type of dog that can be set off by performers; they appear from nowhere, barking incessantly and responding to any advance or retreat as if it were a game. Although this can get a lot of laughs, one has to be careful not to over-excite the dog, otherwise they can become quite vicious. The best policy is to bare your teeth and growl at them. They growl back but with a few sudden advances they are usually overcome and yelp into retreat. It always worked for me, but I suppose it depends on your growl.

Less fun are drunks and other unpredictable people. Street Theatre often takes place in areas where there are small groups hanging out all day getting intoxicated on one thing or another. In some places they even get territorial about strangers invading 'their' space. Often the interruption will start with some amiable heckling and when volunteers are required they seem suitably uninhibited to be chosen. Only when it is too late do you realise the state they are in. Sometimes they need no invitation and simply wander in to the space. Usually they just want to perform and get a bit of attention, so occasionally it is possible to let them do their bit and they are happy enough to go. The trouble is that usually they don't want to go, and it is very difficult to make them.

Light-hearted banter almost always fails - they take it that you have included them in the act. If you drop the act and make a genuine entreaty it rarely succeeds, it just makes them more powerful. Anger and aggression must be avoided at all costs - it looks bad and can also lead to a real fight. Gentle calm physical force has slightly more chance of success, especially if there is a group of you. The best method is to use your powerful position and appeal to the sympathies of the crowd, who will be on your side, getting them to shout in unison when fed questions like "Do you want this intruder on stage?" - "NO!" "Do you want them to go away?" - "YES!" With this kind of mass rejection it is hard for them to maintain the illusion that the audience is enjoying their drunken performance, and all but the immediately comatose begin to retreat. If they don't appear to be able to get off the ground, then another appeal to the audience - for strong helpers to extract the fallen angel - can have playful possibilities that lighten the heavy air of potential danger.

Police and other uniformed officials can be dealt with by similar methods. They are less of a problem in Britain

nowadays, but in some countries difficult situations can still arise. The first thing they will do is try and tell you to stop from the edge of the space. When you ignore them and continue (assuming this is what you choose to do), they are obliged to enter the space and approach you. The show has stopped, but the audience will be reluctant to leave - not only because of the real drama unfolding in front of them, but also because they will want to support you. It is possible to use the question and answer tactic used for drunks, but this form of mass resistance may not appeal to everyone; it will also raise the level of tension, so that reinforcements are called and you may be arrested for incitement to riot. The best method is to leave the space, join the audience and lead them in ironic applause and cheers. This puts the police in the position of performer, and draws attention to the fact that the uniform is only a costume and they are only acting the tough authoritarian rôle. Usually they can't quite cope with this and begin to edge out of the area; you can then return to more applause and attempt to finish the show before reinforcements arrive.

* 'Street Theatre and other outdoor performance' by Bim Mason, Routledge 1992, £10.99, and very much recommended.



Blood on th streets - Bim (left) and Mummerandada demonstrate how to deal with hecklers

Our man on fire

**Don't play with fire!
That's what my mum
always used to say. I
once set fire to a grove
of bamboo playing with
matches - it didn't half
go whoosh!**

- I hid and watched various grownups panic with buckets of water, vainly trying to extinguish the blaze. I think that was my first experience of the power of fire. I've witnessed some events since then that have convinced me of the dangers, put me off using fire in my performances whenever possible, and kept me away from it - especially when it's used for theatrical effect. I like to watch it, and am thrilled with it as much as anyone, but I'm always checking where the fire-extinguishers are and looking for the exit and wondering if there's a first-aid kit nearby - just in case...

I was at a festival in Florence years ago. We were doing a kind of revue format, various acts backed by the house band. A friend of ours was going to turn up some time from Oslo! Yes, it is a long way, so we weren't expecting him to arrive on time for the opening night. But he did. He'd driven non-stop from Hamburg, hadn't had any sleep, was all wired up and raring to perform. "I'll do some fire breathing," he said, "just a little bit in between the last two acts, OK?" He assured us he wasn't too tired and he really wanted to be part of the opening night so we reluctantly agreed. He was the kind of guy it's hard to say No to (he still is).

The band is playing and on he comes, the audience is having fun, the evening's been great so far, it's warm and friendly and relaxed - it's Italy and we're having a gas. He goes to the front of the stage with the bottle and the torch, lights up the torch and does some of the standard rubbing it on your arms and so on, then he starts to blow the fire. The first and second blows are OK. He blows the third and suddenly his face and chest are on fire! Everything slips into slow motion and in that daze of a few split seconds, as the horror of what is happening sinks in, we all play really bum notes and the music becomes a grotesque accompaniment for him running blindly into the audience, trying to stifle the flames in someone's clothes, and people running away from him screaming with delight and laughing at this amazing trick! The reality is soon apparent - only a few seconds (but it seems like a day) and he's rescued and backstage, being doused with buckets of water, lots and lots being the best immediate treatment. We called an ambulance, tried to calm down, and

told the audience that the show was over. He was badly burned and hospitalised for weeks. He'd been so out of it and tired, couldn't find any paraffin and used petrol! Be warned!

Then there was the time watching a show when suddenly from behind the curtains strides an eight-foot-high figure in flames from head to foot. Fantastic! How do they do it? They have a costume made from frizzy nylon, not fireproofed, and had candles for backstage light, that's how. He was lucky. There was a carpet on stage and some quick-witted person rolled him up in it and put him out. He was in hospital for six months and lost part of both heels.

Then there was a similar incident in a car. Five people on their way to a gig with the masks on their laps. Light up a cigarette and whoosh! The inside of the car is in flames and smoke, they can't get out because it's a borrowed car and they're not familiar with the locks. Same stuff, the un-fireproofed frizzy nylon gear. They all suffered very nasty burns to faces and hands and appeared in their next performance with bandages everywhere and quite disgusting peeling skin dripping from noses mouths and ears. Horrible. Looked great on stage though...

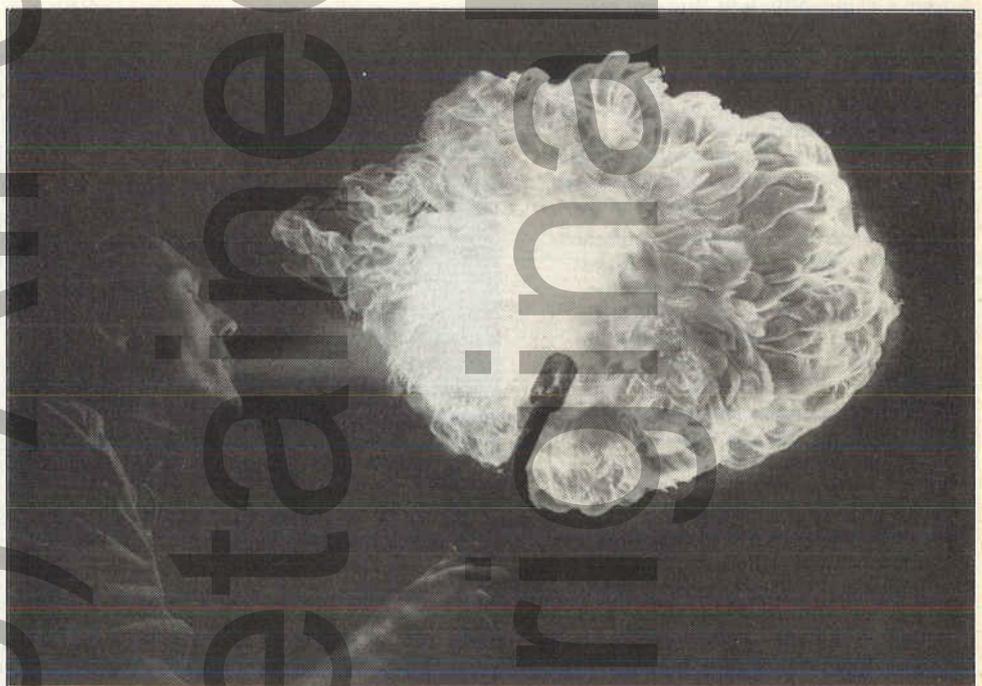
Then there's the infamous clown who did this escape from a locked fridge. Chains and padlocks all over the outside of it.

He'd be inside and pull a string to set off a smoke flare. This time it came inside the fridge with him! One of those enormous orange distress flares - loads and loads of smoke and plenty of heat. The stooges on the outside couldn't open the locks - it wasn't part of the act to have to undo them that quickly. The clown is very lucky to still be alive today. He was in intensive care and a specialist burns unit, the smoke nearly killed him.

Then there was the last time I did a show with fireworks. Two piddly little rockets, six-inch tiddlers. They were fine in rehearsal, went the right direction and looked great. We're firing them from a rowing boat on a canal. Come the first performance, as we drift round the corner into position we fumble the lighting, the boat swings just that little bit too far, and the first rocket corkscrews hard left smack into the crowds and explodes - CRUMPF - kids screaming, the usual mix of shock and relief, laughter and tears. One little girl was very badly shaken, one woman had a burnt trouser leg and somebody's jumper caught fire - so it wasn't a bad score really. We could have had one eye blinded and someone's hair in flames. We didn't use those rockets again.

Yes I love using fire in performance, so much so that when I smell a candle or catch sight of a bottle containing some dubious liquid I usually run for cover and ask where the nearest extinguisher is. I don't like it. It scares me. And I'm glad it does. I am very very wary of playing with fire. It's a great effect - but it CAN kill and maim. So take it easy out there, and for God's sake make sure you're insured.

*Grilho Parafuso.
surely Grillo Parafino?*



Happiness is a Cigar ... dipped in paraffin? Sam Lane shot by Luke Danniels (0225) 339888

Don't put yourself out for us, dear

Having posted the accompanying article, I absconded to South Wales to take up a winter contract with a travelling circus of the traditional genre. Over the winter season nearly all circuses abandon the top as they really are a lot of hassle to keep up in bad weather. That sort of acreage of sodden tarp is highly unpleasant to manhandle (*personhandle, surely - D*), and nobody in their right mind wants to get out of bed at two in the morning to hitch a truck to a rope just to keep the king-poles upright. Last August was enough for most of us. Anyone who's still working in winter tends to play theatres, halls, even schools, with a small show.

To set the whole disastrous scene properly I should point out that we were meant to be playing Cornwall and Devon this winter, but things don't always go to plan. After a sodden summer in North Wales, the rest took off for a month in Ireland while I took a month off, arranging to meet up in Cornwall. After only three weeks I received a phone call asking me to meet them in Haverfordwest instead. Only yards off the Rosslare-Fishguard ferry, one of the trucks had blown up, leaving the Fabulous (and occasionally Flying) Dakotas stranded. The rest of the circus moved on to take on the Cornwall bookings, leaving The Dakotas, a twelve-foot python and myself, to take a three-handed show round South Wales.

Leaving aside my relationship with the Dakotas, this is the most incredibly hard work. With no advance party - or advance bookings, come to that - we have to get up at six, poster the next town, drive back to wherever we're playing today, spend an hour in the phone box getting the next bookings (and pneumonia), check our kit, get to the hall, rig our own stage, do the show, and get out. We usually hit the sack around midnight - which is where I'm writing this! Somehow we find the time to eat, do the laundry, and get posters printed. There is absolutely nothing romantic about life on the road!

Now, because I'm using all my kit, every night, I have two of everything. Two fire-devils, two blowing torches, two sets of eating torches... otherwise the wicks would burn away to nothing in a week. The only thing I didn't even consider was two costumes.

If you've tried it, you'll know that it's impossible to blow fire without soaking the front of your clothes with fuel. You can imagine that by the end of a week my costume had absorbed a fair bit, and I was wearing what equated to a well-soaked wick. How something so obviously dangerous could have not even occurred to me is frightening.

I stood on the knife board while fire knives with a week's worth of fuel in their wick landed somewhat haphazardly around me. Evidently they were burning so brightly that they were blinding Mel and he couldn't even see the board! We took our bow. I lit the fire-devil from the knives, and, carried away by the audience's obvious enthusiasm, went in for some really high throws. Plucking it from the air with far more aplomb than I usually manage, I lit the blowing torch. Rapt faces were illuminated by HUGE flames, into which I put my hands, arms and legs - I was seriously strutting my stuff here. A good audience can really bring out the poseur in any performer, and I'm no exception. You get such a buzz off their enthusiasm that you

just can't help yourself. I was just going for the big one when I heard a kid say "EEurgh! There's fire on 'er dress!"

I didn't immediately cotton on to what was happening. Turning to the front, I felt my left ear becoming rather too warm for comfort, and glanced down to see my costume - skimpy enough already - blazing merrily. With a mouthful of paraffin, there was little I could do, so I blew the last flame anyway, blew out the torch, and tried to hand it to Jenny, our ringmistress. She wasn't there. She was rooted firmly to her spot, stage right, looking horrified.

Knowing that only the fuel was burning, and not me (a great comfort, I can assure you), I smiled my broadest stage-grin and extended an arm to stage left. We had two fire blankets and an extinguisher - surely Mel would hand me the other blanket? Surely not! Holding the dress away from my skin, I turned to find that he too was rooted to the spot, holding the extinguisher before him like some talisman to ward off evil spirits. I briefly considered rolling around on the floor, but the Girl Guides only mention this in conjunction with a hearth-rug - an item the stage conspicuously lacked. Mel looked so funny that I stared to laugh, and he, thinking that I was probably hysterical, thought he ought to hit me. I was always under the impression that the old wives' cure for hysteria was short sharp slap in the chops, but Mel's technique is more along the lines of repeatedly punching one's lights out.

What a party! Swearing viciously, I snatched the blanket while ducking the blows, put myself out (although by this time I had to have three goes at it), took the eating torches from the rack, and tried to light them.

I couldn't. There was no flame on the knife-board. In his excitement, Mel had extinguished everything in sight. He was still gawping at me as I snarled and kicked the lighter towards him. With a shaking hand he lit my torches.

and I went on to the big finish with a flaming torch in the teeth. I took my bow, took the mic, managed to say "Thankyou-very-much-ladies-and-gentlemen-don't-try-this-at-home" before running off stage to giggle while the others stuttered into the silence about the natural habitat of the Burmese Python.

At the end of the show the applause was amazing, the best all week, and only one person came up to ask "Was it in the show?" We always like to chat to

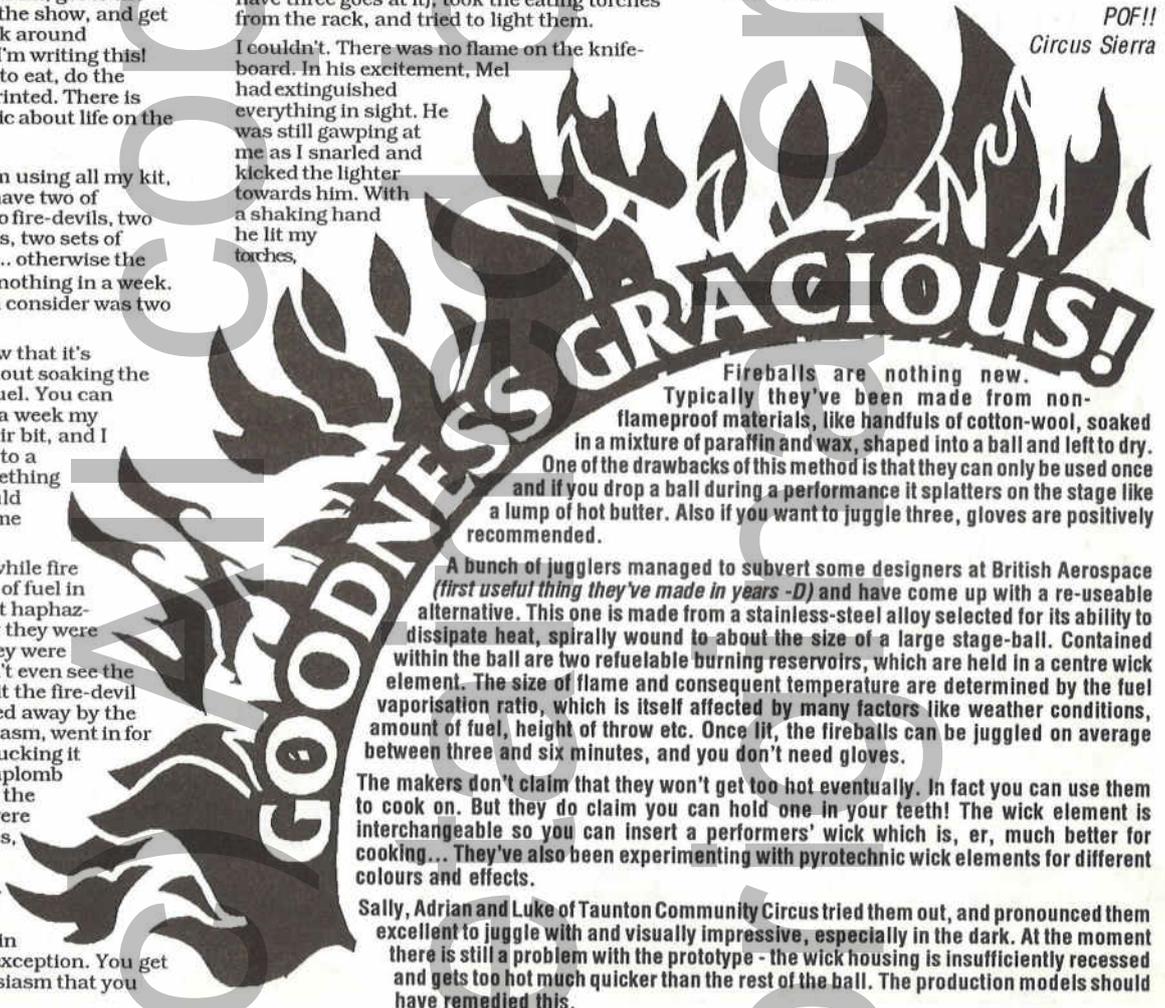
the kids afterwards, and let them hold the snake if they want to. Tonight we had a huge crowd. A woman came striding through the middle and bellowed "Do you think that was a very sensible thing to do in front of children??"

We got 'home' surprisingly early, and fell into what has become our local over the last couple of weeks, still smelly and in full make-up. "Good show?" asked the landlord. "Oh yeah..." said Mel, glaring at me. "She sets her clothes on fire in front of two hundred kids, and all she can say is 'Bollocks'..."

I don't know why I found it so funny. Maybe it was relief, maybe it was the knowledge that however spectacular it looked I knew I wasn't getting hurt. Maybe it was the fact that it could only happen when the Dakotas were there - Sod's Law syndrome and all that. Personally I think it's about time Jake the Snake started running the show and prethented hith educated humanth. In the meantime I'm getting a second costume so I can have one forever in the wash (*er... lot of good it'll do you there - D*).

Play safely!

POF!!
Circus Sierra



Fireballs are nothing new. Typically they've been made from non-flameproof materials, like handfuls of cotton-wool, soaked in a mixture of paraffin and wax, shaped into a ball and left to dry. One of the drawbacks of this method is that they can only be used once and if you drop a ball during a performance it splatters on the stage like a lump of hot butter. Also if you want to juggle three, gloves are positively recommended.

A bunch of jugglers managed to subvert some designers at British Aerospace (*first useful thing they've made in years - D*) and have come up with a re-useable alternative. This one is made from a stainless-steel alloy selected for its ability to dissipate heat, spirally wound to about the size of a large stage-ball. Contained within the ball are two refuelable burning reservoirs, which are held in a centre wick element. The size of flame and consequent temperature are determined by the fuel vaporisation ratio, which is itself affected by many factors like weather conditions, amount of fuel, height of throw etc. Once lit, the fireballs can be juggled on average between three and six minutes, and you don't need gloves.

The makers don't claim that they won't get too hot eventually. In fact you can use them to cook on. But they do claim you can hold one in your teeth! The wick element is interchangeable so you can insert a performers' wick which is, er, much better for cooking... They've also been experimenting with pyrotechnic wick elements for different colours and effects.

Sally, Adrian and Luke of Taunton Community Circus tried them out, and pronounced them excellent to juggle with and visually impressive, especially in the dark. At the moment there is still a problem with the prototype - the wick housing is insufficiently recessed and gets too hot much quicker than the rest of the ball. The production models should have remedied this.

