



MESS Series coordinator, Britt Parrott takes time out from contest duties to boost a ven air.

MESS

M.E.S.S. #2

By Bryan Ridgeway

The second Mid-Eastern skate ramp contest of the summer series was held in Johnson City, Tennessee. Yes, there was to be another outstanding effort on the part of all the skaters to make it from all over, even though this state is famous for hosting rainout skate contests. It was not to happen this time as the weatherman forecast sunny and hot skies.

Skaters from some 13 states started pulling in 2 days or so before the contest. There was definitely more of a variety of skaters at this contest than at any MESS contest in history. Even John Dettman, who drove all the way from Santa Barbara, California, was on hand to take part.

Finding the ramp once in Johnson City was little or no problem at all.

Everyone ventured into the country a little bit, over a river and through some woods till the Outlaw house was in view. Gregg Outlaw has the ramp situated right beside the house. Upon arrival, special notice was taken of TEAM SQUID, who were using Johnson City as the starting point for their Greyhound Bus U.S. skate tour.

Also on hand for the occasion were pro skaters Rob Roskopp, Mike McGill, and Mark "Gator" Rogowski. Everything was now set for the contest.

A sideline contest to the ramp event was a freestyle contest. The first one to be incorporated into M.E.S.S. Skaters present pulled out the little boards and showed that there was more to them than inverts and airs. After the special event was over, the 2A unsponsored



skaters got ready on the ramp. Judges on duty were the pros.

Quite a bit of good skating took place as each skater was given two preliminary runs to determine who would make it to the 15 minute jam finals. Of ten skaters, six made it. When it was all said and done, Tom LaPlante had first under his belt with Chris Carter in a close second and Chris Lenart third. It was Egger, Kays and Bates in 4th through 6th.

Immediately following the 2A, the judges were anxious to start the 3A division due to the extreme heat and humidity. Gator had caught some sort of virus from god knows what, and could hardly breathe. I don't see how he was even able to judge, but somehow he managed it. Another factor contributing to the "C'mon, lets go" attitude was a protruding bee hive next to the ramp. There was no incident fortunately.

Class 3A was soon underway and the cut to 5 for the jam was all set. There were 7 skaters left behind this time after the cut was over. In the jam were Brady Byrd, Steve Hobbie of Alabama, Mike Harrington of Georgia, Jay Henry, and Johnson City local, Robert Taylor. Throughout the jam, all the skaters had ups and downs so it was a very close race. When an official announced there was only 5 minutes left in the jam, some serious shredding took place. Three skaters in particular started separating from the rest with better lines and tricks. Jay Henry was one of them as well as Robert Taylor and Mike Harrington. Layback air twists, inverts and cool airs were all seen. Taylor pulled out to win it with Henry and Harrington right behind him. Byrd got 4th place and Hobbie earned a respectable 5th.

In the sponsored group, 13 skaters representing most skate companies, started shredding to make the cut to 8 for an extended 20 minute jam. Brian "Batmite" Beauchene launched 3 foot high frontside ollies and other rad tricks to place 8th. Chuck Treece from Philadelphia did quite well to gain the #7 spot. John Detman got better and better as the jam went on to take 6th. Kevin Dickman, who never lets the crowd down by having at least one 100% sketch run, made it to the #5 position. Britt Parrott took time out from running the entire contest show to place 4th.

When the word "Backside Ollie" is mentioned at a MESS contest, one name in particular comes to mind. Doug Walker who clicks them off like routine kickturns. He flailed them over the canyon and landed in 3rd.

Tom Grohowski continues to be the dominant force to contend with in the MESS Series. Armed with consistency and bio-ness, Tom captures the top spot.

Jim Goodrich



Pulling one more move from his arsenal of tricks, Indianan, Jeff Kendall stretches out a one-footed invert and takes a well-deserved second place.

At every MESS contest I have witnessed, there is one skater in mind that looks to be the man to beat when he practices, but when it comes to putting out during competition, he jells. He skates so intense and can do most of today's circus tricks. It seemed this contest would be a repeat of the past when he fell on the first trick on his first two runs. Then, out of the depths, a squid made a calling. Kevin "Squid" Dickman said something encouraging to this skater and a miraculous comeback was witnessed. Major contorted handplants were seen along with many more hot tricks. The skater came back to snag 2nd place. His name, Jeff Kendall. This was quite an achievement considering who was in front of him. It was a skater who drove all the way from New Jersey a few days before the contest to gain some practice, then he made an 11 hour detour to Jacksonville, FL to skate Kona skatepark and made a return trip back up to Tennessee on contest day. I'm talking about Tom Gronolski. Tom's smooth style and mega long frontside grinds merely helped in the winning effort of his second straight MESS win. He should be pro if he isn't by the time you read this.

After the contest, most went to Oak Ridge to skate Joe Bowers' ramp. McGill and Roskopp skated for the locals as well as themselves. After the heat started up again, it was time for all to head home via bus, plane and car.

Special thanks must be attributed to Britt Parrott whose time, money, and hardwork went into making this contest as well as ones in the past—a major success.

FREESTYLE

Jeff Stroup
Garth McCallum
Morris Wainwright
John Dettman
Chris Lenart (TIE)
John Kulp

Top Eight Each Division

2A Un-sponsored

Tom LaPlante
Chris Carter
Chris Lenart
Andy Egger
Mike Kays
Sean Bates
Steve Braski
Garth McCallum

Sponsored

Tom Gronolski
Jeff Kendall
Doug Walker
Britt Parrott
Kevin Dickman
John Dettman
Chuck Treece
Brian Beauchene
Brett Martin
Joe Bowers
Joe Doung
Mike Hill
Mark Doung

3A Un-sponsored

Robert Taylor
Jay Henry
Mike Harrington
Brady Byrd
Steve Hobbie
Jon Kulp
Morris Wainwright
Chip Jones

M.E.S.S. #3

By Britt Parrott

MESS #3 in Elizabethtown, KY was perhaps the smoothest contest yet, due in part to the great atmosphere and the rippin' ramp. A total of 33 skaters entered to battle it out for the top spots. Once again, a jam format was used. Noticeably absent was the Squid Team because of their U.S. tour. The 10 foot high, 20 foot wide wooden structure was one of the best, thanks to the hard work of Mike Kays and Ron Mason. We are now past the halfway point in this highly successful series, so stay tuned to T.W.S. for the final chapter in the MESS.

2A Un-sponsored

1) Shawn DeLong
2) Scott Peters
3) John Downey
4) Dave Roberts
5) Chris Lenart
6) Jade Corn
7) Andy Egger
8) Tony Cook
9) Jow Downey
10) Glen Bruce
11) Mike Kays
12) Steve Braskie
13) Mike Taber
14) Mike Renillo
15) Jimmy Bell
16) Ron Mason
17) John Passmore

3A Un-sponsored

1) Bernie O'Dowd
2) Robert Taylor
3) Mike Harrington
4) Rick Stanbuck
5) Alan Gardner
6) Chip Jones
7) Wendell Elrod
8) Steve Hobbie

Sponsored

1) Tom Gronolski
2) Brian Beauchene
3) Jeff Kendall
4) Ray Underhill
5) Doug Walker
6) Britt Parrott
7) Joe Bowers

Lyle Doncho



Ray Underhill managed to alter his busy work schedule in order to kick back skate with me.



Brian "Eat-Me" Beauchene flouts a frontside spin, landing over the bar and then into the crowd.