



# Track Grease & Tomato Pie

## Regional Newsletter for the Garden State

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NEW JERSEY REGION

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### Happy New Season!

Let's just cut to the chase, shall we? Is there an ACE member out there who *hasn't* heard that Six Flags Great Adventure will debut the **World's Tallest and Fastest Roller Coaster** this year? You must be livin' under a rock if you don't know that it's called **Kingda Ka** and it will be a premier attraction in the new Golden Kingdom section of the park. More information appears on page 2 of this issue.

And then there's **Tsunami**, the S&S woodie at Clementon Amusement Park. The coaster had a late season opening in 2004 and will be new to many enthusiasts this year. Many of you took some very special rides in late September (in the dark!) when the park graciously hosted an ERT session for ACE members. A few pictures from that wonderful evening appear on page 4. Thanks again to Larry Baker and staff!

You'll find a two-page insert with information about most of our local parks included with this issue, too.

Finally, the second part of ACE member Mitch Francisco's feature article, *The Wooden Coasters of New Jersey*, starts on page XXX. Part One which appeared in the last issue is still up on the region's web site for those who haven't read it.

So, on to the news, pictures, features and reminders that make *Track Grease & Tomato Pie* the ACE New Jersey Region's very best newsletter! <wink!>

Dana & Joe

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### ACE New Jersey Region Web Site



The modest but effective ACE NJ Regional Web Site was created so that those of you with Internet access at home, work or through your local library can check for periodic updates and information from us in between newsletters. Even if you don't have an email

account, just stop by a public library that offers free Internet

access. Type the following URL into the web browser and you are *there!!!*

Here is the actual web address (don't forget the tilde ~):

<http://home.ix.netcom.com/~dooley7/index.html>

or

Go to the ACE web site ([www.aceonline.org](http://www.aceonline.org)) and choose either 'Links' or 'ACE State-by-State' / 'New Jersey' to get to the hypertext "clickable" link to the regional web site.

And, yes – by the time the postman delivers this issue to your doorstep the web page should be updated and current.

### Coaster Celebration at Six Flags Great Adventure - Saturday, May 21, 2005

Six Flags Great Adventure is pleased to announce the return of Coaster Celebration, the park's own special event for thrill seekers. See the enclosed flyer for all the details. *Please Note: This is NOT an ACE event.*

### NJ Region Event at Morey's Piers SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, August 13, 2005

The annual event at Morey's Piers is scheduled for Saturday, August 13, 2004. A flyer will be mailed and posted on the regional and national ACE web pages later this spring after we've worked out all the details.



License Plate spotted at Eastcoaster.

Folks sure do travel to hear about the latest roller coasters!

Photo: Joe Krapf

## Across the River



### New York City

Join the ACE NY Metro Region for opening day at Astroland in Coney Island to ride the world famous Cyclone. The date is Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. Discount POP available between Noon and 4 PM. Meet at the ticket booth on West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, near the corner of Surf Avenue, across from the coaster. Heck – just look for the people wearing coaster gear and follow them. If you've never ridden the Cyclone, this is a terrific (and less expensive) way to check it out and start the season off right!

### Eastern Pennsylvania

#### ***Hydra...The Revenge – The Myth Becomes Reality at Dorney Park, May 2005***

Hercules may have lost, but YOU can ride a real winner! Dorney Park will debut a new B&M floorless coaster on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Experience the 53 MPH, 105 foot first drop – but that's *after* you zip through the jojo roll right out of the station *before* the lift hill... at 12 MPH! Celebrate Wildwater Kingdom's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2005. And, welcome to Heather Kramer, new Public Relations Manager at the park.

### Back to the Garden State...

### Six Flags Great Adventure

#### ***Dare to Conquer... Kingda Ka***

Wanna *real* thrill? To Launch from 0 to 128 MPH in 3.5 seconds? Shoot 45 stories (456 feet) into that pristine Jersey air? Plunge vertically into a 418 spiral drop? But, it's not over yet, folks! You still gotta fly over a 129 foot hill before you glide back into the station.