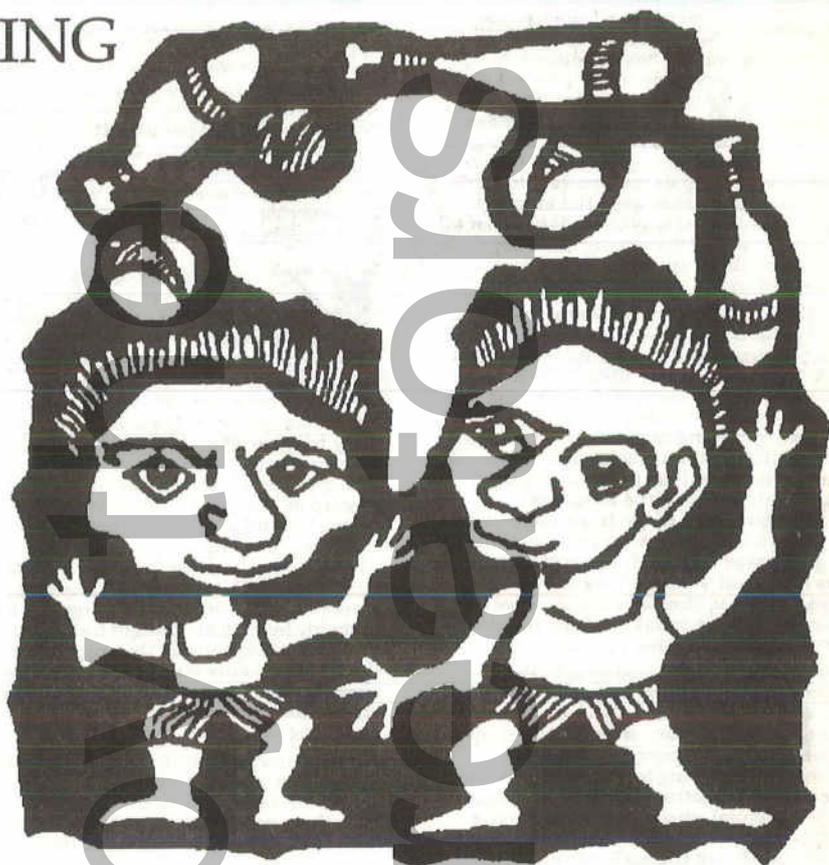
Watch them appear in every fire show you see this year!
Just don't let the Uni Hockey players near one...
For further information contact: Ross of Carousel 0222 640600

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I was planning to begin this piece by saying that not all fire-blowers are necessarily plagued by pleurisy and worse, but then had to postpone writing it while I spent a week in bed with a quaintly musical chest. Anyway, in between the coughing fits which threaten to turn my brains to jelly, here goes...



Hot Lips tells all...

If you still want to eat/breathe fire, read on. There are good and bad ways to go about it. Or bad enough, and worse - depending how you look at it.

From my point of view it's immensely satisfying to blow a really impressive flame, and for a long time that was enough in itself. On the other hand, having earned a fair income at it, I have to say that the money made it well worth it too! Well, a girl has to eat...

The first question most people ask me (apart from "Orrite, Hot Lips?") is "What's that stuff you drink, then?" Mostly they assume it's either water (why??) or petrol, which just goes to show what an unthinking bunch makes up the average audience.

The horrifying thing is, that some people do use petrol. I knew one chap who successfully blew fire for thirty years using the stuff, before he imploded one lung. He's still working with a travelling circus. He's the "stooge" clown who doesn't speak and has a bucket of water poured down his trousers twice daily in the season. If that's not a warning, I don't know what is.

Basically, you're running a risk whatever fuel you decide to use, as most are prone to the dreaded blow-back to a greater or a lesser degree. Some are simply less volatile than others.

The cheapest - and coolest - is paraffin. It tastes appalling, but burns at a low enough temperature for even the most nervous pyromaniac to create a bit of a show by running the torch up and down his or her arms, even though the residual soot is a bit unglamorous. I usually do my legs while I'm at it.

It saves shaving, and is much cheaper than a salon treatment - sod the bikini line, though!

More expensive, but about ten times kinder to the taste-buds, is barbecue lighter fluid. It burns a lot hotter than paraffin, is cleaner and less greasy, it also has a tendency to dry off a bit quicker and makes less mess of the floor - which is useful if you happen to be playing a theatre as it's a bit of a bummer if the next act hurls itself arse over tit into the front two rows of the stalls (I'm telling you, the 'Flying Dakotas' were merely 'Fabulous' until they got to perform after us!).

- Come to think of it, if you're looking to avoid accidents, watch where you spit! If you grease up the pavement with half a gallon of Esso Blue and cause some old biddy's broken hip, you could have an unpleasant time with the law.

Non-greasy fuels can be expensive - brandy, for instance. But did you know that you can use various powders instead? Fool Time teach kids to blow fire with Lycopodium powder, which is a hell of a lot safer, doesn't make the floor slippery, and doesn't drip. If you have trouble getting this from your chemist, try custard powder! (or cocoa powder, sherbet - experiment!) With a bit of practise, it really does work. Of course you still need to soak your torches in a liquid fuel, as half-an-hour in a bucket of custard doesn't seem to work quite so well...

I don't want to sound damning, but I never use 'firewater', and don't know anyone who recommends it either.

General Safety

Pippa Tee covered this in the first issue, but for those of you who didn't buy it/lost your copy/lack common sense, here it is again.

DO tie your hair back and remove any loose clothing. It's possible to buy various flame-proofing sprays, which work well on hair as well as clothes. Look in your local hardware store, or contact Oddballs.

DO watch where you left the container of fuel.

DON'T forget to keep the lid on!

DO make sure that you soak the whole of the wick.

DO keep the handles dry.

DO make sure that you allow the

torches to drain once you've dipped them and always shake off any excess fuel before you light up. Do this away from where you are going to perform/practise. Shake it again after lighting if you like but this is no substitute for doing it beforehand... and dangerous if you haven't.

DO watch the wind - and I don't just mean the gastric sort. If it's too windy, don't do it! At the very least you'll end up bald.

DO keep an eye on the condition of your wicks, and make sure that they are firmly attached to your torches. I know a fire-eater whose wick fell off into his mouth once, and he managed to remove all his nasal hair from the inside - to rapturous applause!

DON'T EVER attach wicks to fire-eating torches with wire or screws. I fix the end onto a wooden torch with a drawing pin, and then wind the rest of the wick tightly around it, sewing it in place. If you use wire, it will simply become very hot and weld itself to the inside of your mouth. Even cattle don't get branded these days.

DON'T use metal torches for fire-eating, for the same reason. A long time ago I made myself a beautifully elegant pair of fire-eating torches from barbecue skewers...

DON'T do it pissed at parties. Don't even think about it. You need all your wits about you.

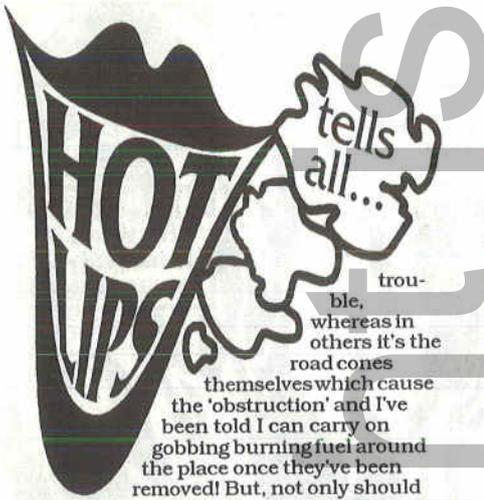
DO I REALLY NEED TO TELL YOU NEVER to blow at anyone? Make your admiring friends keep their distance, or better still stand behind you. If you're showing them what you can do, blow upwards, or to the sides... and if you plan to busk, learn some crowd control!

Performing in safety

Apply all the above, and then some. Apart from any mistakes you might make, the sheer stupidity of the public will add a degree of excitement to your act you never thought possible.

If you're busking with fire, do blag/steal/buy some road cones, so that you can create a safe area for yourself. Whether you're allowed to do this varies from town to town, like all busking bye-laws; some places, if I don't cone myself off I'm in big

continued over...



trouble, whereas in others it's the road cones themselves which cause the 'obstruction' and I've been told I can carry on gobbling burning fuel around the place once they've been removed! But, not only should they prevent Joe Public from getting burned, but they should mean that no-one gets to go skating on a greasy pavement, either. Some dumbo will still try to walk through the middle of it, but at least you've tried. You will still constantly have to yell at the kids to keep back, and their parents, come to think of it, as no-one seems to believe it's 'real' fire. (If anyone manages to come up with a good 'coal-effect' devilstick, let me know, OK?)

At organised events, you have the advantage of a stage, which means that the public are removed to a safe distance, and all you should need to worry about are the weather, and the legacy you leave the next act. In a theatre, the problems are even fewer. Theatres are very probably the most fireproof places in the known world. Joe Public is well away from you, the ceiling is high, the lighting can be adjusted to suit your needs, and there is absolutely no chance whatsoever of sudden high winds or a cloudburst. The only thing they are likely to be fussy about is your Public Liability Insurance. This should be simple, but it isn't - you need to find a company who offer, or specialises in, magicians' insurance, and they are just a trifle costly. You won't get this one from the Pru.

Make sure the theatre has adequate fire-extinguishers backstage, and that they provide a bucket of sand - for draining, shaking and even extinguishing (if one turns a bit stubborn) your torches. Anyway, you'll need something to spit into when you're finished. So again, all you need to worry about is the next act...

I played a nightclub a couple of times this summer, and was at first delighted to discover that they had a carpeted stage - as were the Dakotas, who were once more on the same bill. Unfortunately the carpet caught fire, which just goes to show that you can't ever really win. The Dakotas put it out with great showmanship, and the following week presented me with an asbestos blanket to put on the floor.

In a Big Top, you have no worries! I've never set fire to grass yet, and you have all the advantages of working indoors without the worry of a stage.

Health and Safety

It's a well-known fact that paraffin is one of the finest cures for constipation known to man. It doesn't so much cause things akin to dysentery, as oil the works, so to speak, which should be at least a little comfort should you happen to swallow a mouthful! You can't actually avoid swallowing any, as a little fuel will always trickle down the back of your throat, but this shouldn't have any real effect on your intestines. Barbecue fluid is less of a laxative than paraffin, incidentally, and custard powder has rather the opposite effect entirely. To keep your body-clock "normal" you could always try using all three! To reduce the amount of fuel you



actually swallow, don't swallow when you finish blowing - spit somewhere instead. The problem you do get with liquid fuels is this: because you can't avoid swallowing some fuel every time you blow, it gets dealt with a little at a time by your digestive system. Even if you don't swallow enough to send you racing for the loo, some of the fuel will remain in your system as it contains substances which although not harmful in themselves, are heavier than your own body fluids. This residue has to go somewhere, and usually collects in the bottom of your lungs - which is how come nearly everyone ends up with pleurisy after a few years. However, knowing all of these things doesn't seem to put many people off, so...

...you still want to know how to do it??

Fire Eating

I'm not irresponsible enough to tell you this! All I will say is that it works on the same principle as the candle in the jam-jar, so if you close your mouth over a flame, you effectively starve it of oxygen, and it goes out. The only way to learn is to be shown by someone else - just make sure they can do it first!

Fire Blowing

What follows is really only a few hints and tips, but before I am made to take responsibility for what you may do to yourselves by your surviving family and members of the constabulary, I must point out that I would never attempt any of this without being shown first by somebody else exactly how to do it, and I'd want them with me when I tried. This is intended as a guide to help those who already experiment. If you really must try learning by trial and error, have someone else with you. Then they can put you out if the need arises.

OK, you take your torch / fireclub, and you dip it like we told you, shake it off, and you light it. Then you take a swig of the fuel you put in a pint mug at your side and...
...gag it all over the deck!

You will, too. It's only pride that keeps most first-timers from chucking all over the place. Paraffin tastes gross, and feels like engine oil. You only ever get used to fuel - no-one ever gets to like it.

Take another swig. Take a deep breath through your nose, because you don't want to drown, and BLOW. Spray the fuel out of your mouth and over the torch flame, moving the torch away from your mouth in a smooth arc.

Don't just spit a pure jet or floppy dribble of fuel over the torch - you'll only succeed in putting it out. Try to create a fine spray. Practise with water can help, although it has a different 'feel' to it, and definitely has less body than fuel.

Don't hold the torch too close to your face. The heads of our torches are usually about 18" away from us when we start. It sounds like a long way, but believe me, it looks close enough when you come to do it.

Learn to move your torch away from you as you blow. This takes the flame away from your mouth - otherwise the flame will simply burn itself back towards you, the fuel supply.

Don't keep on blowing! These two points spring to mind having the image of one member of our group - blowing for all he was worth, arm rigidly holding the torch all of two inches from his mouth, running backwards down the yard trying to get away from his own flame - forever burned into my

memory. Most of us didn't know it was possible for one mouth to hold that much fuel.

Don't lean forward towards the flame and then leap back in terror. You won't be impressed with the result, and if you're that nervous you're probably reading this under the bedclothes and shouldn't even try. Instead, stand up straight, look the torch in the eye, and get on with it. With a bit of common sense, and a bit of respect for the elements, you'll be blowing whoppers in no time.

One last thing, although paraffin-breath can be a little bizarre, it really doesn't ruin your love life!

"POF!" 1992

Fire Water

- unpalatable truth?

Letter from Dave of Spotlight (Holland), the major exporters of FireWater to this country.

There was an incident in the UK (Glastonbury '92, actually) where a child drank some fire liquid. Everything turned out OK, but the hospital, and now our supplier, have informed us that there is an additive to the fuel which removes the taste and smell of the liquid. This additive is highly toxic, and should not be swallowed. With this information we have decided to stop supplying the fire liquid after our stock has run out. I am sorry that events have turned out like this but I hope traders understand our reasons for discontinuing it.

We have just prepared our mailing prices, all fire liquid should be considered unavailable.

As to an alternative, I'm not sure about other manufacturers, so I can't comment. Custard powder works well, as will any powder/air mixture. At a professional level we have nothing better to recommend than lamp oil, cheap but with high petroleum additive levels - Toluene, Benzole, etc. Petrochemicals in general can lead to serious skin rash and gum infections; taken internally they can be serious, but hospital help is effective IF the exact nature of the substance is known. Inhaling petrochemicals is worse. Death is a common side-effect. The condition is known as chemical pneumonia and can be caused by a single mouthful entering the lungs (say after coughing then breathing in with the mouth full). Patrick Maman at Unicycle in Paris has some stomach preparation fluid which coats the stomach wall, I would guess that milk has a similar effect.



Your other safety net

We're all such happy-go-lucky types, insurance is probably the last thing we think about. But if you're going pro, you'll find it's not only legally necessary, but often more sensible than you might have thought you were yourself. **Prue Tezle** goes cruising in shark-infested waters.

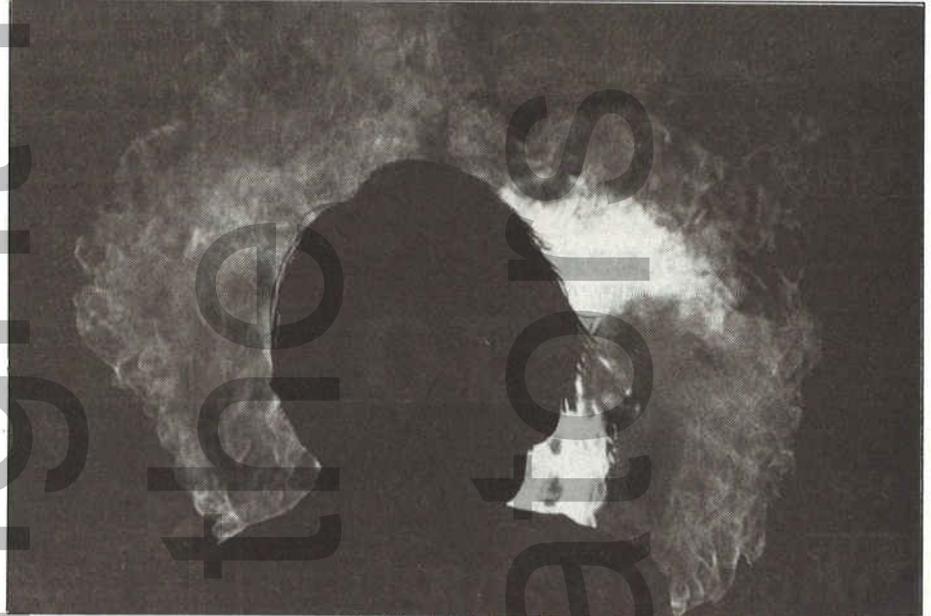
When I was regularly performing the most common question was not (sadly...) "How did you do that?" but "Do you have insurance for shows, and how can I get some?" Without giving precise figures (every policy will be different), here's a list of things to think about.

Firstly, it's not a long list... If you have tried to get insurance and been foolish enough to mention "entertainment" you'll know the problems. Most insurance companies class all entertainers with the booze-soaked actor image, which is as insulting of most actors as it is of the rest of us. It's of no use to point out that jugglers, unicyclists, trapeze artists etc. wouldn't survive long if they attempted to perform while drunk; they won't touch you with a barge-pole, let alone a policy.

Do you need insurance anyway? If you do any work for a council, then you will indeed need Public Liability Insurance. Many venues also demand it. Loosely, this means that if you cause an accident and are subsequently sued for damages, your policy will pay them. This will only happen if you are negligent in some way - rule number one, take proper care! If it is impossible to decide who is at fault, and costs are split 50/50, then again the policy will cover the cost. The chances of a serious accident are (hopefully) slight, but if it did happen you could literally lose everything. The cost of the premium will vary, the possible variables being:- what you perform with (knives? fire?); how many in the group; how much you wish to be insured for (£¼ million - £2 m.); note some councils, like Kent and Avon, require £2m cover; where you perform, stage or street; previous claims... and there would no doubt be others. One company we consulted suggested that certain restrictions could be set, e.g. roping off the performing area if you were using fire.

If you have a set show that stays pretty much the same (shame on you!), the insurers will like you. More creative artists will have to set down their act description as clearly as they can. It's no use "forgetting" to mention that you occasionally - though not always - finish your act with five torches on a giraffe unicycle. If you haven't, you might find the policy is null and void!

That covers audience protection; how likely are you to injure yourself? If performing is your sole occupation, then it's quite important that you are covered for temporary injury and subsequent loss of work, or in the desperate case of losing a limb or an eye, permanent loss of income (obviously if you're not earning anything you can't claim loss of income!). A basic accident policy may cost only £50, but if you use fire it will rise, and if you swing through the air with the greatest of ease, policies start at around £250 a year ("p.a." in money-talk). The cost of the policy reflects the risks and each act is individually assessed. How much



Mind Blowing! Shadowy character Sam Lane by Luke Daniels (0225) 339888

money you want out, to live on while recovering from injury, is also a factor; and remember if, like many of us, you use non-NHS health-care, osteopaths and the like, medical expenses would be much higher. And you need time to get back into performing condition, regain muscle/bone strength and confidence.

For temporary disablement you'd get weekly benefits until recovered, starting usually after two weeks. A lump sum would be paid out on death (oops) or permanent disablement, loss of limb etc. Anything more than that and you're moving into the category of personal pensions, a whole other can of worms.

When I was performing only a few years ago, it made sense to insure all the props against theft and breakages, e.g. unicycle collapses mid-tour, new one has to be flown to Aberdeen... No longer, however, as the policies start at around £250 p.a., and then there is a £100 minimum excess (i.e. you pay the first £100 of any loss). There are also so many exceptions and exemptions that it's not worth it, unless of course you are insuring equipment of £3-4000 value, as with a touring company.

The other area where insurance is a problem is motor insurance. If you have to be insured giving entertainment as your main occupation, I suggest you try Scottish General as that's what Equity use. Equity members can go through them anyway. BUT, if you can think of another way to describe yourself... e.g. if you run workshops, I see no reason why you shouldn't describe your job as "part time teacher". It's true, surely. Or "mother" (or "father"?) works just as well...

