

THE LAND OF LEGENDS

LOGGERS SPORTS

Our goal is to re-create logging culture through our logging shows to celebrate old legends and create new ones.

In July, 1971, B.C. premier W.A.C. Bennett designated logger sports, including birling, axe-throwing and pole climbing, as the official industrial sport of the province. It was about then that the sport began a long decline, not coincidentally at a time when fewer workers earned their living as loggers.

Logging has been the prime resource based industry for the coastal areas of British Columbia. From the days of hand logging, bulls, horses, and steam machinery, to today's use of grapple yarders, self loaders and helicopters, the industry has seen many changes. Throughout these changes, the one thing that has remained constant, is the loggers getting together to show off their skills in friendly competitions.

Logging sports are not just competitions amongst loggers, but they provide an opportunity to depict the heritage of Vancouver Island by incorporating entertaining events that show both past and present logging practices. Events like axe throwing, tree climbing, spring board chops, log rolling, hand bucking and high speed power saw cutting never cease to amaze the crowds at these competitions.

In fact, logging sports has become so popular that TN has a Lumberjack series airing in Canada & around the world.



Ron Hartill is considered one of the founding fathers of British Columbia's logger sports competitions. From New Zealand, originally, he lived and worked in Honeymoon Bay. He was seven-time national champion at the Lumberjack World Championships in Hayward, WI.



Jube Wickheim claimed 10 world log rolling championships in his career, the first one in 1956. The consecutive world titles earned an entry in the Guinness Book of World Records. Jube's hometown is Sooke but has called Shawnigan Lake home for the past five decades. He & his brother travelled to Japan in 1965 to demonstrate their sport – and to promote B.C. Timber. One of the tricks shown by the brothers included Jube standing atop a chair at one end of a floating log while Ardy used a pole and his feet to maintain balance. Their show was also seen at EXPO 67 in Montreal.

Jube formed the Wickheim Timber Show to travel the globe, including a 1992 performance at the opening of Euro Disney outside Paris. (Among the log-rollers employed by the show over the years were the four Herrling brothers, known as the Birling Herrlings.)



Glen Berry always loved logger sports competitions. As a founder of the Sayward Logger sports, he competed and ran the show for a decade. Delighting the crowd with log rolling antics with his partner Johnny Wheeldon. From the north island to the south, Glen re-located to Cowichan Bay and worked in Port Renfrew teaching the next generation the events and taking small competitions into camps like Barkely Sound. He also organized the Lake Cowichan logger sports for many years. This photo appeared in Beautiful British Columbia magazine in 1979. Glen passed away in 2016 but his legacy continues as his grandson chops using his favorite competition axe.



Bobby Walker. If you worked in the bush in the 80's and 90's, you wanted your power saw "Walkerized". He not only provides working loggers their tools for making a living but also makes incredibly fast competition saws for logger sports

THE LAND OF LEGENDS

LOGGERS SPORTS

competitors. He is a favorite character on the competition circuit. He became interested in the sport in the early 1970's when Ron Hartill would bring his go-cart engine up to the McCulloch shop in Nanaimo to be made into hot saws. Bob started building the saws, everyone wanted one, and from there started going to the competitions as well.



Marv Trudeau competed in the speed tree climb for many years. He was tragically killed in a hang gliding accident in 2010. Marv's company Aerial Tree Service now has his sister at the helm.



Norm Gaudie, "Stormin' Norman" as he is affectionately known competed from 1977-2015 making his start at All Sooke Days. He excelled at the underhand chop and the single buck and was a 9-time Canadian Champion sawyer. He spent two memorable years in Japan doing exhibition shows and competed in Nova Scotia twice in the Canada vs Europe Lumberjack Challenge. Norm also supported the sport by holding various positions in the CANLOG Assoc.



Matt Mooney first saw a logger sports competition in Port Clements, Haida Gwaii. He liked what he saw and joined right in! That was in 1973 and he was a fixture on the competition circuit until 2013 when he "retired" from competition. Far from retired though, he coaches his daughter and granddaughter in their chosen events and supports everyone in their events. Matt's favourite events and where he excelled were the power saw events, bucking events and the axe throw. There has never been anyone else in the sport to throw their axe as easily as if it were a pub dart! Matt and his family organized and ran the Ucluelet logger sports competition (Ukee Dayz) for 36 years!



Alan Boyko roomed with world champion tree climber Danny Sailor at the M&B Franklin River Division in the early 50's. Danny introduced many persons to this sport. Alan started competing locally in the early 60's, the cable events were his best: eye splicing, Molly Hogan races, choker setting. He competed internationally and represented Canada, traveling to Finland, Japan, New Zealand, Australia. He also was a member of the group that did loggers sports for Queen Elizabeth in Ladysmith in 1971.

Alan and his family organized and produced logger's sports events for their home community of Port Alberni for over 44 years. He also did the announcing for the logger's sports competitions in many communities on both sides of the border. He is still active assisting the local program where needed and applying his skills maintaining tools for other competitors.



Wade Stewart of Parksville started competing when he was 4 years old. He climbed and rolled in San Diego at SeaWorld as a young boy for many years as part of the Wickheim Timber Show. He held the Canadian record for the 100 foot speed climb for many years. Wade is also an accomplished log roller, also holding the Canadian Championship for many years. He even rolled and climbed on the David Lettermen Show!

THE LAND OF LEGENDS

LOGGERS SPORTS



Mike Herrling started log rolling when he was 11 years old. His dad was log rolling in an exhibition show at Expo '67 and then is when he started his logger sport career. Although an accomplished log roller, the springboard chop was his favorite event. He retired from the sport in 2007; his career took him to USA, Japan, Sweden, France New Zealand and Australia.



**Join Us for the Laughing Logger Show
at the Cowichan Exhibition on
Friday & Sunday, September 6 & 8.**



Ken Nelson, "King Kong Kenny", of Campbell River competed from 1967-1997. Shown in the photo with his New Zealand partner, Brian Herlihy. His favorite event was the underhand chop but excelled in all chopping and sawing events. Ken was a favorite character on the logger sports circuit and once thrilled all of us by showing up to the Squamish Days show in a helicopter, landed right on the grounds, competed and won logger of the day then swooped of in the helicopter for home!



COWEX
Cowichan
Loggers Sports-Land of Legends

COWICHAN EXHIBITION

7380 TRANS CANADA HWY DUNCAN, BC V9L 6B1

E COWEX@SHAW.CA **W** WWW.COWEX.CA **T** 250.748.0822 **F** 250.715.5760