#### ***THIS EATS ALL RECORDS!***

Kingda Ka, the hydraulic launched rocket coaster and the latest dazzler by Intamin AG, debuts this season at Six Flags Great Adventure. The coaster will dominate the Golden Kingdom, an all-new 11-acre jungle. The Kingdom also features Balin's Jungleland, an elaborate children's area, and the Temple of the Tiger, a spectacular encounter with beautiful Bengal tigers.

We're sure that many of you plan to visit the park this season to ride Kingda Ka and to experience the Golden Kingdom. And we realize that an attraction of this magnitude and stature will draw lots of people to the park. Many members have already contacted us to ask about special ride times for ACEs, whether there will be an ACE event at the park, etc. All we can say for now is that if the debut of Kingda Ka is similar to that of other coasters during the past six years (Medusa, Nitro, Superman), there **MAY** be opportunities for club members to be invited to ride the coaster at times when the public cannot. For example, in the past we've been asked to "round up" riders for early morning TV coverage, to film commercials for the park and

to take part in segments being filmed for features on the Discovery networks. *Please* don't ask us to put you on "the list" of participants for the Media Day, when the coaster officially opens. The *park* invites people to Media Day – invitations are quite limited and we cannot add people to a "list" that we do not create or manage.

So, although we can't tell you anything definite right now, we *can* remind you about the one way to ensure that you will be considered should special ride time opportunities arise. What's the trick? Real simple: **KEEP YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS UP TO DATE IN THE ACE DATABASE.** That is, go to the ACE web site, establish a username and password to access your personal information if you haven't already done so, and **make certain the email address listed has no typographical errors and is the one that you currently use and check routinely.** That is the list we use to send out the word about special ride times. In the situation where we receive an overwhelming response to a rider round-up the process is also simple: the slots fill up in the order that the emails were received, and when we hit the quota that's it. Got it? So, keep checking the email account that you provided to ACE for news about special ride times, for Kingda Ka or any coasters. (Note: If you don't have email, team up with an electronically connected ACE buddy who DOES and have him or her include you in their reply!)

## The Wooden Coasters of New Jersey

### (Second of two parts)

A look at the origin of the wooden roller coaster in the Garden State and its significance today

Written By Mitch Francisco

### The Second Golden Era of the Roller Coaster, and Beyond

Trolley parks were a growing breed by the late 1800s. These were parks that served communities along trolley lines. Today, not too many exist in the US, but one that began as a fun place "at the end of the line" is still in operation here in NJ: Clementon Amusement Park. The nearly 100 year old park has been home these many years to one of the state's first John Miller designed rides, the commonly named *Jack Rabbit*. The roller coaster was built by the Philadelphia Toboggan Company for a cost of \$80,000 in 1919. The family sized coaster has a height of 50 feet and is 1,380 feet long. Unfortunately, high maintenance cost has left the classic-era wooden coaster, which was the second oldest coaster in operation in the US, closed since 2003. The ride is still standing today but it is unlikely ever to operate again.



Humming Bird roller coaster, Riverview Beach Park, Pennsville, NJ

Another popular amusement park in the state was Riverview Beach Park, which opened in 1889 in Pennsville. The park had two wooden coasters both designed by John Miller along with Harry Baker. The first was the uniquely named *Humming Bird*, an out-and-back design, in 1922. The second Riverview Beach coaster was the *Wild Cat*, which operated from 1927 to 1964. The *Humming Bird* thrilled riders until 1968.

Bertrand Island Amusement Park on Lake Hopatcong in northern New Jersey was another park that enjoyed its success because of trolley service. The park's humble beginnings were part of a camping village by the lake, later expanding to the construction of a 40-room hotel. More visitors came once a boardwalk and beach were developed in 1922. Rides were eventually added, including the centerpiece wooden coaster, *Wildcat* (1925). Herbert Schmeck designed the coaster, which was his eighth project at the time. By the end of his career, the popular designer had 36 roller coasters credited to his name. Bertrand Island Amusement Park's *Wildcat* stood 80 feet tall and had nine camelback hills. It cost \$80,000 to build and on its opening day, 10,000 visitors flocked to the tiny park to try to experience the ride. The out-and-back coaster survived a major fire in 1970 and a train collision in 1973. Sadly, due to economic reasons and competition against other amusement parks, the *Wildcat* along with Bertrand Island Amusement Park gave visitors one last time to enjoy its lakeside beauty on Labor Day of 1983.