Final points to remember:- Insurance policies do not cover everything. Only you know exactly what you need. They also always contain exclusions, things they specifically do not cover. Read the whole policy, not just the 'cover' section. Make sure you fill in everything in the greatest detail you can manage, or you may not be covered even if you are paying premiums. And make sure that, when making a claim, you give fullest possible evidence of what happened, of the value of articles (keep receipts, if you don't already) and so on. People do make

fraudulent claims (tut tut) don't be surprised to be asked to show that yours isn't. Also:- You get what you pay for! Cheap cover will generally give you less than an expensive policy. Make sure what you're paying for is what you want! And, last word, even having insurance doesn't leave you free to behave in an out-of-order manner. Policies often don't pay out if you've done something really daft, check yours...

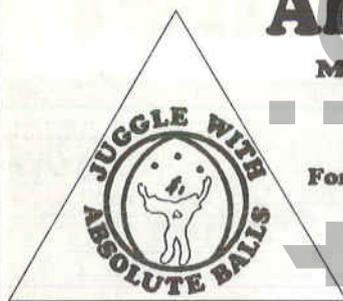
We're not in the business of telling you who to get a policy from. You should shop around for what you want at a price you can afford. It ought to be possible. We'd be interested to hear of other performers' experiences. But we must acknowledge the assistance in writing this article of Equity Insurance (no, you don't have to be a member), 0245 251581; and Matthew Torrible, who is a broker specialising in "high risk" categories from mountaineers to fire-blowers, and does a pretty competitive line in Public Liability Insurance, 0272 211806.



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F I R E R Y DISAGREEMENTS?

FireNoise are one of Britain's most visible (*tee hee -D*) juggling groups. When rumours suggested they were in a state of collapse we sent scandal-hungry hackette **Kate Merser** to rake through the ashes. In letters of fire she shows their history and what is to come...

Around the end of 1990 in Oxford, a group of fire jugglers met up with a percussionist while messing about in the park. The combination of fire and drumming inspired them to create something - FireNoise. Within a couple of months the initial group of about ten tripled in size and enthusiasm; they acquired bookings for events like College Balls and a dance instructor who gave advice on how to put big group pieces together.

Offshoots of the original group include Ultra Vision, the Ultra-Violet (UV) show that so wowed the Coventry convention that the next day it was impossible to buy anything vaguely luminous anywhere in the city! Part of a FireNoise bonfire-night show, it went down a storm, in fact much better than the fire. Much of this was down to John Blanchard, dextrous juggler and club-slinger, who choreographed three-ball and ring routines for which he also wrote and played the synchronised music. The original group of five split due to people going off to do their own thing in other parts of the country, and John has taken the name for his own one-man show. Undeterred, those left have chosen a new name, InFluorescence, and are aiming to carry on the same basic UV show with more experimental things added. Dave Dyer, one of the founder members, is practising juggling and swinging with open umbrellas, inspired by the Chinese State Circus.

Another spin-off is Cosmos, "a futuristic UV circus show with jugglers acrobats and dancers," run by FireNoise founder Jim Semlyen in York. Jim was a great loss to the group because of his professionalism and the hard work he put into the project to get it off the ground.

FireNoise itself has no definable edges; membership is open to anyone with motivation, commitment and £10 (membership fee). After a recent shrinkage in membership, there remains a committed core of a dozen, within a larger group who can be called upon at any time. There does seem to be some tension at the moment with most of the jugglers wanting to concentrate on their own juggling careers and looking for paid work which FireNoise can't offer them. But Dave points out "We're all quite new to the game, none of us with the exception of John have much chance of making it as a professional juggler at this stage. Without FireNoise it would be very difficult without spending a lot of money to have the chance to perform."

The Glastonbury Festival show (not to be confused with the Dogs of Heaven megalopyro experience next door) was technically their most impressive to date. One feature was a blazing meteorite caught and tossed around like a volleyball. On closer analysis this was revealed to be a simple toilet roll soaked in paraffin and set alight. Though they've had no accidents with this during shows, a non-member was burnt across the face on one occasion by the unravelling end of the roll which flapped across his face.

Apart from the fire juggling clubs, they made most of the equipment for the shows

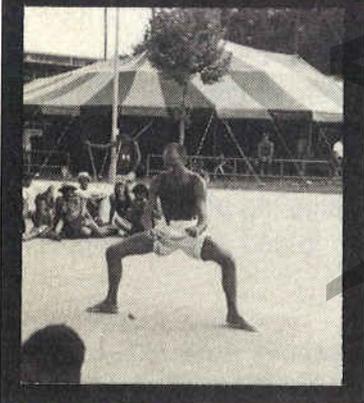
themselves - wooden swinging clubs, the fire sculptures, and two six-foot aluminium poles with wicks on either end which are spun and manipulated round the body. Putting on a good fire show takes weeks to prepare, liaising with the venue, working out production, etc. The new legislation brought in over raves puts even more restrictions; they now have to inform the Police of expected numbers as well as reporting to the Fire Service. Shows are generally promoted as private parties with invited guests and friends, to avoid the outrageously expensive public entertainments licence. But insurance is unavoidable; as FireNoise performers aren't actually employed, Public Liability actually covers everyone. They have a written agreement for every show, stipulating safety procedures, distance from the crowd, number of extinguishers and so on. At the moment they're playing around one hundred pounds per show. *[perhaps they too could learn from the articles about insurance and fire safety elsewhere in the mag -d]*

The remainder of the group is working on their next show, 'In Flagrante', a tale of industrial decay exploding with assorted pyrolatry and no fewer than eleven blazing bog rolls! Dave is ambitious but realistic - "It needs a hell of a lot of work, and at the moment there's not enough people in FireNoise that are committed to that dream to enable it to happen. But it is still growing."

Diabolo insists on the last word - Though not the first (nor the last word) in fire groups, FireNoise have probably done as much as anyone to show off the thrilling possibilities of fire and UV to the general public, and this has been good for juggling as a whole. The Catch wishes them a fiery bright future.

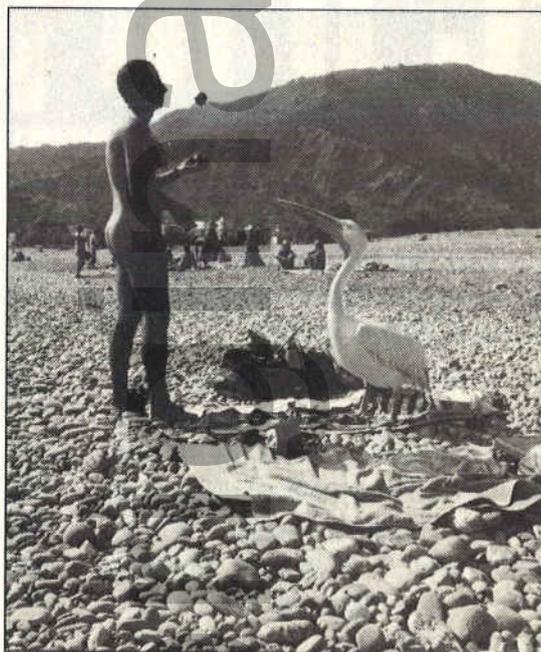
Spot the ball

SOLUTION TO ISSUE 2 PHOTO

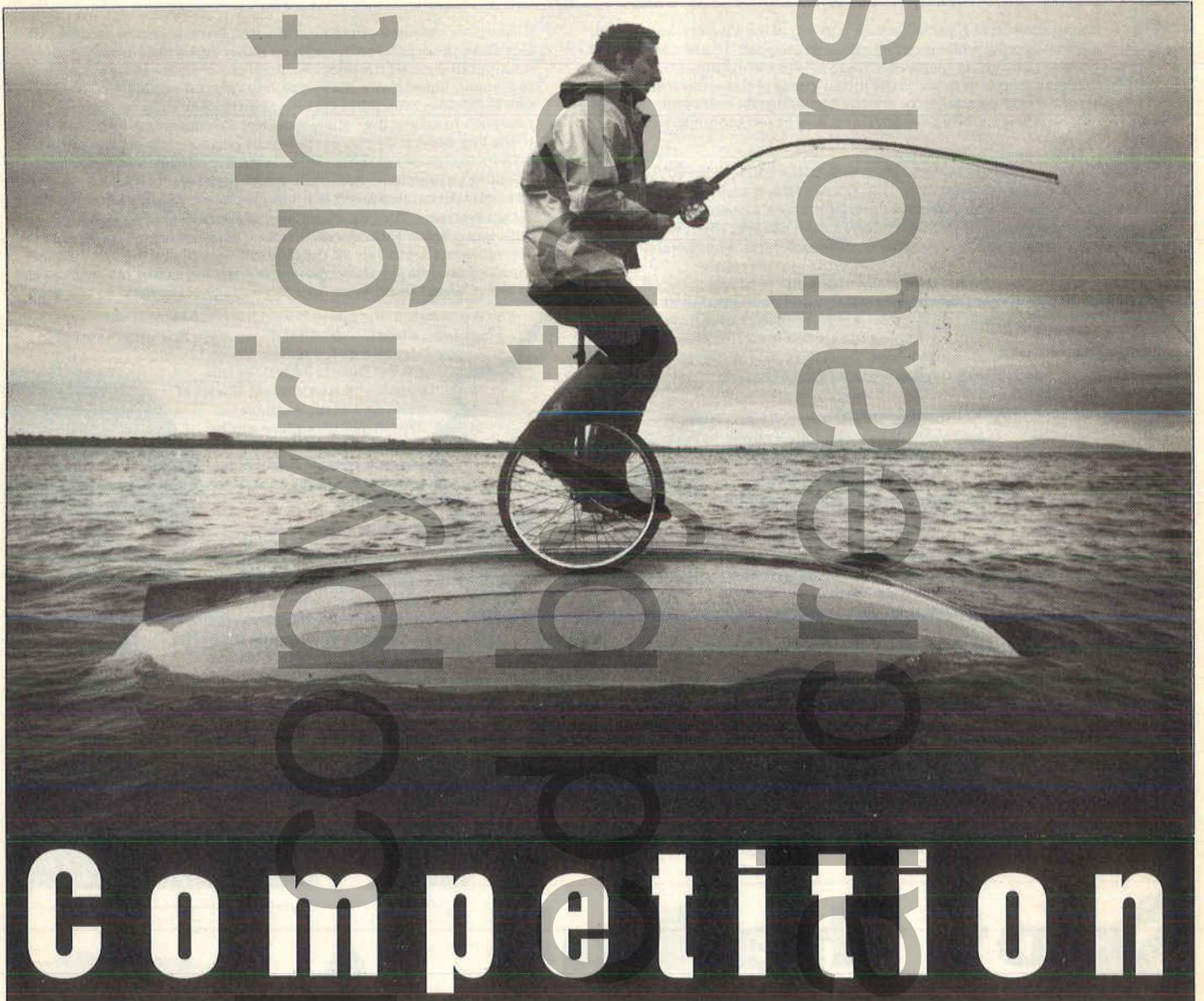


Our competition in issue two got more replies than drops at a 'Club Meeting' practise. After much inebriated discussion, the panel awarded the prize - a jealousy-inducing set of **Beards shiny new Spot Balls** - to reader **Charley Y of Peckham**. And speaking of Peckham, our issue three competition is this, or, curious photo on the right. We are assured that it wasn't a set-up; but, as before, have opted to ruin that by concealing one of the balls from your prying eyes. Put an X (or indeed a Y, we're not chromosome-centric here) where you think the ball should be, and we'll award prizes for the most appropriate answers. If you don't want to cut up your precious copy of *The Catch*, then buy another. Or even photocopy the page, idiots.

This issues winners will get a matched (not to say matchless) set of **Five Spotlight Silicon Balls**, the new model 2½" beauties. There are **two sets** on offer, one to the individual, and one to the workshop (collective entry) that sends the best answer. Now you've got something else to talk about in the pub afterwards. Closing date is March 15th. Get xxxing!



The Catch on Photographic



Competition

Wow! Brilliant!

No, I don't just mean the quality of the pics, but the fact that I can fill three pages without having to think about it. Or pay anyone...

Your response to our blatant scam was gratifying, including pictures from all over the world. In the end we decided that the boat must have taken so much setting up, it had to win - even if it was so blatantly aimed at us. Most of the winners sent in several shots as good as the

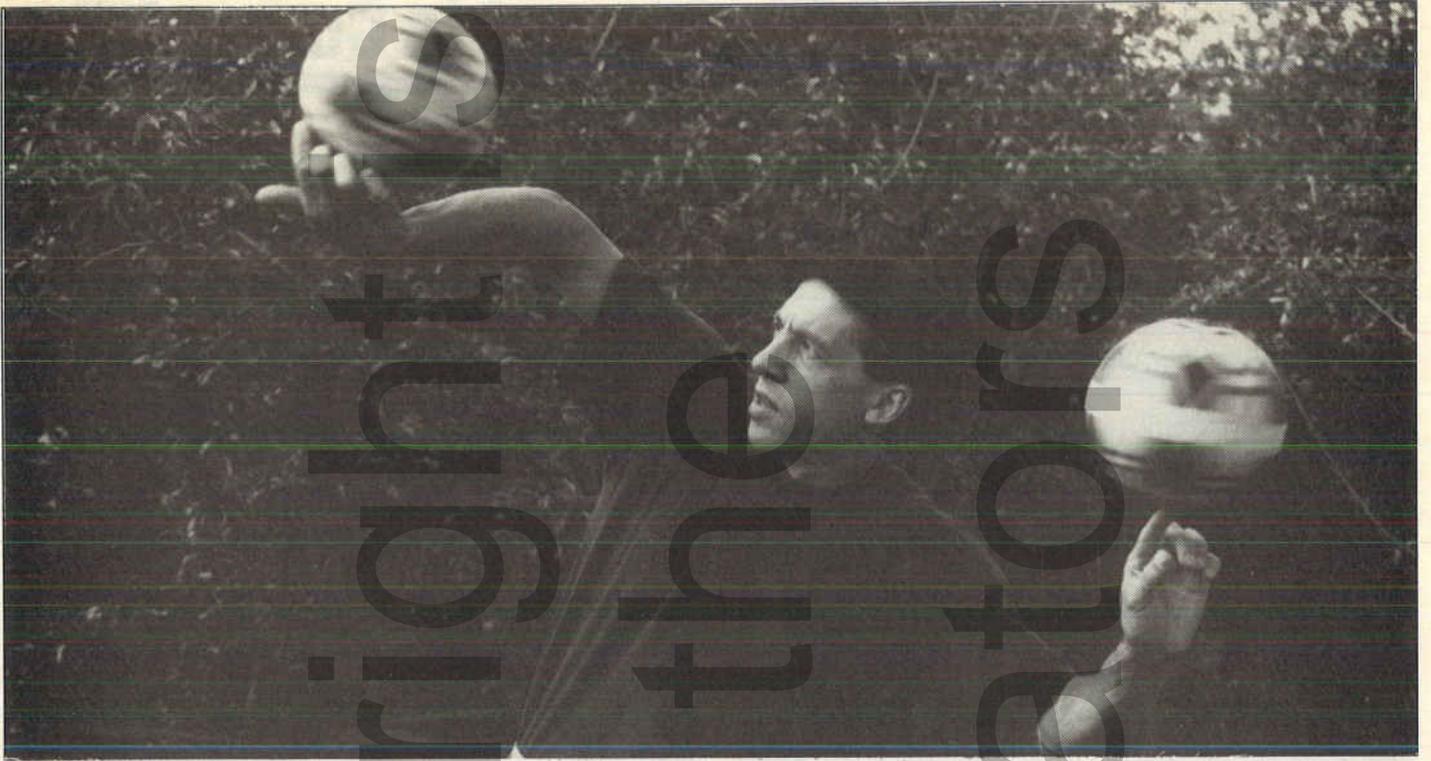
one we're printing, and probably like the others better. Hard luck. Toby & Nick win a copy of Karl-Heinz Ziethen's ace picture book 'Juggling, the art and its artists'. The rest get Catch T-Shirts which are so fab you're all going to want one when you see them so tastefully modelled.

We've printed phone numbers so if you want publicity shots taking, you know who to talk to... Commiserations and not-fair-

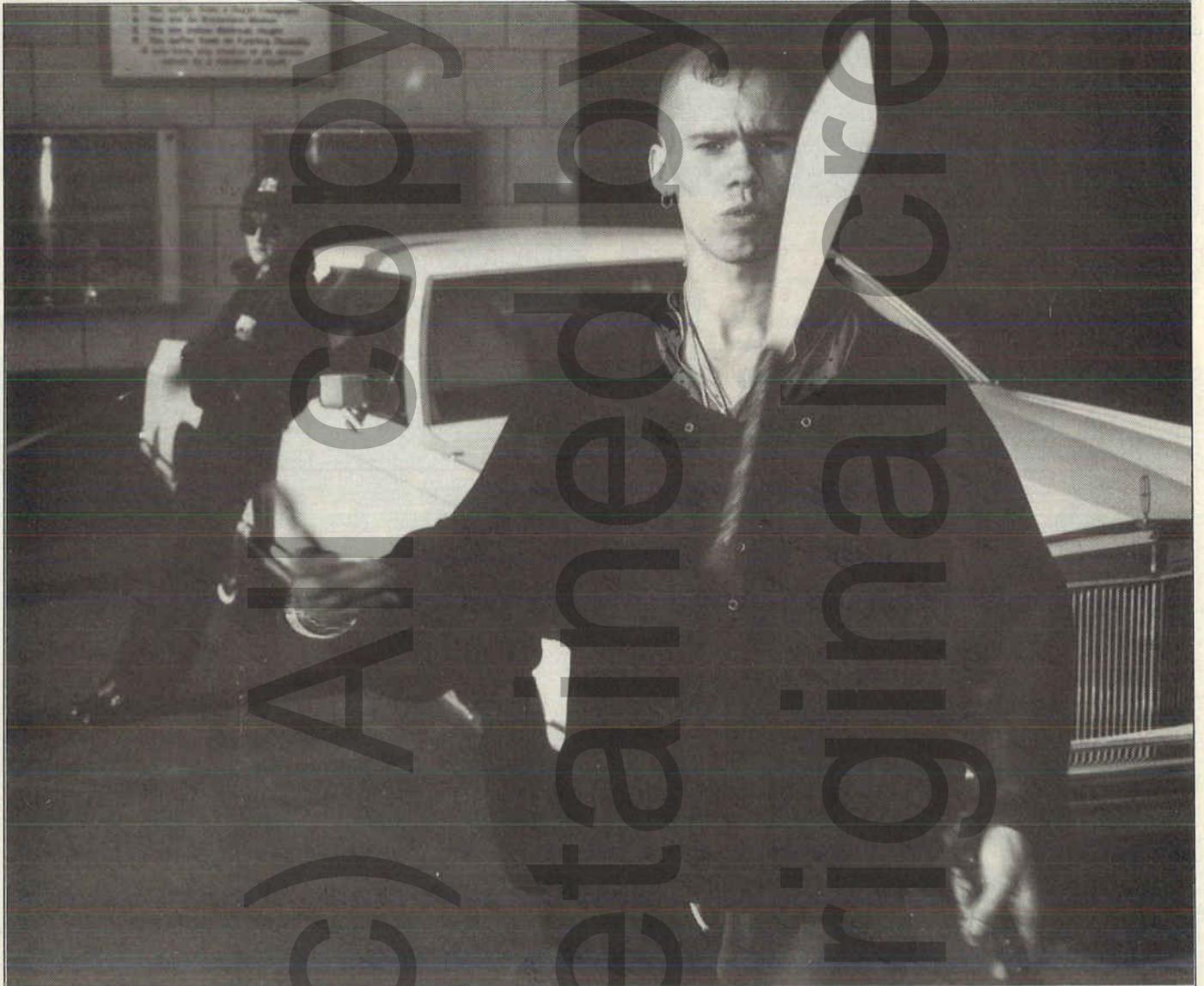
neithers to the photographers we've already used on a professional (you must be joking) basis, who we decided to disqualify on sheer whim. Hal Roberts, Adrian John, Luke Danniels, John Presley, oh, alright, and Stuart Ashman, officially-endorsed pioneers of great juggling photography, who are now joined by the following winners...

*[ABOVE] Nick Hitchcock (photography)
& Toby Shears (concept and unicycling)
Ireland (091) 90484*





(ABOVE) Vince Miles of Steppingstone Theatre - pic Linda Robson c/o 0582 570425
(BELOW) Photo: Phill Pepper 081 459 3312 - Richard (Fiasco)



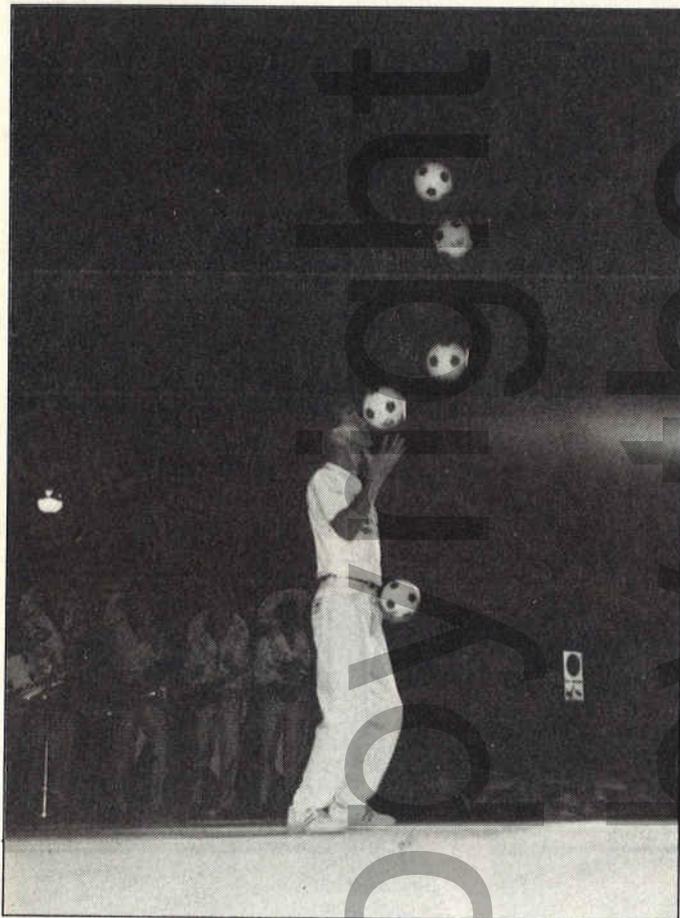
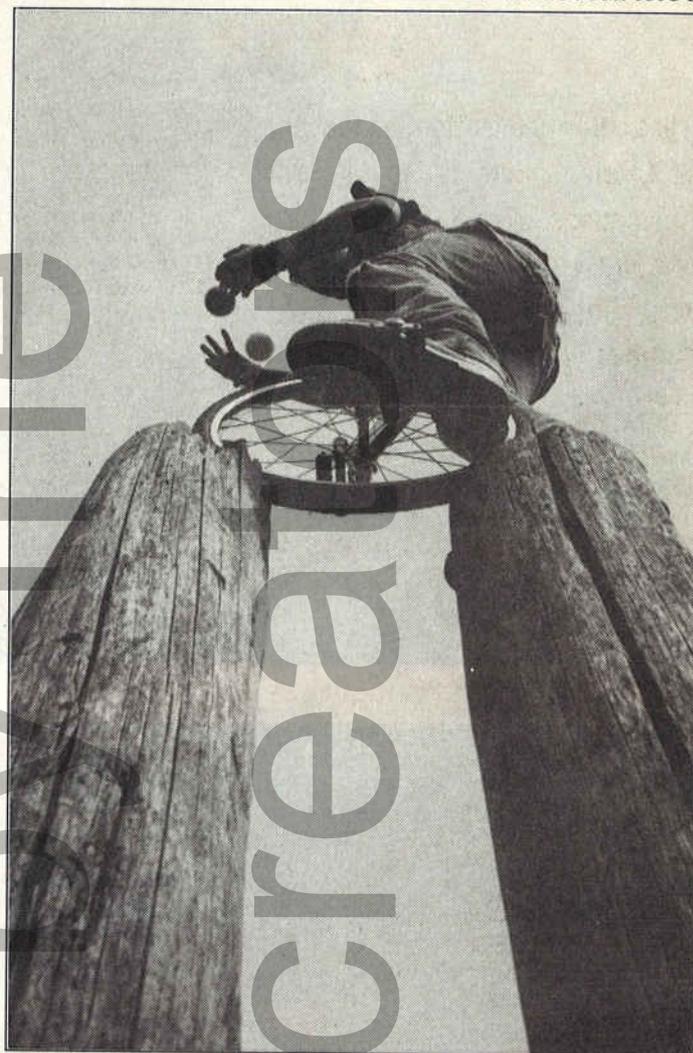


The Catch Photographic Competition

...continued

(RIGHT) This one by
Greg (Dr. Colin) 0273 813464

(BELOW) Pics by Jules,
whereabouts at present unknown



(RIGHT) Phill Pepper (Norman Normalé)
(BELOW) Pics Jules





On the convention trail

It has come to our attention that not all Catch readers go to juggling conventions. And vice versa. To remedy the first part of this unfortunate state of affairs, we asked **Claire Mop**, our correspondent with the comfy caravan and travelling fridge full of white wine and tequila, to give you a little person-to-person counselling on why you should be putting those dates in your diary right now!

Attempting a convention may seriously damage your hands, your liver, your lungs, or your sleep pattern. Not attending may make you feel worse...

An example. A man who normally juggled half an hour a day went to the nine-day Bristol convention last September... juggled eight hours a day for two days, and then left because his hands were so battered he couldn't take any more (club passing is the fastest way to get in this state). He could have stayed on and drank or smoked for consolation, if he could bear to watch hardened toughs carrying on juggling until the wee small hours without getting sucked into such madness himself. Or tried rope swinging, scarf juggling, diabolo, tight rope, anything that would give his hands a rest from the slap of clubs. It doesn't have to be like this.

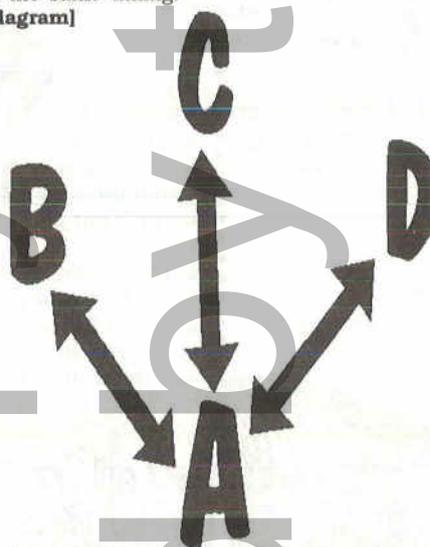
Conventions aren't necessarily an orgy of alcohol, a haze of smoke, a place where no-one sleeps, or no-one need sleep alone. It's only like that if you want it to be! (*guess how Claire likes them - d*) BUT, if you want a good night's sleep, either (a) take earplugs and sleeping pills, or (b) make sure your room or tent is in a designated "quiet area".

Families come to Conventions and are catered for to varying degrees. There should be a crèche - but check. If you want something to happen you might have to help to make it happen. This seems only reasonable, and at the risk of being serious for a moment, is something we should all think about. Don't just go to see what you can get from a convention. Think about what you could bring to it (now apply this to your whole life!).

Anyone can enjoy Conventions. Whatever your level, you will be inspired. You meet people from different areas and you'll find they have new approaches,

fresh patterns, tricks and ideas. It adds to the gene pool so we don't get inbred. I went to the one-day convention at Blandford this year, and was taught a multi-person passing pattern by someone there who had learnt it from someone who had learnt it in Georgia in what was then called Russia. Here, let me share it with you. You need four or more people in a circle. Start with two people passing with each other, and bring each person in by turn. You each do the same thing, which is pass in an "every other" pattern with each person in turn, going in a circle either clockwise or anti-clockwise. When you come round to yourself, instead of passing, do "selfs" in the same timing.

[diagram]



So: counting "selfs" from the right hand, A passes to B (fast start). Then self, pass to C, self, pass to D, self, self... (this is counting right-hand selfs only, but you are actually doing a left self too of course, as in solo juggling). This gives you time to move back to face B again for a repeat of the pattern. Got that? Now put in any "every other" tricks that you can do.

What else goes on? At risk of stating the obvious, they are great social events. I personally know "rusties" (and if you don't know or can't guess what a "rusty" is then you haven't read your Catch issue 1 page 14, and if not why not) ...where was I... oh yes, I know rusties who go to three-day conventions and juggle for three minutes. But I can assure you they still have a wonderful time. I have to admit to being rusty myself at times. At Banyoles I was helping on a stall, one of the al fresco ones lining the avenue of plane trees. Sitting there I met lots of people I'd not met before... many nameless but not faceless, and some I'd heard of but not met before. The most juggling I did was a couple of hours on the last night, in Turbonana's UV tent, having paced (not to say limited) my alcohol consumption.

How well-organised are conventions? This varies! European conventions will be flavoured by the host country. Both the ones

in Spain I've been to were laid-back affairs. In Castellar Della Frontera, South Spain, 1986, the authorities refused to believe several hundred jugglers were going to turn up. But they did, long before the toilets! Camping was basic but with views of lake and mountain... and Africa! It was more like a festival than a convention, as Castellar is an ancient (Roman) hill-top village with no halls or smooth floors... but I loved every minute of it. Banyoles, North Spain (Catalonia) 1992, had a sports stadium, but not the one they were originally offered; unshaded, it was too hot for all but the truly mad for much of the day. But you could juggle all night instead.

There will always be workshops on offer though some of the subjects won't be specified beforehand; you can't always tie a juggler down to time and space till the last minute. Usually there is something for beginners because it's less intimidating teaching beginners! The organisers have to rely on people offering to run workshops - they will be too busy tearing their hair out to do it themselves. They're a good way to get to know your neighbourly jugglers in a smaller group than a massive hall with possibly over a thousand jugglers... but that's quite a sight too! It's not just juggling either, there will be acrobatic goings on going on somewhere, sometimes trapeze instruction, always musicians, often slack or tightrope.

There will be stalls where you can browse or buy juggling equipment and related goodies. There is usually a public parade and always some sort of games afternoon with competitions in light-hearted fashion. There is always a "public" show, although there is usually little room for public once all the jugglers have filled the hall. There is usually a cabaret night or open stage as well if the event is more than a one-day convention... In fact there is always something going on.

These one-day conventions are relatively new phenomena... but I'd like to see more of them. It's a chance to visit jugglers outside your immediate area, and they are more intimate than the larger conventions. My only problem is getting up in time to drive half-way across the country and arrive before it's half-way through the afternoon.

Since conventions have grown in size there is increasing need for the smaller events to keep the "family of jugglers" feel. To my knowledge Verona (1991) was the first place equipment ever got stolen (from a stall), but this is less likely to happen in an environment where everyone can get to know everyone else. Generally you can leave your stuff lying around all day quite happily. Do, however, mark your equipment in some way - one club looks much like another, and after the big "throw up" at the end of the games it's easy to pick up the wrong one. Jugglers generally are wonderfully decent people (*you're turning into Margo again, dear!* -d), I hope it stays that way.

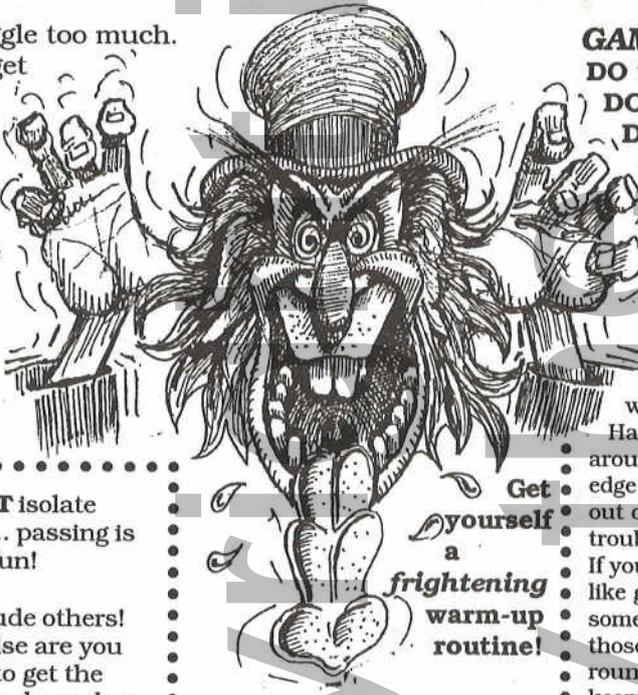
It's always something special... the energy generated by a mass of jugglers is greater than its parts, we all end up with more... So I'll see you at the next one!



CONVENTIONAL

a compendium of contradictory advice from the Catch Compañeros convention old lags club (SA JA & Ms. Mop)

DON'T juggle too much. In fact forget juggling altogether, check the cafés and bars and meet some new people.



GAMES

DO take part in the games.

DON'T expect to win.

DO cheat, it's more fun.

The only game worth taking part in (unless you're Haggis) is **GLADIATORS**.

This is how to win:-

Hang around the edge and keep out of trouble.

If you feel like going for someone, go for those hanging round the edge keeping out of trouble.

DON'T beat people about the head. They might turn nasty.

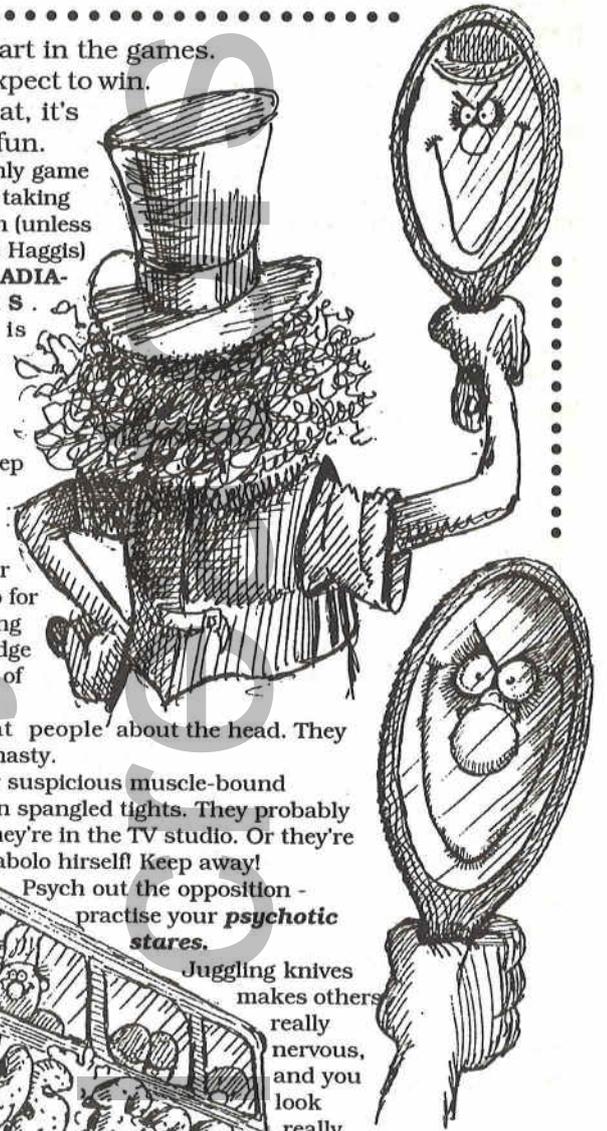
Look out for suspicious muscle-bound characters in spangled tights. They probably think they're in the TV studio. Or they're Diabolo himself! Keep away!

Psych out the opposition - practise your **psychotic stares**.

Juggling knives makes others really nervous, and you look really 'ard.

Use a diabolo - chuck it really high and garotte/whip people with the string.

If someone suggests a game of Uni - Gladiators, keep well away



DON'T isolate yourself... passing is fun!

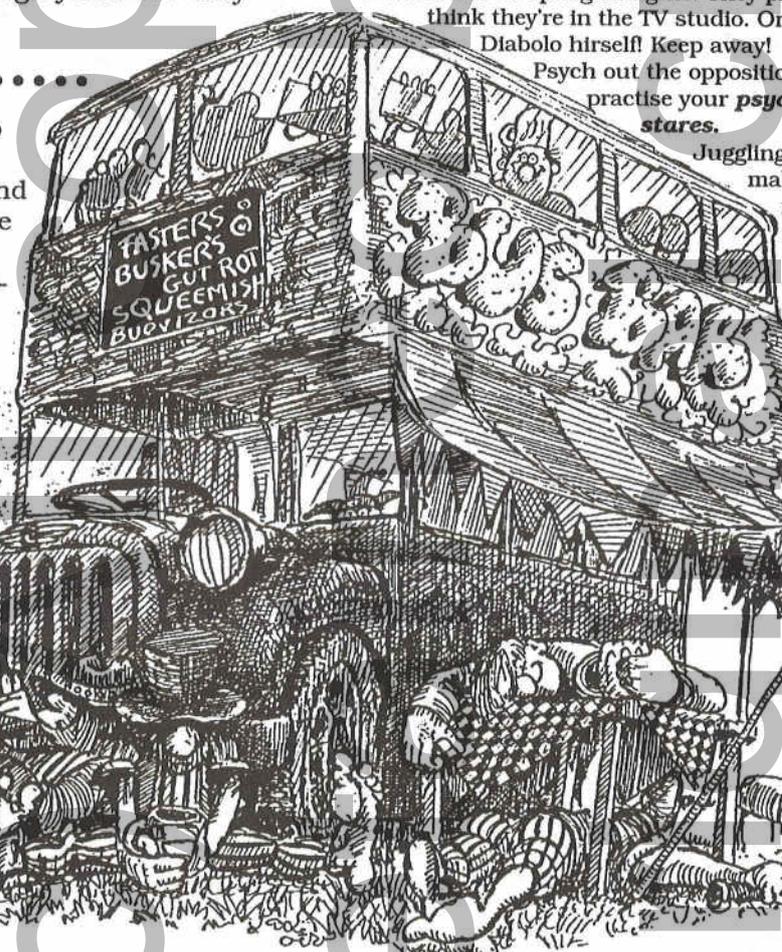
DO include others! where else are you going to get the chance to do such a big pattern?

DO r.e.s.p.e.c.t. other people's gear. Ask before you borrow anything, even though you know they aren't going to mind.

DON'T expect to be able to juggle when drunk unless that's your natural state and you're used to it. Otherwise it's frustrating.

Bottles don't make particularly well-balanced clubs.

The Bus Bar is the haunt of depraved degenerates who only get round to juggling in the middle of the night and sleep most of the day.



You are advised to make their acquaintance.

BEHAVIOUR

Cartoons by Robbie

.....
DON'T make fun of the Birmingham accent.

DON'T eat sticky food before passing clubs.

DON'T pick your nose before passing clubs.

If in doubt...

DON'T put condoms on the handles.

.....
DON'T run away to join that circus in Zagreb, no matter how good-looking the fire-eater is.

.....
REMEMBER... YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH WEARING ANYTHING! Or nothing!
DO spend all your money on the stalls that advertise in the Catch
DO have a nice time, darlings...

.....
BE NICE TO the organisers (they're the ones who have lost their voice and aren't getting paid).
BE NICE TO the people serving food.
BE NICE TO everyone, go on...

How to be nice to Convention organisers:

DO register!
DON'T lose your badge!

DO buy a Convention T-Shirt, it's going to be a collectors' piece. You mean you haven't got a Catch T-Shirt yet?

DO join in the parade - council sponsorship, etc., is usually helped by the promise of a colourful parade.

DO bring colourful outfits, musicians... get a routine together!

Renegade

- Have you the Attitude?

It grew naturally in Santa Cruz, California; eventually everyone wanted in on it. These are the events that shaped the face of Juggling as we know it. **Tom & Bob Renegade**, awesome prop makers, ageing Hippies and forefatherdudes of the Renegade stage, reveal their uncensored story to Ken Farquhar.

The birth began in 1982. The conservatives had taken over the IJA (*American/International Juggling Overlords - D*) and replaced an inexpensive, bodacious festival with a costly, structured, and competitive convention. World record challenges and performance competitions replaced the laid-back party atmosphere of previous years. And who wanted to pay \$500 to watch similar characterless Las Vegas routines and technical juggling? Neither Tom nor Bob! They dropped all association with the IJA, stopped paying subscription and festival fees, and formed Renegade - an underground movement of urban guerilla jugglers determined to free fellow enthusiasts from the restrictions imposed on them by the IJA.