One last notable, by-gone NJ amusement park was Olympic Park, which began as a place for city-folk to escape from the heat on summer weekends, to enjoy the beer gardens, German food and music – especially the songfests. The large theme park was in Irvington, not far from Newark, and operated from 1887 until 1965. By the early 1900's, the park had an average of 10,000 daily visitors. The first of two wooden coasters built was the *Jack Rabbit*, which was another Miller-Baker designed ride (1926). The coaster was later remodeled in 1937. Unfortunately, the *Jack Rabbit* wasn't able to survive a devastating hurricane in 1950. The coaster was never rebuilt, but led to the construction of the *Jet*, -- the park's second coaster. Opening in July 1951, the *Jet* cost \$100,000, double the price of the park's first roller coaster! It closely resembled *Jack Rabbit's* medium-sized design and entertained riders for 18 years before it closed with the park.

## Still GREAT and ROLLING

Although there may only be three wooden coasters in operation today in our state, these coasters are symbols of the rich history that New Jersey has had with its many past wooden roller coasters.

Six Flags Great Adventure's *Rolling Thunder* made its debut in 1979. The park followed the trend of the wooden coaster's comeback in the 1970s, which was known as the second golden age for roller coasters. The revival of the wooden coaster was catalyzed by Kings Island when they erected the beautifully designed *Racer* in 1972. Great Adventure's wooden coaster was special since it was a unique twin track design. Today, it is one of nine twin track wooden roller coasters remaining in the world. Its figure eight layout was created by Don Rosser and Bill Cobb. The duo had a short partnership that earned them only two roller coaster projects, the other one being *Judge Roy Scream*

built in 1980 for Six Flags Over Texas. The cost of the 96-foot tall, 3,200-foot long *Rolling Thunder* was about \$5 million.

In 1996, Morey's Piers opened the *Great White*. The out-and-back ride harkens back to the designs of the great roller coaster builders who created the original "classics" in the Garden State. At night, lights illuminate the galvanized steel supported coaster and make it one of the most visually beautiful rides to admire on Morey's Piers, on at any seaside venue. One unique feature of the *Great White* is the initial dive underneath the pier as soon as the ride is dispatched from the station. First time riders will be pleasantly surprised by its sudden drop and quick speed as the train descends into the dark, cool tunnel beneath the pier on its way to the lift hill. Another unique feature of the coaster is its mammoth size. How did Custom Coasters, the company that designed the *Great White*, fit this 110-foot tall coaster onto a pier? They simply built the ride beyond the end of the pier! The *Great White* stretches about 600 feet beyond pier onto the sandy beach – not quite out to where the ocean starts, but you can almost taste the salt in the air.

\* \* \* \* \*

At the very end of the 2004 season Clementon Amusement Park debuted its first wooden roller coaster since 1919 when they built the *Jack Rabbit*. Today, the park has around 20 rides, but none as grand as their newly designed coaster, *Tsunami*.

*Tsunami* is the product of S&S Power's wooden division, headed by Denise Dinn, formerly of Custom Coasters International (CCI). Throughout the late 1990s, CCI was one of the primary wooden coaster companies in the industry. The company closed in 2002, but during its short existence produced 34 wooden roller coasters around the world. Some notable wooden roller coasters that CCI designed and built are *Boulderdash* (2002) at Lake Compounce, *Shivering Timbers* (1998) at Michigan's Adventure and Knotts Berry Farm's *Ghostrider* (1998).