An early action involved the Renegades of Gravity Performers Group taking part in the convention competitions. The aim was to offer an alternative to the slick high number tossers by injecting political humour. The Nuclear Show, highlighting the problems of Chernobyl, used clubs to represent fissionable material; the show terminated with a frenetic feeding pattern that culminated with a meltdown, loss of stage lights, and confetti fallout on an unsuspecting audience in a dark auditorium. Obviously unhappy at causing possible political controversy and perhaps the boycott of all Soviets from future meetings, the IJA tried to pin 'littering the theatre' on the Renegades. "But we couldn't have done it", declared Bob, "we were on stage!" "You can't touch it for 2000 years", chanted Tom. They were duly disqualified for not being IJA members and auditions for the competitions were implemented.

With such sanctions imposed on them, and unable to perform, Tom and Bob struck back with some alternative judging at the Las Vegas Convention. Using their extensive information network, performance particulars were revealed prior to the show. Dressed in DJs and seated at the rear of the theatre, the Renegades held up their own scorecards after each act. These included Awesome, Cool, and 2001 for the performer who used that pretentious piece from 2001 - A Space Odyssey. This left a set of bemused and annoyed IJA judges unable to share in the joke, as the attention of the audience immediately diverted to the Renegade scorecards after each set.

Trophies had been set up. When a trophy bears the name of someone either the person was great and is dead, or is dead rich and thinks he is great. When Albert Lucas introduced the Lucas Cup - to qualify one must win 3/4 of the numbers and endurance events - Renegade replied with two honorary tributes of their own. First there was the Mucas Cup, a spittoon converted into a trophy, and then the much coveted Todd Strong Ring, a golden toilet seat.

Still with no place to perform, the only option left was to create their own type of show. Recruiting from the talent on the fringes of the IJA, the Renegade Stage started when everything else finished, at midnight. The attitude was 'after hours', no rules and no audition necessary, thus creating a loose, friendly atmosphere, new concepts, original material and pure filth.

Now it's so popular an event it's held every evening during the IJA festival. The attitude crossed the big pond with visits by the founding fatherdudes to European Conventions; now most Juggling festivals throughout Europe have their own version of the Renegade stage.

Both Renegades have noticed a massive difference between performers from both continents. "Most American Jugglers have a 5-10 year skill advantage on most Europeans. The Euro-stages seem to have the following qualities. English Toilet humour, German no sense of humour, French too busy cooking, Swiss too busy cleaning props, and the Italians never seen at conventions and therefore, we assume, stealing props".

Renegade Performing Tips

- (1) The shows are often long and lame - the two seem intrinsically linked. This is the biggest mistake of performers. It is almost impossible to bomb if the show lasts 30 seconds.
- (2) "You show it you blow it." If you don't want anyone to copy your material, perform in front of the mirror.
- (3) All performers are Renegades or Triple G's (Geekie Gympie Goons) - which one are you?



The Zen of Juggling

Dave Finnigan.

RRP £6.95 (from juggling shops and bookshops) Namaste

If you have a copy of Dave's bestseller 'The Complete Juggler' for improving your skills, then you need 'The Zen of Juggling' to develop your mind. It's more than just a manual for the ageing hippy juggler; whether you're a beginner or trying to do Mills Mess with five clubs, a performer or a hobby juggler, this volume will exercise your intellect.

'The Zen...' as a juggling book is unique - it's the only book on the subject I know without diagrams or photographs - it lubricates the mind where the best pictures are found.

You will be taken to an Oriental Summer School in Taiwan. Master Huang, who is the best teacher you never had (not just the one-chapter-ahead-of-his-pupil type) tells of the nine steps to Zen Juggling, the disciplined preparation which leads to a sense of flow in which your self-consciousness disappears in the perfection of each movement. Wow! Sounds the sort of bloke you want at a workshop, eh?

Find out about your Chakras. We've all got seven of them. Know where yours are? Woo is the gardener? (who? do you mean Wu? -d) What is Dr. Chen's secret? Why not empty those spiritual and philosophical prejudices from the intellectual/verbal left side of your brain? How is that done?

It's full of gems like "if you are not dropping you are not learning". When you are learning a new trick, "go to the leading edge of your juggling ability in your mind, and place imaginary balls in motion, moving them slowly and surely along their paths. See the entire pattern from your

hands to the peaks on either side. Run this vision constantly in your mind, gradually speed up the objects, but make certain that you know where each one is at all times." Try it, it's not bad advice.

So is it a good read? Well, before I picked up the book I had decided that I wouldn't like it (*that's the open-minded approach we look for from reviewers - d*). What would the Master say about that attitude? I have heard it said many times that most jugglers are thinkers - then most jugglers should read this book.

Treat yourself to a trip to the East.
"OM"

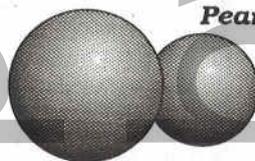
Stuart Ashman.

Juggling and Feats of Dexterity

This is a small colourful hardback of 96 pages. It's also a mystery. Is this a very old book reprinted, or a new book written in an old style? I suspect the latter. Beanbags are mentioned, which I had never heard of until the eighties, and never appeared in any of the older juggling literature. The book contains basic instructions on juggling with silks, napkins or "kerchiefs", beanbags and balls. There are feats with plates - the anonymous author says "use the servants' dishes and not the Sunday Wedgwood." There are two pages devoted to the waltzing plates alla Maskyl, and two more on spinning plates. There is also a chapter on basic hat tricks and balancing feats. The book contains photos of circus artists and magicians and has several prints. It is really a collectors item.

'Juggling and Feats of Dexterity' is published by Charles Letts & Co., available from juggling shops and bookshops, price £4.95 +p&p.

Pearse Halfpenny



The year of the Diabolo

For me 1992 was the year of the Diabolo. Two excellent books appeared: Brendan Broly's, and Diabolo Stick Grinds and Suicides by Donald Grant. These are probably the first real technical books on the diabolo since David Ward's 'The Diabolo, the game and its tricks', published in 1907. We have had to wait a long time!

Brendan Broly's book (£5.50 +p&p from all good juggling shops) will gladden the heart. Anyone who has seen Brendan perform realises here is a young man who really knows his diabolo. There are chapters on how to get started, technique, and 24 first-class tricks. Tricks like Cat's Cradle, Whip Catch, Climbing the String, all get the Broly treatment. There is also a chapter on two diabolos on the one string. Illustrations by Carina Milburn make it easy to understand. A serious performer need look no further than this one book, I heartily recommend it.

Hot on its heels comes another, on advanced techniques: Diabolo Stick Grinds and Suicides by Donald Grant (£4.50 +p&p from all Catch suppliers... er, I mean "all good juggling shops" - d). A 'grind' is a trick where the diabolo spins (or grinds) against or on the hand stick. The term 'suicide' is applied to a trick which involves letting go of the hand stick or sticks. Donald has taken two basic tricks and explored their full potential, getting together 25 tricks ranging from the skilful to the mind-boggling - the last, by Ewan Buchanan, is a truly delightful gem. It's written in a nice relaxed style with great illustrations.

The future of juggling looks great when two young and brilliant performers are prepared to share their skill and tricks with us. It is rumoured that they are both writing further books. I can't wait.

Pearse Halfpenny

The year of the Diabolo, indeed? That sounds like a good idea. Wonder if the UN will go for it... - d

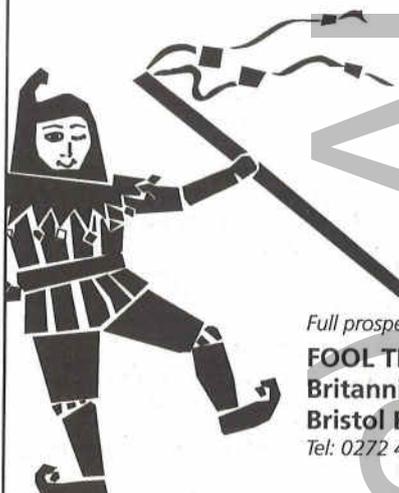
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See you at the British Convention in Birmingham



Oy Mister, one of your wheels is missing!

Choosing a new or second-hand unicycle can be a daunting task for a beginner, and often the choice is made simply by price or availability. But there are other factors to consider, as **Charlie Chucklebucket** explains.

Size and width are important... of the wheel, that is. *[tee hee - DJ]* The larger the wheel, the greater the effort to make it turn; but the smaller the wheel, the faster you need to pedal to cover the same distance. It is possible to learn on a 24" or even a 26" wheel, but beginners could find that more difficult. Most adults seem to go for 20", though children may well need something like a 16". These seem to give the best compromise between speed and effort. Thin tyres have less cohesion making them more manoeuvrable; this is important if you intend to take part in slalom racing or if you will be performing pure unicycle tricks, but learning to balance is much harder. If you intend to juggle in the saddle then the greater stability of a wider wheel will be better. Beginners should only look at standard sizes, not at midgets or giraffes; no matter how much natural balance you think you have, you are going to fall off, and crashing into the ground from the top of a giraffe is definitely not a good idea.

By far the most important decision is the choice of saddle; a lack of care can have far-reaching effects! Everybody's first exposure to unicycle saddles seems to be on the T-bar of a DM standard, probably the most basic unicycle in the world. This is a narrow metal strip with a thin layer of padding. Riding one is an emotionally moving experience that brings tears to the eyes. The problem is that none of your weight is carried by the natural padding of your backside, but

all of it on your wedding tackle. Words just cannot describe the pain, yet some people seem happy



enough to ride these for years. The T-bar is actually an integral part of the unicycle frame so it is not possible to change it.

Britain's only other budget unicycle is the Pashley, and again this has a peculiar saddle.

They seem to have gone to the other extreme by making something that is as padded as possible. The result looks like a huge rubber slug. Like the T-bar there is no definite front

or back, you can sit either way round. It is more comfortable than the T-bar but has one disadvantage - with all that rubber between your legs, your knees are forced to stick out sideways *[insert more innuendo here - DJ]*. It is impossible to get up any speed, so road racing is out; in my last race at the Weymouth Festival, I finished a magnificent last, even beaten by a seven-year-old who kept stopping the traffic by falling in front of the cars.

DM's other popular unicycle is more upmarket - the Ringmaster has a contoured saddle, shaped more like that on a bicycle, with a wide back, a narrow nose, and a lot more padding. Now, one of the first things beginners have to learn is not to drop the unicycle on the floor. The idea is, when you start to topple over, you reach between your legs and catch hold of whatever comes to hand *[joer missus - DJ]* in the case of the Ringmaster this is bound to be one of the nice catching handles attached to the front or the back. This is a very neat design, the only criticism being that the bottom of the saddle is not very well reinforced. A friend had a seat badly damaged after just one beginner made a heavy drop. Still, the Ringmaster is probably Britain's most popular make.

If you have got money to burn you should consider treating your bottom to a Sem. Sem's saddles are contoured with a wide back and a very long narrow nose; at first glance they don't look as though they could possibly be comfortable. There is no padding, just a single thin layer of material, but they seem to give support in all the right places. Unfortunately Sem have a very high price tag, making them only suitable for professionals.

The best place to see a variety of styles is of course at your local workshops or festivals. Most riders are happy to let strangers try their equipment, but do ask before just picking one up, and make sure the owner knows that you are a beginner; they should be able to advise, give you a supporting shoulder, and hopefully stop you falling off and hurting yourself or (worse still) damaging the unicycle. Do bear in mind that a quick test ride will only give you a vague idea of what the machine feels like after an hour in the saddle. Workshops are also a great place for picking up second-hand bargains, there is always someone trying to pay for an upgrade by selling their old uni.

Second-hand Unicycles should be examined for the same sort of wear and tear as a normal bike, with a couple of differences. It is unlikely that there will be much rust because unicycles don't get left chained up outside in the rain, but do check the wheel quite carefully. If the rider has done a lot of bunny hopping, bouncing up and down, or

skipping, the wheel may be bent out of shape. This is particularly true of narrow wheels. One visible sign of this is missing spokes. Make sure you check under the saddle, if there are cracks or cycle tape covering up cracks, then the saddle has probably been damaged by dropping - there is no way of telling how long it will be before it completely falls apart. Scratches and scuffs on the paintwork are not desperately important in themselves, but if there are a lot of them the owner has probably not been careful about dropping and there may well be other less obvious problems. Always insist the saddle be adjusted to the right height before you even think about buying.

Curiously, Unicycles do develop a front and back. When most riders rock, that is ride backwards and forwards on the same spot, they tend to favour one foot, putting more weight on one end of the crank shaft. In my case, I rock with my left foot at the bottom, the result is that the left cotter pin stretches and the left pedal works loose. It is easy to check for this by trying to move one pedal while holding the other. It is not really serious if there is a little bit of play, but do insist that the owner fixes it before you buy. Rocking makes the tyres wear out unevenly. The chances are there will be lots of tread but one patch will be worn bare. Move the tyre around a bit and it will last a bit longer.

Oh yes, the title... Every time you throw your leg over a unicycle some punter will insist on cracking a line like "Someone's pinched your wheel!" or the old favourite "Couldn't you afford a proper bike?" Lesson Number Two for beginners is how to smile and pretend you are hearing all this for the first time!

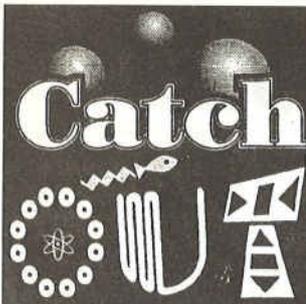
Aunt Augusta, the Catch's Ecstasy Aunt, gets her pennyworth in - My dear, Freud would have had such fun with you, all this castration anxiety... Women do ride Unis too, you know. A bit of a racer, are we? It's not what you've got between your legs but what you do with it that counts.

Diabolo Says - These asides are getting a little silly. Those of you who have got beyond that stage should turn to "Catch This" and join a Uni hockey game.

First steps on a uni (by Stuart A)

- [1] Adjust Uni to correct height - when the pedal is at its lowest point your leg should be slightly bent.
- [2] Sit well into the saddle
- [3] Keep your back straight
- [4] Look up
- [5] Focus on a point on the horizon
- [6] Don't put too much pressure on the pedals
- [7] When you fall off both backwards and forwards you are making progress!

The other half? The other wheel? Theresa Abrahams. Pic by S.A.



The Jim Rose Circus Side Show

A detailed recollection by Mavis Enderby

The only thing I ever saw at the side of a Circus in this country was caravans. In the United States they have shows at the side of their circuses. God bless America. Jim Rose is touring the world. He has ripped his Circus sideshow away from the side of the circus. Either that, or the circus which he sided decided to leave him sleeping and sod off.

The closest England gets to anything resembling it is between the candy-floss sellers and coconut shies of the big travelling fairs; and, to a lesser extent, in some South London pubs. Hull used to have Scotland's Tallest Man, he wore a kilt, that's how you could tell which one he was. On the same bill was a sheep with five legs. Scotland's tallest sheep. And there was a pig with two heads in a jar. It was born on a farm in Dundee. The man introduced it as the only pig with two heads born inside Scotland under six feet tall ever to visit Hull. Outside one Freak Tent at Hull a sign promised sights that would revolt and amaze. It actually advised those of a nervous disposition not to enter, warning of horrors such as a woman with a horse's body, a child with a lizards skin, and a hippy with three balls. Some years ago I begged Granny to let me see the freaks, but she refused, said it would give me nightmares. She tried to drag me away towards the carousel but she was old and frail. I had just turned twenty, and was much stronger. After a long struggle I was able to break out of her half-nelson and got her with the Boston Crab. I took the contents of her purse and paid for my entry into the Freak Tent with a tiny, non-functioning model of an invisible hearing-aid. Inside the tent were nothing but photographs, mostly of Bridlington sea-front. A sign underneath claimed they were all taken by a man with three knee-caps.

But I digress.

Jim Rose bounded onto the stage with All-American fervour, looking like the love-child of Tom Waits and sounding like Barnum on Benzedrine. Like the fairground barkers of old, he called the crowd to attention, using charm, charisma, and a PA the size of Imelda Marcos' shoe-tree. He screeched a frenzied commentary throughout; I was standing too close to the speakers, and got involved with trying to stem the flow of blood from my ears, so missed most of the first act. I think he bent six-inch nails with his eyeballs, or it could have been his teeth, he bent his teeth with his eyeballs, something like that. By the time I'd moved nearer the back of the room he'd buggered off and been replaced by Mr Lifto. "Lifto! Lifto! Lifto!" chanted Jim incessantly. Mr

Lifto looked like a spider with malnutrition and not enough legs. He had rings through his ear-lobes from which he dangled electric irons. He had rings through his nipples from which he dangled electric irons. And he had a ring through the end of his penis from which he dangled more electric irons. I have never seen a man with so many electric irons dangling from his body. It made me wonder how come the robe they placed around him at the end of his act was so creased. Jim Rose said he met Mr Lifto in a bar. It's a good job he didn't meet him in Rumbelows.

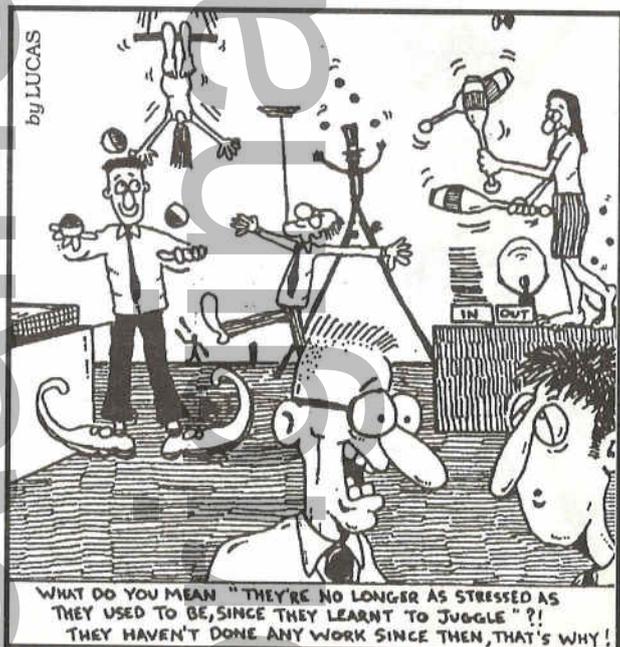
Next on was the Torture King, who Jim said he met in a trash-can. I think that's American for dustbin. And Torture King is American for a bloke that sticks pins through himself. Everywhere Mr Lifto hung an iron, the Torture King stuck a pin. And Jim Rose loved it, falling just short of publicly masturbating, he lay prostrate at Torture King's feet and thanked him profusely for his pain. Someone in the audience fainted. It could have been the multitude of steel pins that visibly pierced Torture King's chest, thighs and face, or it could have been the realisation that they just paid nine quid to get in. Either way, Jim spotted them immediately, even before they fell over. The person who fainted was tall and green with huge leaves and carried a small piece of pointed plastic on which was a photo of himself and advice on how best to keep him happy. I can't be certain, but I think it may have been a plant.

Torture King left the stage by a staircase of razor-sharp swords, and then came the horror of the interval, battling through the crusties at the bar to buy over-priced beer. The second half began with Jim escaping from a straitjacket, something it looked like he'd done often, probably throughout late adolescence. Then came 'Slug'. Slug, up until now, had been sitting on one side of the stage providing incidental music with a keyboard. He ate things, insects mostly, and I think a 60 watt bulb. Having seen Mr Lifto, I wouldn't have been surprised if Slug had shoved a four-foot fluorescent strip-light up his arse, wired his bollocks up to a battery, and sat in the woods at night-time eating everything that landed on him.

The last act turned out to be the first act, just like in the Bible. The eyeball bender was back, this time forcing things up his nose. A long tube, right up his nostril and down into his stomach. Jim Rose, always on hand, fitted a funnel to the visible end of the tube and poured beer down it. Lots of

other stuff went in there too. Can't remember what. I feel sick. It was all forced down the tube with a huge syringe-type thingy that looked like it had been designed to do exactly what it was doing. I can't go on. He pulled the tube out of his left nostril and shoved it back down his right nostril. And then, like a suffragette in rewind, they used the huge syringe-type thingy to suck it all out again. Jim Rose asked for volunteers, and suddenly there was a queue of six people (sick people? - d). They climbed up the stairs and stood in a line in the middle of the stage, like a hedge. The green gunk in the huge syringe-type thingy was decanted into glasses and the multi-limbed shrubbybery drank it. The only bit of the finale I heard was what filtered through to the Gents (Don't worry, folks. Mavis is not like other women - d). It's difficult to hear things when you're in a toilet (and I use that preposition in its fullest sense), especially with your head up around the U-bend. As far as I could gather Jim Rose finished the show himself by lying face-down in a pile of broken glass and inviting people to come and stand on the back of his head. As I knelt above the bowl checking my vomit for vital organs I could hear Jim Rose rasping on about T-shirts, so much so you might have believed the while evening had been leading up to just this moment. Tonight was the last night of their world tour (apart from the rest of it), everything had to go. Me included. So I did.

I walked down the street with a friend, and we talked about all the bits we knew for almost certain maybe could have been definitely fake, probably. If you ever get the chance, go see. I refuse to get Barry Norman about it all. Don't blame me if it makes you ill. And don't buy a T-shirt - wait until someone faints and steal theirs.



'The Pack'

- Jon Durham, Darren Hoskins, Rod Laver, Anna Mearns.

Fool Space, Bristol

They're young, highly skilled, attractive, very professional performers. Enough to make you s... sit up and really enjoy the show! Possibly the best to come out of Fooltime so far; they must be good - Paul Daniels gave them star billing on his show. Rod and Jon have been the envy of many jugglers for some time, it's refreshing to see great skill combined with excellent performance techniques. Jon and Anna have developed a stunning trapeze routine and they only started two years ago. Anna's range of characters is also impressive and she has a flair for comedy. She and Jon have been working in traditional circus, Gandey's. "We found Philip Gandey easy to work with, very straight with us," she says, "but we had a few qualms over the treatment of the Moroccan troupe. They were quite happy earning what to them was a fortune, but it made us uneasy. We didn't really get involved with the animals..." Jon puts in - "...except when they escaped. There were bears, dogs and elephants - the bears quite often ambled off looking for popcorn..."

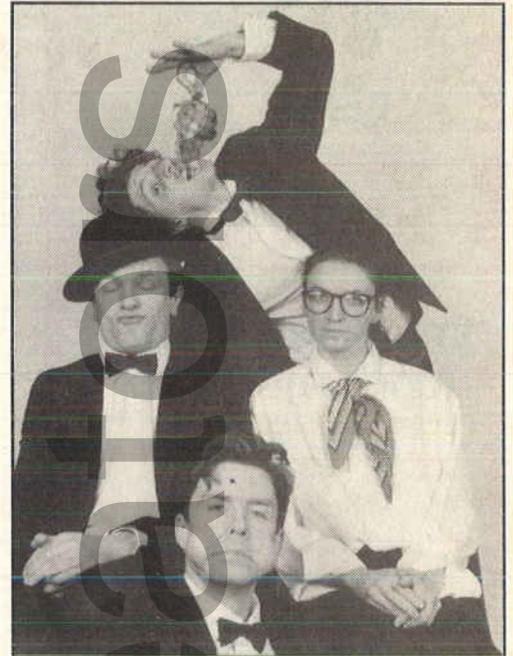
While not their chosen direction, this has undoubtedly tightened up their show skills and given them confidence as only regular (even repetitive) performance can do. "We'd love to put on a show with the four of us on a regular basis. We're looking for funding - any offers?" They reached the finals of the Belgian Circus Festival, 'La Piste Des Espoirs', in Jan/Feb '92 and came away with the prize of honour. Not bad for beginners... And they were selected for the 'Cirque De Demain'. As we've said before, circus is taken so much more seriously on the continent.

Rod showed us another of his skills in the show - juggling ping-pong balls in one's mouth, very difficult and quite revolting. As he says, "people always take notice!" Darren has swapped farm work for the stage; he used to do trapeze but confesses "Anna and Jon were much better than I so I stood down!" Neither does he juggle, BUT he is a very good comic actor. His portrayal of 'General Alert', the familiar retired Army buffoon, was brilliant. It's risky playing such a

well-used character, but he succeeded.

Music came from James Brommage, who is usually seen juggling and/or playing Frank Spencer - he too, it seems, is multi-talented. Personally I detest electronic music... but James used its versatility to great effect, mixing the pre-recorded with his own playing. This has both advantages - the ability to react musically to events on the stage, and pre-recorded material for set pieces.

The show itself was pleasantly concise! There was little padding, and a vast amount of skill packed (poor pun alert - d) into the hour. It was set, very loosely, in a hotel. The 'waiter' hung

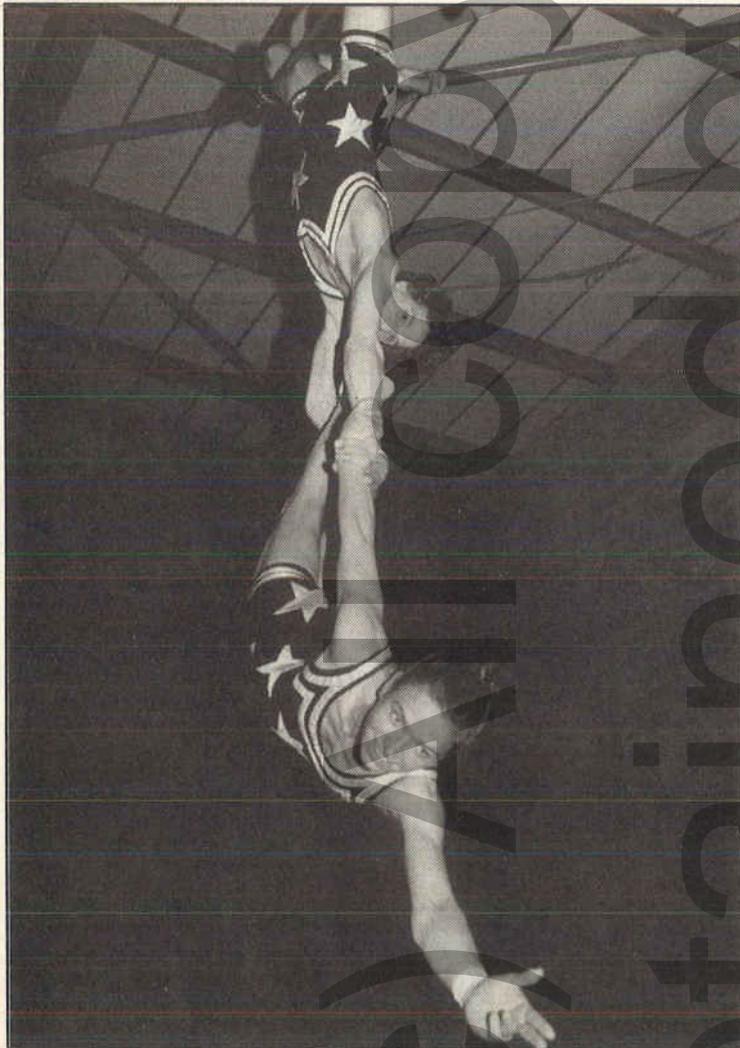
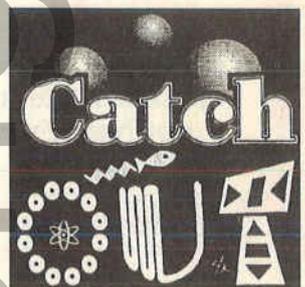


Clock-wise from front Rod, Darren, Jon, Anne

around, literally, on the trapeze collecting orders, the first guest arrived on stilts; not a snappy opening but different and interesting enough to get the audience's attention. There were some bits that didn't quite work - only a few! - but the rest was so good that we all came away with the feeling of having seen something special. Anna's charlady foil to Darren's General, the superbly catty leader of the sexual awareness group, Rod and Jon sharing three clubs with incredible smoothness, it looked so easy. The inventive use of four between two people, seven clubs on singles, doubles, and triple. But the best bit for me was to see them go straight into eight clubs, with no preparation, no "okay, here comes a tricky bit" (obviously isn't for them! -d), they just sent the clubs up without hesitation, in a space hardly big enough, into a perfect pattern. They did nine too, in case we had any doubt about their expertise.

Anna and Jon ended the show with their spectacular trapeze (I'm running out of superlatives). Perfectly choreographed, excellent choice of music, great costumes (as there were throughout the show), technically sound, artistically spot on... I give up. Go see them for yourselves.

Pippa Tee



It's the Flying Squad! Pics by Karmina Walton (0272) 541137

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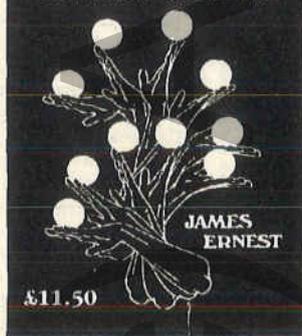
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Ra Ra Zoo present:-

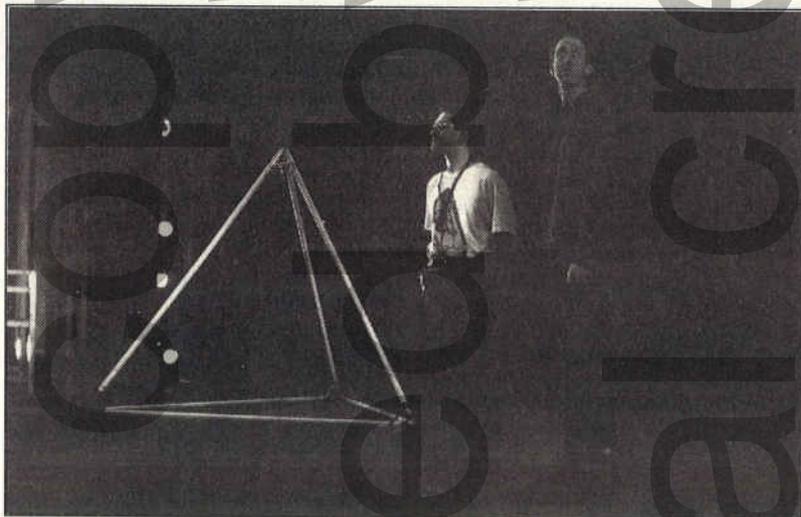
Knowing the "old" Zoo shows I went along to see 'Gravity Swing' with high expectations (a quick thankyou to WoMaD for letting me in - and good luck for a revival...). Everyone seeing the show earlier in the year had enthused - "It's brilliant - amazing juggling - a bit arty but very good." In Bath, however, two performers and the musician had left, and one replacement, Lucy Allen, had been in the show for less than a month. Perhaps it's not surprising, then, that it fell flat. The preceding act had been an energetic African tumbling troupe, after which the much more controlled acro-balances of Jeremy Robins and the rest could not arouse the same enthusiastic response. Chris Cresswell had some funny if predictable patter, Kati Ylä-Hokkala showed off her rhythmic gymnast training to good advantage, and Lyndsey Butcher worked hard to keep everything together. But the show was full of symbols, which I spent much effort on working out, only to discover that this neither entertained or helped me with the rest. The pace dragged, "art" occasionally failed and became embarrassment, humour was distinctly lacking. Technical ability is wasted if it is not entertaining.

Given the problems attached to that particular show, I thought I'd go to Gloucester to see the latest, 'Cabinet of Curiosities'. Lindsey, Chris and Jeremy were performing with Nigel Warrack as both performer and musician. It's said that if the beginning and the end of a show work, then what happens in between is less important... How can I put this kindly? The start was controlled acrobatic which while technically perfect (as were all the skills), failed to enthuse. The end was so abrupt that we had to be told the show was over. The theme was a trip down memory lane through the curios of past shows. For me this was a dreadful mistake! The only reason for re-doing a routine is if you do it better - or you can't think of anything else... Maybe having experimented with many new ideas, the theory was to return to something tried and tested. Maybe now they have worked all the old stuff out of their system... let's see what original material they come up with.

If you had never seen Ra Ra Zoo, there was much to enjoy. Lindsay and Jeremy showed

off their strength with impressive balancing, they were joined on the triple trapeze by Nigel for an entertaining and skilled routine with a strong finish. Lindsay's pas de deux was excellent, Chris linked all the sections with benign absent-mindedness, and Nigel showed great musical variety though he was somewhat heavy-handed with the volume. The talking chair had potential, an upside-down Irish Jig got a laugh and the fire section, though simple, was faultless.

What the show lacked was zest. It didn't inspire, no spark. The lack of costume interest or clear background set didn't help - nothing to make the performers stand out. But with all the talent, it should have worked. The lederhosen-style welly dance should have provoked laughter and appreciation for the superb choreography, slick performance and total idiocy of concept. It didn't. Why? There was a documentary recently on comedy - but it applies to all entertainment; Joan Rivers said that when a comedian stops considering every nuance of every word and action, and starts believing that he has worked out how to be funny, that is when his career ends. That there is never a point when he can afford to ride on his past achievements, but must always be working to please the audience. Afresh. The technical skills are there, the hours of rehearsal are evident, but the zest for performing is not shining through.



Ra Ra Zoo - past and future

When the Zoo began their career, nine years ago, they introduced a new art form to British audiences - Circus Theatre. Taking the circus skills of juggling, trapeze, acrobatics and the informal comedy from street shows and festivals, they wove them into a theatrical musical setting. The shows had brilliant interaction between performer characters, contrasts of comedy and skill, pace - and the vital ingredient, sparkle.

They started as a small touring company working mainly overseas, partly from choice but also from lack of backing. Dave Spathaky (artistic director and co-founder), relates, "In 1988 after a 18 month tour, we realised we'd been in England for only two weeks... The Arts Council approached us just as we were thinking we should be working more in this country. They encouraged us to apply for a

medium size group tour, and we did the first Australian tour." The Zoo seems to have been to all known parts of the world and a few unknown ones too. The Arts Council have helped them cover much of Britain as well, but "has not responded to the last four or five applications. We are moving back to the original format of a small touring company. This will mean working abroad more as it's hard to get high enough fees in this country to operate commercially. Of course it's sad to lose the money, but not the red tape, sitting in meetings etc. It is nicer to say "This is the show, this is what it costs, do you want it?"

The Question is, "which show?" There have been many changes of personnel - finally this year none of the original members remain. Ra Ra Zoo is now also an umbrella organisation for several acts involving ex-Zoo performers, Dave, after two-and-a-half years absence due to injury, is touring with a new solo show; Sue Broadway, co-founder like Dave, left the main group to explore working with an all-women group and is currently the artistic director for Circus Oz in Australia. This lasts six months and she will return to work with the Chinese Opera project, to be premiered in Leeds, following the 1992 workshops with Liu Fu-Sheng and Rachel Henson.

Judy Pascoe will be taking her solo show on the road - "It's basically storytelling of her time in Africa, but she does three eggs on a chopstick (!) so it counts as Circus Theatre." Mark Digby and Ali Houlibeq who were in 'Stop Laughing' will be touring with Le La Les. Sean Gandini and Kati Ylä-Hokkala have a forty minute dance/juggling piece which they are looking to tour with a contemporary Dance group. Sean left the Zoo half way through the 'Gravity Swing' run last year, as too did Jackie, Sylum and Merlin the musician... which perhaps explains the mixed reviews.

Is the Zoo coping with all the changes? Dave again, in positive mood - "What is Circus-Theatre anyway? We keep trying new ideas, some of them work better than others.

'Angels and Amazons' (1992's all-women show) had reviews ranging from "brilliant" to "dreadful". The response to 'Gravity Swing' was mostly good, but it went through a bad patch. The show went to the States twice last year, and has been booked for a two-month tour in '93, so on balance (*haha - D*) we must be doing the right things." There were moments when it seemed the Zoo might fold, the recession, Arts Council attitude, Dave's injury and Sue's absence all contributing to the feeling of disintegration. But the new acts regenerated enthusiasm and the bookings are still coming in. "Wir müssen noch Chaos in uns haben, um einen tanzenden Stern zu gebären." - "We must still have Chaos within us to give birth to a dancing star" (*Netzsche*) - the spirit must never grow hard but remain creative. Here's hoping that the spirit of Ra Ra Zoo will prosper!

Kate Coles

See what she's written? Ra Ra Zoo in rehearsal. Pic by John Presley (0494) 728270



BJF

The first 'European' Convention was attended by half-a-dozen jugglers. About 1200 registered for last year's European, and 2000 participated at the '92 British Convention. Some years ago a decision was taken to continue with the European Convention despite the (as we then thought!) impossibly large numbers and attendant difficulties. We felt, however, that one major event was still desirable, where jugglers could keep in contact with far-flung friends. It was anticipated that individual countries would hold their own meetings, but the number of small events springing up all round Europe is still astounding. Apparently jugglers can't resist the opportunity to gather together and throw things... The smaller conventions allow new friends to be made and tricks exchanged in a relaxed setting. The larger events show what can be achieved by the "seriously dedicated" jugglers, and provide enough inspiration to keep most of us busy for the next 12 months.

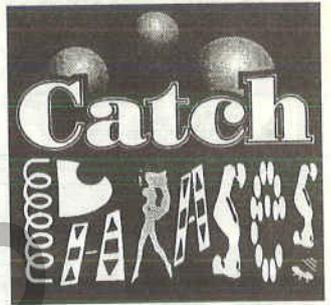
All conventions need to be successful. To further this, and curb moves towards commercialisation, the BJJ was set up, as a mainly advisory body. Assuming that the basic organisation has been thought out, what then makes a convention work? It's always such a gamble! The organiser has no idea whether 500 or 2000 will turn up, so if you have a large hall it could feel empty and "cold". Hire a smaller hall and it could be so crowded it feels like a rugby scrum in a sauna. It's worth remembering that one or two smaller spaces allow people to feel together even when not many have turned up, and helps the show audience to be grouped together, which helps the show. It's also good to have a smaller space for workshops, so the tutor can be heard! At least after Coventry I hope adequate sign-posting will be high on the list of

priorities. And just for a change it would be nice to have good, reasonably priced food, suitable for children as well, without having to wait for up to an hour... This is a nut that few conventions have cracked (*'cos few have experienced outside caterers - D*).

Of last year's other events, the East Midlands Convention in Corby gave an excellent demonstration of how to put on a show; full of variety, with a great band, and very smooth organisation, despite problems that the audience - rightly - was unaware of. The Channel Islands convention had the advantage of an idyllic setting (yes, the look of a place does matter!). Jackie was fortunate enough to attend and sent back glowing reports of the Islanders' hospitality, clean beaches, and non-stop partying. And while we can't all emulate the scenery, there are some useful points to note. Firstly it really helps if the local people actually want a large number of noisy jugglers descending on them, and (preferably) would like to get involved. Secondly every convention can and should be different, using local facilities to set the style. And, thirdly, the prime objective is for the jugglers to have fun!

Jackie also wrote to us about the "Initiation" of actually getting to the venue - apparently many asked for window seats on the 'plane, only to find that there were only window seats in "a plane that looked like a 2CV with wings" (*tee hee - airsick acrobats! - D*). This shared experience no doubt contributed to the closeness of the convention-goers and their subsequent enjoyment. The European Conventions used to have the same feel, jugglers meeting up at the ports, and a feeling that the party had already begun. How about a Magical Mystery Convention? Everyone has to get on the Convention Special, destination unknown, where the skies are blue and the cafes have no queues...

Pippa Tee.



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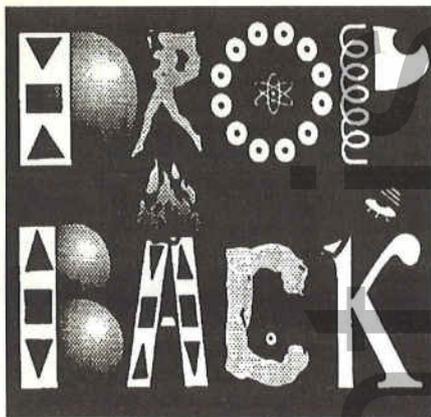
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Greetings from the Colonies

I recently received my first copy of The Catch. There has been a great deal of "talk" over the E-Mail network regarding it. I also received a few letters from people in the IJA commenting on how much they enjoyed your magazine.