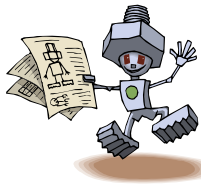
Like the *Great White*, *Tsunami* has a steel structure as its support. Clementon's new coaster is an out-and-back design with a peak height of 110ft.

The roller coaster currently has the steepest vertical drop on any operating wooden coaster in North America. After the first drop – at an amazing 62 degree angle -- the coaster takes riders into a twisted left turn. At 80 feet, the coaster's second hill is taller than many other wooden coasters' first drops. Another camelback hill follows at 65 feet. Finally riders are whirled through *Tsunami's* double helix. After the rush of positive forces, the coaster makes one last turn and it heads back toward the station. Before the coaster hits the brake run there is one more time to experience some airtime on the final camelback hill.

*Tsunami* has some interesting visuals since it crosses over with the park's log flume, and runs along the side of the park's lake – but it's doubtful that you'll process them on your first or second disorienting, whirlwind ride! The roller coaster has not one, but two Philadelphia Toboggan Company trains. The trains consist of four two-bench cars for a total of 16 riders per train.

S&S Power's new wooden coaster is a terrific addition to our state.

*Mitch Francisco, 23, of East Brunswick is a senior majoring in Biology at Rutgers University. He enjoys snowboarding, golf and cooking. Mitch is a big fan of the Knicks and the Yankees. Great Adventure is a favorite seasonal hangout.*



# Nutz 'n Boltz

Did you know. . .

...that you can update your ACE membership information on the ACE web site? Go to [www.aceonline.org](http://www.aceonline.org) and create a user name and password to log onto the members-only area (you'll need your membership number to do this). Once you are logged in you can change or update your mailing address, email address and phone number. **Please be sure to keep your email address current if you want to receive electronic correspondence from us.** We continue to get many bounced or inactive email account messages – it's up to you to keep the information current! We cannot say this too many times, it seems. *Thanks!*

...that you can register for ACE national events on the ACE web site? Go to [www.aceonline.org](http://www.aceonline.org) and follow the simple instructions to register and pay for national events using *ConveneMachine*, a secure system that allows you to pay event registration fees by credit card. Easy as pie!

## ACE ADDRESS (Ardel, the management company)

ACE's address for membership applications, renewals and event registrations is:

ACE  
EB 110  
PO Box 1691  
Minneapolis, MN 55480-1691

The address for all other correspondence is:

ACE  
13355 Tenth Avenue North, Suite 108  
Minneapolis, MN 55441-5554  
Phone: (763) 765-2322  
Fax: (763) 765-2329

## Welcome to Our Newest Members! (October 2004 - January 2005)

Christiana Millili  
Kristi & Eric Bahme  
Dave & Jordan Palamar  
David Gowell  
Lawrence Bridges  
Kyle Cooper  
Don & Alex Mango  
Colin Jockish  
David Lucas Jr  
Melissa Zimel  
Joseph Baumgartner  
Linette Wille  
Rob Ackerman  
Michael DeMaria  
Robin William  
Amy, Matthew, Joseph  
& Erin Marano

Frank, Kara & Deyna Jeckell  
Scott Dermond  
Gregory & Rita Brandis  
Maria, Joshua & Rob Naehr  
Noel, Michael & Joan Joseph  
Emily, Kelly & Kasey Bender  
Jim Mosier III  
Nicholas D'Ambrosio  
Henry Shuster  
Althea Yenchik  
Barbara Clark  
Pache Barcliffe  
Elisha Hannafey  
Vincent Pesce  
Sandy, Jerry, Nick & Emily  
Pitts



Riders return to the station during ERT at Clementon, September 2004  
Tsunami's lift hill climbs to the heavens behind the brake run.



Tsunami fans Adam Revesz, Ellen Whitman, Kerri Fischer, Derek Ruth and Mark Rosenzweig catch their breath between rides during ERT.



ERT at Clementon winds to a close. ACers buy souvenirs and snacks and talk about, what else? Coasters! Especially Tsunami!

Photos on this page courtesy of Bret Ulozas.