I am very pleased that juggl2ing in Britain has grown to such an extent. On behalf of the International Juggling Association and its over 3000 members I would like to congratulate the British Juggling Foundation, the editors and all readers of The Catch; and encourage all jugglers to support them and become subscribers. It is through publications such as yours, and groups such as the BJF, EJA and the IJA that we can continue to promote the art/sport of juggling to the people of the world. I hope that through publications such as The Catch, Kaskade, Jugglers' World and the many smaller local publications, interest in juggling will prosper in 1993 and in the future.

Perry Rubinfeld, Winnipeg, Canada.
Chairman of the Board, International Jugglers' Association.

We saw your ad for The Catch in Kaskade. Sounds interesting, particularly the name of your what's on guide. CATCH THIS also happens to be the name of our entertainment business here in South-west Florida...

Terry Hurd, Joel Poppert,
8200 Matanzas Road, Fort Myers, Florida, 33912.

Of course I want to subscribe for life! But accept a year for now... Since kicking off in 1977, moving here in 1985, I still haven't stopped setting up circuses, teaching, performing, etc., tho' I'm increasingly calling myself a consultant now - so I can charge more! 'The Circus Shop' is my latest venture, and as in England trends are set in the west. Check Perth on the map. That's where we are, between Madagascar and the Nullarbar Desert.

All best wishes to all friends.
Reg Bolton
Mount Lawley, West Australia

[Reg, as if you didn't know, is the author of "Circus in a Suitcase" and "New Circus", a pair of influential books we'd recommend to anyone. We're like that. We get all pally when compliments are being handed out - DJ]

a true story

During the IRA bombardment of Manchester, the Mushy Peas were evacuated from their shop, shunted around town by the Police, returned to the shop and found a local customer who had braved bombs, defied the forces of Law & Order (Laura Norder), cycled through road blocks, and all because... they had heard the new issue of The Catch was out. Not only is it worth £1.50, it's also worth risking life and limb for! (?)

Mushy Peas juggling shop, Manchester.

More on juggling injuries

I feel impelled to write to warn your readers of the most dangerous piece of juggling equipment available to the public. Forget torches, knives, sickles, chainsaws etc. The item I refer to is the scarf! After trying all the above with no problem I then demonstrated this vicious piece of equipment at a workshop for beginners.

Picture it - three scarves in columns, the intention is to throw a high one in the middle keeping it in the air with well-aimed gusts of breath. Up goes the high middle throw, the back starts to arch, the head starts to crane back looking up, then CRACK!! The back regains its posture - the neck doesn't. Let this serve as a warning to all. It's very difficult to drive when all you can see is through the sun roof.

How about this idea for conventions - beginners workshops especially for juggling widows/widowers and families. **[should think it's the last thing they'd want, actually - DJ]**

Phil Stickings, Ixworth, Bury St. Edmunds.

I have just read issue 2 and enjoyed it thoroughly. I especially liked the article on page 25!

With reference to books with circus themes, Angela Carter's novel is called "Nights at the Circus", and I thoroughly recommend "The Catch Trap" by Marion Zimmer Bradley. The book focuses on a young lad who joins a flying act. Read it!

Tony, Lazy Daze, The Circus Factory, Hebden Bridge.

Write to **Diabolo** Catch's Cradle, c/o Moorledge Farm Cottage, Knowle Hill, Chew Magna, Bristol BS18 8TL

Attention All Jugglers! Hands up who loves juggling! Hands up who thinks animal experiments are wrong! How many of you have ever really associated these two questions together? Probably not many of you as until recently they haven't had anything in common. Well now they do.

Many of you will have been juggling for quite a while now, and will remember when juggling wasn't the big commercial enterprise it is steadily becoming. Don't get me wrong, I am really pleased to see juggling become more accessible to everyone, it has so much to offer to all, it's just the way it's being done. As far as most novice (and some not so novice) jugglers are concerned, the whole British juggling scene completely revolves around one company - More Balls Than Most. This takes me back to my reason for writing this letter. More Balls Than Most are that link between jugglers and vivisection (animal experimentation). Confused? Then let me explain.

Boots, the high-street chemist, are responsible for a large proportion of animal testing that goes on in Britain. These experiments are barbaric and extremely outdated. The animals involved, often Beagle dogs, undergo extreme pain and discomfort during their sad and short lives. Boots' petty signs in their shops, "None of our cosmetics/toiletries are tested on animals" are an absolute lie! They don't personally test on animals, they just pay other companies to do it for them! If you are in any doubt about this then please contact NAVS (National Anti-Vivisection Society Ltd., 'Ravenside', 261 Goldhawk Road, London W12 9PE), who will be happy to give you the full details.

More Balls Than Most, to some, the main image of British juggling, who "love" juggling and are in no way "in it for the money", now supply most main branches of Boots with their juggling balls! Great! In their aim to flood Britain with their balls, and if possible along the way put as many small juggling shops and market stalls out of business as they can, they are lining the pockets of a band of animal killers! This is disgusting! Is this really what all you thinking

eating the apple plus...

After exhausting research and scrutiny, these are the results of our "Why Bother?" guide to juggling products.

Marks out of 10 >>>> We were disappointed with the watermelon results after high hopes following the visibility test - the durability result was influenced by an unfortunate early drop. The citrus fruits were also lower than expected, falling down in the performance trial with a little too much zest (groan). The Golden Delicious led to a tasteless performance. **(not as bad as these puns surely?)**

	Performance	Visibility	Durability	Cost
Golden Delicious	4	3	3	9
Gala	6	6	5	5
Granny Smith	5	5	8	4
Satsuma	2	7	3	9
Jaffa	3	9	8	3
Lemon	3	8	9	3
Honeydew Melon	2	6	3	2
Watermelon	1	9	1	1





Jugglers out there want?

So, hands up who loves juggling! Hands up who thinks animal experiments are wrong! Hands up who supports More Balls Than Most! They can't deny this one, it is there for all to see! OK Adam and Charlie, if you didn't realise this before, then you do now - prove you are in it for the love of juggling and not just the profit - Get your balls out of Boots - or suffer the consequences!

Come on you jugglers, it's up to you! Do something about this now!

Yours with great hope

Luisa Bond - Juggler and Animal Rights Campaigner.

Diabolo sez-
Duck! Broadside coming your way! Luisa wrote to us before Christmas, but didn't make it in time for Issue 2, which is a shame in a way 'cos that's the period of greatest sales among the unconverted public, and the best time to campaign... We edited her letter a little, to excise a reference to a named MBTM associate (who has a big mouth but isn't really a baddy) that we didn't think was defensible. But since the letter as a whole addresses at least one important issue, we felt we had to run it. I hope it stimulates debate not just on the Vivisection issues, but also on the problems of reconciling the idealisms and businesses at the heart of our little scene, see also article upfront on the Juggling Trade Federation and watch their progress. But on the other hand, since Luisa's letter constituted an outright attack on a particular organisation, viz. More Balls Than Most, we thought it was also only fair to approach them for their comment, which follows -

Thank you for bringing to our attention this letter and specifically this issue.

We abhor vivisection and don't in any way want to support it. When taking on customers we weigh up lots of different issues, and there are thousands, and in truth our decision to run with Boots was because our contact with them showed these individuals to be good people. The propagation of juggling would be served well by them and juggling would be brought to people

that might otherwise never come across it.

More Balls Than Most would want to support an anti-vivisection campaign but how? We tend to support charities that specialise in their field - this year it's 'Breakthrough' for breast cancer - because they know how to approach the problem most effectively. Could MBTM have created a publicity whirl for the benefit of the cause by refusing to supply Boots? - we are not sure. Nor did we know enough to do the subject justice. Other issues have to be balanced with it. We have been able to reach countless people through Boots. Experience tells us that the peaceful energy that accompanies juggling will do more good for the world than harm.

We're told that we are the largest juggling company in the UK. What has accompanied this profile to date has been some bitterness and rumour. It really hurts. It's good to face issues like this one - so long as the background to the issue is viewed in a fair light. We don't want to operate in a vacuum. We wish to direct the positive energy that exists within our company into the juggling community - it explains our new cabaret and workshop space. We are not anonymous business people. We are people who are trying to offer support to this amazing phenomenon that is occurring in the British juggling scene.

Jugglers are thinkers, someone said...

I have noticed lots of people borrowing my Catch. Don't they realise they should support a new publication and buy it for themselves. I don't lend mine to anybody - even the other people in the Catch office.

Name & Address supplied.

You can buy scarves and hats in juggling shops, but not gloves. Is there a good reason for this? Can you tell me where I can buy gloves?

Not one bean bag I have ever bought ever had any beans in it. Isn't this against the trades descriptions act?

Lynne Seed, Haricot.

Re-cycling

(nothing to do with unicycling - for a change) see **dropback lines ish 2**

We here at ODDBALLS use recycled paper for our photo-copies, faxes etc. and recycled plastic bags (from local Sainsburys!) We try to have minimum waste and also use recycled boxes, envelopes etc. for our mail order.

Lee Jellyhead

[er, not sure that was what Dan Zero was on about, Lee...]

I'm very interested in your next issue, I gather you're doing an article about fire. I think it's a fascinating subject, and as I have a boring job as a picture restorer I crave suitable distraction.

Bernie, Windsor.

I have developed a ring which I think is unique. Not only does it change colour, give a fire-display and can be attached to a unicycle, but it also makes funny noises. I'll be demonstrating it to anyone interested at the Birmingham convention.

Innuendo the Clown.

SUE MEE

Verbal tricks from our soliciting juggler.

Comrade Sue I am a radical left-wing juggler devoting my life to freeing the proletariat from the chains of capitalism. Last month I did a benefit performance for the local Woodcraft Folk's 'World Peace Christmas Party'.

You will understand my horror at finding the event reported in the local paper as "Patriotic juggler does his bit for our boys in khaki" with photos of me and a big tank!

My career is ruined and the revolutionary left will never take me seriously again. Can I demand that the paper tell the truth?

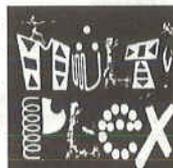
Comrade Kevin

Well, this is a topical case. It seems you have a lot in common with our dear Royal Family, Kevin. From a legal point of view there are three things to consider:

- 1: It is unlikely your career is ruined. All publicity is good publicity. Ask Princess DI.
- 2: Nobody actually reads local papers these days and only your close family will spot you in the photo.
- 3: The freedom of the press is a valued pillar of our democratic society and it would hardly be a free press if it had to print the truth.

I suggest you have a good drink and forget about it.

MULTIPLEX - THE CLASSIFIED ADS SECTION



FOR SALE

MONKEYSHINE: Hand held two step floor safe non-slip wooden stilts. Contact Simon on 0223 410138. Wholesale & Retail welcome. Strap-ons will soon be available.

FIRE JUGGLERS Look! Club Roll with fire-retardant lining. Also circular zipped club bag. Each £12.50. 0203 352751.

APPLES suitable for any "eating the apple" juggling act. British varieties a speciality, organic at premium prices. Contact JTF for nearest supplier.

SPECIAL ISSUE Birmingham Convention Bull Rings. Limited Edition. Box no. 3.

ACTS

THE ZEDD TWINS! Musical mayhem, mime manipulation. Tomfoolery for indoors and out. Contact Nick on 0225 318934.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

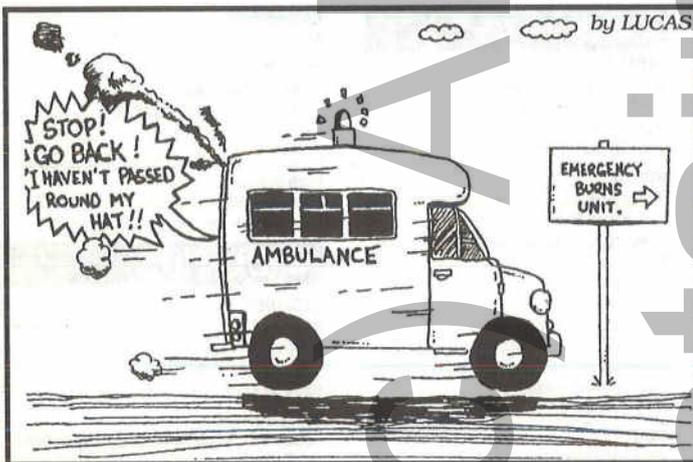
From mid-March '93 ARK Games & Juggling will be moving to a new shop with a high ceiling! New address - Branwells Mill, Station Road, Penzance, Cornwall, TR18 2LE. 0736 330750.

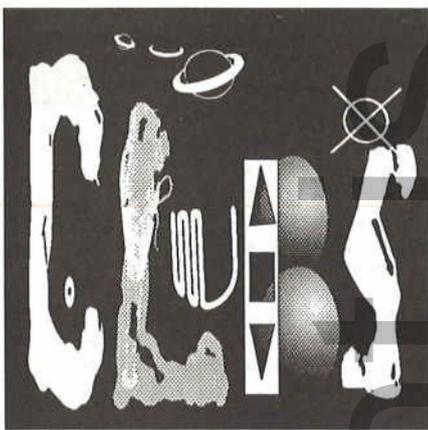
TEAM SPIRIT & BALLS UP JUGGLING COMPANY are looking for new T-Shirt designs to add to and expand our existing range. Artwork to a commercial standard preferred. We're also interested in hearing from any manufacturer of juggling-related clothing or Textile items to add to our Mail Order & Trade Sales. See our ad for coordinates.

LARGE STILT-WALKER seeks large experience. Oxygen available. Box no.2.

LONELY JUGGLER seeks like-minded partner for good times. Wear a flower behind your ear at the Games in Birmingham.

WANTED good juicy juggling gossip, good prices paid for photos. Contact Polly at Circus Factory.





More accurate than precision bombing! More comprehensive than Lindi StClair's little black book! More interesting than the Annual Report of the Biggleswade Horticultural Society! If your workshop isn't listed here, it can't possibly be that we don't know about it - must be that we've engaged in a powerful vendetta against you because not enough of your members buy "The Catch". Tell you what... drop us a line with the details and a suitable bribe and we'll forget all about it. - diablo

Most workshops charge, often just to cover hall hire costs. When we know how much, we've put it in.

SOUTH WEST

BATH
Walcot Village Hall,
Mondays 7.30 £1
Tad 0249 716149

BOURNEMOUTH
Bournemouth Centre for Community Arts,
Boscombe
Wednesdays 7.30-9.30
Mike Chalkley 0202 518030

CHELtenham
The Youth Centre
Sunday 6-9
Jon 0242 521483, Geoff 0242 519832

DORCHESTER
Tuesday, 7.30 usually
Skidazzle street circus, Alan 0300 21071

EXETER
Hot Potato Juggling Club, Labour Club,
Newtown
Wednesday 7.30-9.30
Barbara Goody, 0392 54999

EXETER
University Circus Skills, Devonshire House
Tuesdays 8-10

FROME
F.A.H.A. Playschemes and workshops in schools
Vicky Taylor 0373 452018

GLOUCESTER
St. James' Church Hall
Tuesday 8-10
Peter Koller 0452 415460

LEIGH ON MENDIP
Memorial Hall
Tuesday 7.30-10, £1.
Pippa 0749 840107

LISKEARD
Caradon Juggling Posse, Guildhall,
Thursday 7.30-9.30

NAILSEA
Blue Flame pub, Westend.
Thursday Evenings in summertime. Free!
Di 0934 838802

NEWTON ABBOT
Up for Grabs, Creative Arts centre, Knowles Hill
School
Thursdays termtime 7-9
Richard 0364 42893

PENZANCE
YMCA, Alverton Street
Tuesday 7.30-9.30 £1.50
Humphrey Davy School Sports Hall
Saturday 2-5 £1.50. Kids session
Bo or Mike, 0736 330750

SENNEN (West Cornwall)
Community Centre
Friday 7-9, £1
Bo or Mike, 0736 330750

STREET Somerset
Crispin Hall
Wednesday 7-9
Hannah 0935 826399

SWINDON
Fumbles Juggling Club, Plus One Centre
Monday 7.30-9.30. 30p
Simon 0793 693052

SWINDON
Clifton Street Social Hall
Thursday 7.30-9.30. 50p
Steve 0793 432860

TAUNTON
Bishop Fox's School
Wednesday 7-10
Sally 0823 275459

TOTNES
St. John's Church Hall, Bridge Town
Friday 7-10
Caroline 0364 73125

WEYMOUTH
Weymouth College
Lunchtimes during termtime
John MacDonald, 0305 208839

YEovil
Yeovil College
Tuesday 7-9
Hannah 0935 826399

BRISTOL

Dab Hands, Horfield
Tuesday 7-9
Mike Gibbons 0272 692145

Footline Circus School
0272 556452

Freaks Unlimited workshops, Elmgrove Centre, Redland Road
Monday 7.30-9.30, all levels of ability, £1.50
Thursday 7.30-9.30, Unicycle Hockey & General, £1.50
Freaks Unlimited shop 0272 250368

Juggle Fever Workshop, Hope Centre, Hotwells
Thursday 7.30 - 9.30, under 14s to be accompanied.
0275 832744

Polytechnic Juggling Club, Redland
Termtime, Wednesday 5-7
Diana 0934 838802

SOUTH EAST

BRIGHTON
Kempdown Pier
Monday 7.30-9.30 "drop in", Wednesday 8-10 "drop in" + workshops, Sunday 2-4 beginners
Tat, Andy, Mr Fizzbang 0273 739216, Tim 0273 690737

CHELMSFORD
The Y's Jugglers, YMCA
Tuesday 8-10 50p
John Hawkins 0245 263526

CRAWLEY
Thursday 7.30-10, 50p
Nigel & Sally, 0293 786143

HASTINGS
Scout Hall, Croft Road.
Friday 7-9.30
Bosco Circus, Andy 0424 813144, Derek 0424 431698, Sian 0424 431214

HORSHAM
North Heath Lane Hall
Monday 8.15-10.15 Juggling, circus & performance skills
Park Recreation Centre
Thursday 8-10 Juggling, Unicycling, Uni

Hockey
Dave, Steve 0403 273 466

LEWES
Circus Pipsqueak Youth Circus (8+)
Dr. Colin 0273 813464

MERSTHAM
Tuesday 7.30-9.30 £1
Nigel & Sally, 0293 786143

NEWBURY
Newbury New Circus, Waterside Centre
Monday 7-9.30
Gunther Schwarz 0635 41269

OXFORD
East Oxford Community Centre
Wednesday 7-9
Firenoise Ruth 0865 819114

OXTED
Sunday 6-9
Nigel & Sally 0293 786143

PORTSMOUTH
Priory School
Wednesday 6.30-9.30
Martin 0705 293 673

READING
Sun Street
Monday 7-10
0734 660430

ROMSEY
Woodley Village Hall
Sunday 7-9
Juggling Fiends, Dougie 0794 514674

SOUTHAMPTON
Northam Community Centre, Kent Street.
Wednesday 7.30-10
Guy 0794 513649

WHITSTABLE
Saint Peter's Hall, Cromwell Road
Thursday, children 6.30-7.30 50p, adults 7.30-9.30, £1.
Tina/Steve 0227 772241

WORTHING
United Reformed Church, Shelley Road
Monday 6.30-9.30
Stuart, Coz, Howard 0903 505560

YATTENDON
Thursdays 7.30-9.30, £1.
Barney 0635 201546

LONDON

CENTRAL
Colombo Street Sports Centre, SE1
Sunday 12-5 (£2.20-£4), Thursday 7-9.30 (£1.20-£2.60)
Phil 081 801 9859, Centre 071 261 1658

NORTH
Circus Space, 39-41 North Road N7,
Caledonian Road Tube.
Tuesday 7-10, £3 Juggling Workshop & Class
Sunday 7-10, £3 All-skills mixed

workshop
Courses and classes and one-off workshops in just about everything regularly available. See Catch This! and/or ring for more details.
Circus Space 071 700 0868

NORTH
Middlesex University

Matt 081 881 9791, James 081 365 7444

SOUTH
Gateway Community Centre, 51 Oldridge Road
7.30-9.30 £3, all levels.
Steve 081 677 6692

SOUTH-WEST
The Riverside, Hammersmith
Mondays 7-9, termtime only
Albert & Friends 081 741 5471

EAST MOLESEY
Vine Hall, Vine Road
Thursday 7-10
Molesey Maniacs Uni Hockey Friday 7.30-10, £1.50
Steve 081 398 7390

WEALDSTONE
The Crèche, Leisure Centre, Christchurch Avenue.
Tuesday 7.30-9.30
Adrian Kirk 081 861 0919

WIMBLEDON
Kings College Sports Hall
Tuesday 7-8, termtime only
Andy Moore 081 947 9311

UNICYCLE HOCKEY, CLOWNS
Holy Trinity Church Hall, Beechwood Road, Dalston, E8
Lunis - Tuesdays 7-10, £1.50.
Lee Jellyhead c/o 071 354 5660
The Clowns' Church
Friday 7-11, £1 inc. free tea & coffee.
Colin 081 980 6584

EAST ANGLIA

BURY SAINT EDMUNDS
Bury Fumblers, Saint John's Hall, Saint John's Street.
Tuesday 7.30, £1 for 2 hours, under 14s to be accompanied.

CAMBRIDGE
Victoria Road Community Centre, Tuesday 8-9.30
Patchwork Circus (8-16), Thursday in termtime 4.15-5.45
Drama Centre, Covent Garden, Sunday 6-8
Richard Green 0223 312027, Simon Smoleskis 0223 410138

CAMBRIDGE
Mellow Fellow - t.b.a.
David & Suzi 0954 781646

DEREHAM (nr. Norwich)
Justso James 0263 732888

IPSWICH
Ipswich Community Circus, Westbourne High School
Thursday 7.30-9.30
Anyone own up to running this one?

MIDLANDS

BEDFORD
Bedford Circus Ring, Caulwell Community Centre, Althorpe Street
Thursday 7.30-9.30
0234 328322

BIRMINGHAM
Edgbaston, Midlands Arts Centre, Cannon Hill Park



Adults Sunday 6.30-8, Children Wednesday 4.30-6, £3.30
The Bruised Fruits - Raymond 021 440 0784, Tim 021 449 9631

BIRMINGHAM

Kings Norton, Cadbury Sixth Form College
Mondays 6.30-8.30. Adult Education rates & concessions.
Raymond 021 440 0784

BIRMINGHAM

Selly Oak Centre, Bristol Road
Monday 7-9, 14+, 50p
Kevin 021 414 0094, John 021 444 1754
Saturday 9.30-11.30, 8-80, 50/25p
The Bruised Fruits - Raymond 021 440 0784, Tim 021 449 9631

CORBY

Youth Centre, Cottingham Road
Monday 7-9
Balls Up, Gary or Andy 0536 63786

COVENTRY

Saint Peter's Centre, Charles Street
Wednesday 7-9.30
Circus Palava 0203 448276

CRANFIELD

Institute of Technology Sports Hall
Thursday 1-2
Students Union 0234 750111

DAVENTRY

Drop Shop Juggling Club, Phoenix Centre, Ashby Road
Tuesdays 7-9.30
Lawrence or Vicky 0327 36600

DERBY

Saint Helen's House, King Street
Thursday 7-9.30, £1, 50p under 16s
Andrew Vass 0332 369581

EVESHAM

Cygnets Day Nursery, Swan Lane
Thursday 7-9, £1.50
Matt Gosling 0905 841643

LEICESTER

De Montfort University Juggling Club, City Site S.U.
Tuesday 6.30-9-ish
Thom or Si, 0533 540824

LYE (near Stourbridge)

Wollescote Primary School
Tuesday 7-10, £1.50
Dave @ The Juggling Shop, 021 643 6545

NORTHAMPTON

Bective Middle School, Kingsthorpe
Monday 7-10, Saturday 12.30-3.30
Steve or Jean 0604 719573

NORTHAMPTON

Drop Shop Juggling Club, Nene Centre
Tuesdays 6-9.30
Lawrence or Vicky 0327 36600

NOTTINGHAM

Portland School, Westwick Road, Bilborough
Wednesday 7-10
Tony 0602 708177, Barry 0602 283080

SHEFFIELD

Upshot Circus Arts, t.b.a.
Shaun 0742 662638

SHEFFIELD

University Juggling Club
Wednesday 6-9, Sunday 4-6
Flying Teapots, Rick 0742 663546

SHREWSBURY

Artscape, 5 Belmont
Thursday 7.30-10 £1.20 (80p under 16)
Mel 0743 860893

WORCESTER

City Youth Centre, Spring Grove
Wednesday 7.30-9.30, £1.50/£1
Sharon or John, 0905 23347

MANCHESTER

CENTRE
Polytechnic Gym, All Saints' Building, Oxford

Road,
Friday 7-9.

EAST

Levenshulme Community Circus, Chapel Street
Monday 6.30-8
Spurley High School, Gorton, Thursday 7-9
Liz 061 224 4901

CHEADLE HULME

Adult centre, Woods Lane
Wednesday 7-9

CHORLTON

Quirkus, Saint Werburgh's Parish Hall
Monday Juniors 7-8, Adults 8-10
Martin Taylor 061 860 4821

CRUMPSALL

Mushy Pea Juggling Co. workshop
Saint Matthew and Saint Mary's Church Hall
Thursday 6-8

SALFORD

Salford University Sports Hall
Friday 1-2.

STOCKPORT

Stockport Community Circus, Pulse Young People's Centre,
Wednesday 4-7
Olive 0457 837371

WITHINGTON

Manchester Community Circus
Sunday 3.30-7
Amber 061 232 9025

WORSLEY

Beesley Green Hall, Green Leach Lane
Monday 7.30-9.30
Brian 061 799 2793

North West Circus Network, Adrian Mealing, 061 764 6137

NORTH**BOLTON**

Higher Education Centre
Friday Evening

BRADFORD

Manningham Sports Centre
Friday 5.30-7.30
Ann 0274 480022

COCKERMOUTH

Juggling Club, Christchurch Rooms
Tuesday 7.30
Dave 0900 822867

CREWE

Screwballs, Ludford Street Family Centre, off Badger Avenue
Sunday 6-9

DARLINGTON

Community Circus Club, Larchfield Sports Centre
Tuesday 8-10
Hannah or Matt 0325 361633

HEBDEN BRIDGE

The Ground Floor Centre, Holme Street
Wednesday 7.15-9.30
Circus Factory Studio, Old Town, t.b.a.
Tony Webber 0422 842072

KENDAL

Tuesday & Wednesday
Jem Hulbert 0229 581485

LANCASTER

University, Minor Hall
Tuesday 6-9, Termtime only, £3 per year!
Lindsay 0524 841299. Phone before coming!

LEEDS

Hullabaloo Community Circus, Woodhouse Community Centre
Wednesday 6.30-8.30
Ali 0532 770121

LIVERPOOL

Toxteth Sports Centre, Upper Hill Street
8-10, Thursday. Contribution to costs.
Max Lovius and others 051 727 1074

MIDDLESBROUGH

Toft House, next to Little Theatre, The Avenue

Sunday 7.30

Andy Price 0642 210224

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Saint Augustine's Church Hall, Brighton Grove, Fenham
Gymnastics, Acrobatics and Tumbling,
Wednesday 2.30-4.30
Ugly Juggling Co. Simon 091 232 0297

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Juggling Playshop, Saint Augustine's Hall, as above
Tuesday 7.30-9.30, 30p
Jim 091 232 8146 or Ugly Juggling Co. 091 232 0297

PRESTON

Lancashire Poly
Thursday 6-9, everyone welcome
fll Students Union.

ROCHDALE

The Broadwater Centre, Smith Street
Adults Monday 7-9, Children Tuesday & Wednesday at 4
Skylight Circus in Education, Noreen & Jim 0706 50676.

SHIPLEY

Sunday pm
Pete Sharp 0274 586219

STOCKPORT

Bzercus Community Circus, Priestnal Recreation Centre, Heaton Moor.
Tuesday 5-7 (children) 7-9 (adults)
Moni 061 256 1838

WIRRAL

Methodist Church, Cloughton Road, Birkenhead.
Sunday 2-4
Ann, Wirral Community Circus 051 653 3619

YORK

Cosmos Juggling Club, Priory Street Centre
Tuesday 7-9, £1.50 (£1 conc.)
Jim or Anna 0904 430472

SCOTLAND**GLASGOW**

Ashley Street Community Education Centre, Woodlands G4
Thursday 7-9
Mark Segal 041 332 7769

GLASGOW

Beyond the Wall Circus Club, Woodside Halls, Glenfarg Street, Saint George's Cross
Tuesday 7-9
Hadrian or Hunter 041 552 7763

EDINBURGH

Tollcross Community Centre
Monday 7-9
Angelo 031 447 7862

SHETLAND ISLES

Sandwick Junior High School
Saturday 10.30-12
Gary Worrall 09505 501 / 0595 2114

SKYE

Braes Community Hall
Saturday 11-1
Dave Patfield 047 062 377

WALES**NORTH WALES**

Bagillt Community Centre
Wednesday 8-10, £1.50 including tea!
Mike or Gail, 0745 560785

MID WALES

Rockpark Hotel Games Room, Llandidrod Wells
Wednesday 6-7 (7-12 yrs.) 13-adult 7.15-9
Chris 0597 824300, Jerry 0831 581070

ABERYSTWYTH

"Studio", Arts centre
Tuesday 7-10
Oily, 20 Marine Terrace.

CAMARTHEN

Queen Elizabeth Cambria School
Termtime, Thursday 6.30-9.30
Netty 0570 480022, Pippa 0239 77292

LLANDUDNO

Maskerades, Oxford Road
Wednesday 5.30-7
Phil 0492 875656

SWANSEA

Dynevar School, Mansell Street
Wednesday 7-9, £2/£1, first week free
Dillwin Llewelyn School, Cocketts
Monday 7-9, Integrated Youth Circus
Peter Duncan or Phill Burton, 0792 466231

MORE UNIPSYCHOS**CARDIFF**

CUT, East Moors Community Centre, Sanquahar Street, Splot
Friday 6.30-9, £1

BARRY

Barry Leisure Centre
Mondays, fortnightly from 30th November, £1.50, concs £1, spectators 20p!
f.f.i. on both - Russell Wells (UKUF) 0446 740520

NORTHERN IRELAND**BELFAST**

Belfast Community Circus School, Crescent Arts centre, University Road
Contact 0232 236007 / 248861

CHANNEL ISLANDS**ALDERNEY**

Masonic Hall, Alderney
Wednesday 7-8
Moira 0481 822246

UNIVERSITIES, POLYTECHNICS, COLLEGES

Not enough workshops for you? You must be one heck of a jugglemaniac. To spend even more of your precious time dropping clubs and falling off Unicycles, study the list below. These Universities and Colleges all have juggling groups not listed above, and should have weekly get-togethers, unless they're too busy working, which somehow I doubt. Give 'em a call, find out when and whether - we only have a few names but in their absence, the Students Union should be able to help.

BRIGHTON University of Sussex

CAMBRIDGE

CARDIFF - Ali 0222 488734

DURHAM - University College, The Castle, 091 374 3863

EDINBURGH

GLASGOW
GUILDFORD - University of Surrey - USBASES 0483 300800

KEELE**LEEDS****LIVERPOOL**

LOUGHBOROUGH Street Artists Society

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE University & Polytechnic

NORWICH University of East Anglia - Ken 0603 56161

NOTTINGHAM**OXFORD****SOUTHAMPTON**

WARWICK League of Fools

YORK

Have YOU ordered your **CATCH T-Shirt** yet? If not, it might be a good idea to **LOOK SHARP** (because we are getting through them)

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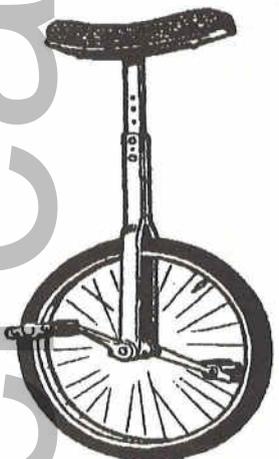
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17 Richmond Road Uplands Swansea SA2 0RB Telephone: 0792 470546

phone FOR FREE COLOUR BROCHURE



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R/O 59 Fairmile Rd. Christchurch Dorset BH23 2LA (0202)471943

DM RINGMASTER UNICYCLES AVAILABLE FROM AGENTS

Skylight

Circus Arts training performance education

Short Courses March - June from £8 acro, music, aerial, performance, etc

Circus Theatre 3-29 May £ 220 \ £180
4 weeks circus \ performance training
Excellent tutors! Send for prospectus

On-going circus \ aerial \ youth sessions

Outreach UK Circus workshops, residencies, performance

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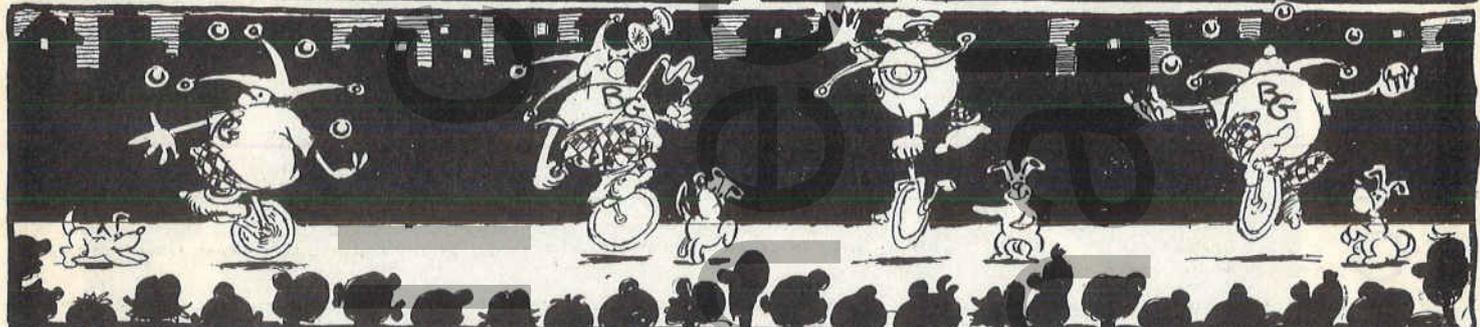
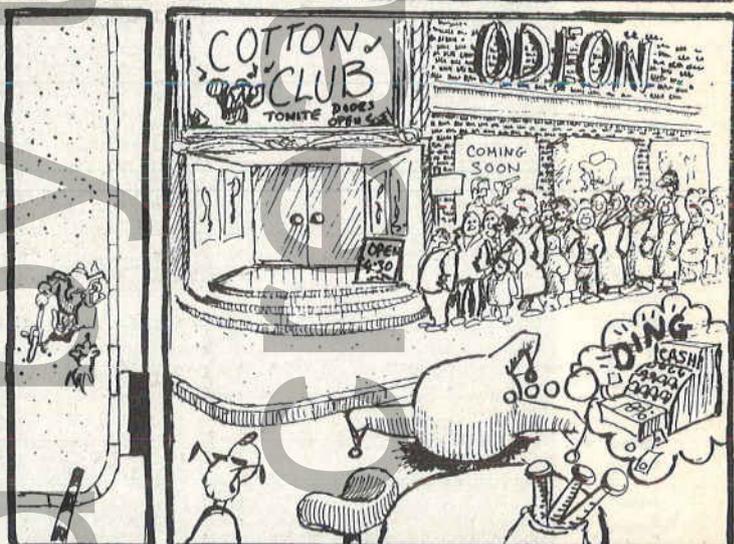
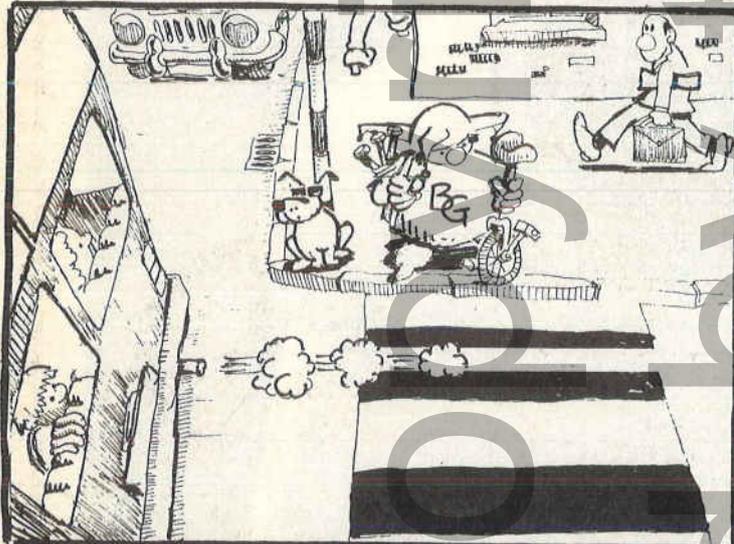
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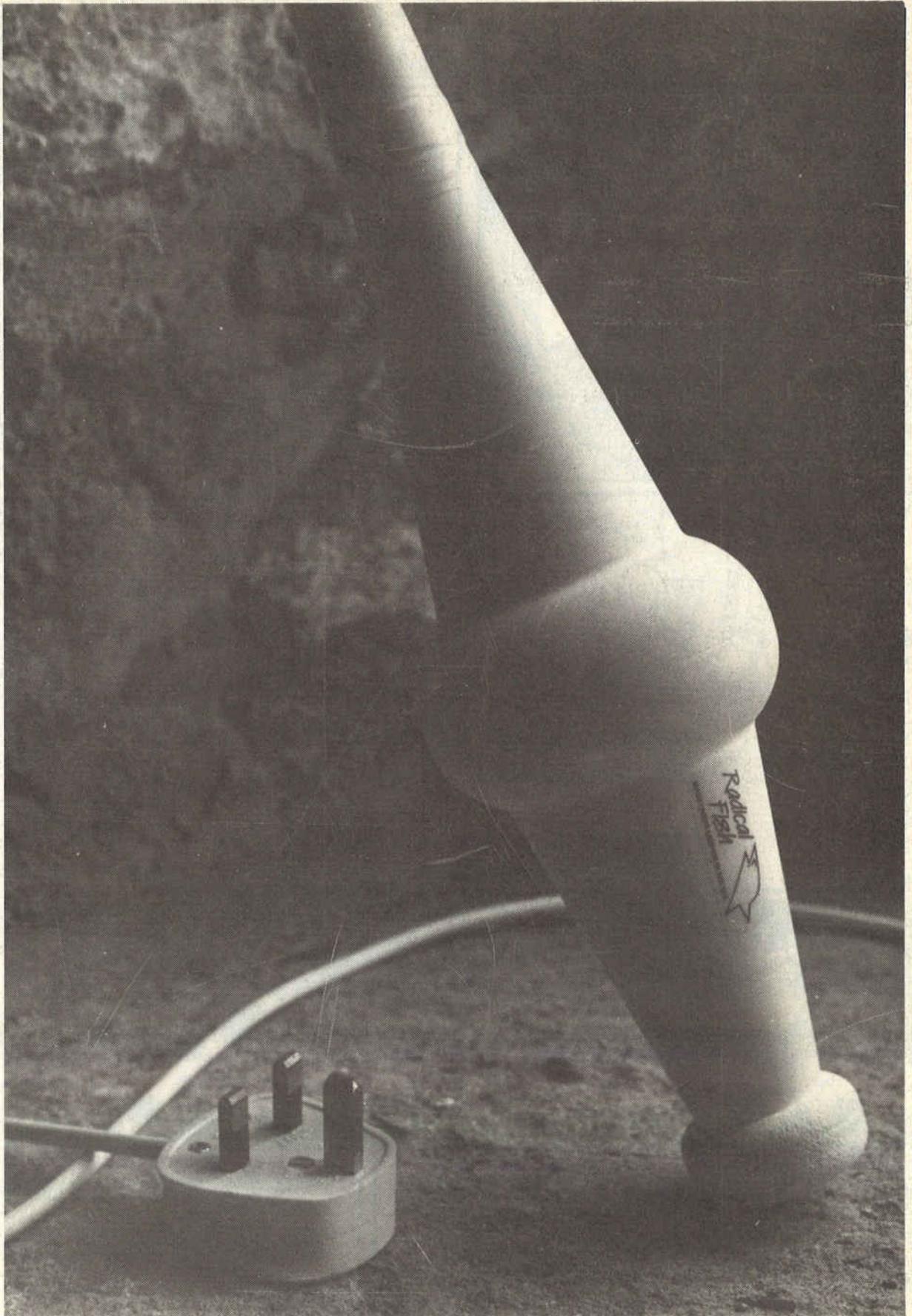


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