

Boomerangs Are Coming Back

*Complete Lesson plans for teaching the sport of
boomerangs*

by

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Lesson 1

Objective:

- ◆ The students will be able to throw a Backyard Boomerang using the correct form and technique so that it returns within a 5' circle.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1-Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium
- ◆ 1-cone or marker for each group

Setup:

- ◆ Students should work with a partner or in small groups (left handed throwers should be grouped together if possible). This will enable students to help one another with the proper technique. Each group should have an unobstructed circular area of at least 15' in diameter.

Procedure:

- ◆ Explain the proper throwing technique as described below. Emphasize throwing the boomerang with the painted side facing inward towards the thrower, and that boomerangs are thrown vertically and not horizontally like a Frisbee.
- ◆ Allow students time to practice in their groups while you rotate around the field/gymnasium to check technique. When most students are experiencing success, having the boomerang return with some consistency, have them play a game of accuracy. Each student will take three throws in rotation from directly beside the cone, allowing the boomerang to land on the ground. The students with the boomerang landing closest to the cone earns one point. The first student to earn ten points is declared the "Boomstud" or "Boombabe" of the group.

Throwing Technique:

- ◆ Make a fist with the throwing hand, with the fingers curled downward and the thumb extended inward (as if knocking on a door). Pinch the end of one arm of the boomerang, painted side facing inward, between the thumb and the first finger. Cock the boomerang back in the hand so that the closest free arm touches the thrower's forearm.
- ◆ Draw the throwing arm back so that the elbow points back and the boomerang is beside the ear. Using a standard throwing pattern, throw the boomerangs vertically, straight forward, releasing it at eye level and flicking the wrist to impart spin. (It often helps to have a target in the distance such as a tree or post to throw at.) The hand position and wrist flick are similar to that used in knocking on a door. Emphasizing this will help some students keep from throwing sidearm.

- ◆ If throwing outdoors, right handed throwers must have the breeze hitting their left cheek. Left handed throwers should have the breeze hitting their right cheek. Do not attempt to throw the Backyard Boomerang if the wind is too strong as it will cause the boomerang to go out of control.

Safety Considerations:

- ◆ Painted side of the boomerang must be facing inward towards the thrower. Throwing the boomerang with the painted side facing outwards is very dangerous!
- ◆ Make sure each thrower has enough room for the boomerang's full rotation (12'-15'). Right handed throwers need room to the left as the boomerang travels counter-clockwise. Left handed throwers need room to the right as the boomerang travels clockwise.
- ◆ A boomerang should not be thrown in high winds.
- ◆ Don't throw the boomerang when a person is directly in front of you, or in the rotation of the boomerang.
- ◆ Don't try to catch a boomerang thrown incorrectly.
- ◆ Students must be constantly aware of their classmates and other boomerangs.

Problem Solving:

- ◆ *The boomerang lands behind the thrower* – Throw more to the right (RH throwers). The boomerang was thrown too much into the wind.
- ◆ *The boomerang lands in front of the thrower* – Throw more left (RH throwers) or more into the wind.
- ◆ *The boomerang climbs high and crashes to the ground* – The boomerang was thrown too sidearm. Throw the boomerang more vertically.
- ◆ *The boomerang grounds out or travels too close to the ground* – The boomerang was thrown too vertically or over vertical. Throw the boomerang straight up and down or just slightly laid out.
- ◆ *The boomerang loses spin and does not complete full flight pattern* – Loosen grip slightly and throw with more wrist flick to impart spin to the boomerang.
- ◆ *The boomerang does not have enough power to complete a full flight pattern* – Check the thrower's technique. A full arm pattern should be used. He may be trying to push the boomerang rather than throwing it like a ball. The release should be at eye-level as is pitching a baseball. The follow-throw should be straight, not cross-body.

Lesson 2

Objective:

- ◆ The students will be able to catch a thrown Backyard Boomerang using various two-hand and one-hand techniques.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1-Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium
- ◆ 1-cone or marker for each group

Setup:

- ◆ Students should work with a partner or in small groups (left handed throwers should be grouped together if possible). This will enable students to help one another with the proper technique. Each group should have an unobstructed circular area of at least 15' in diameter.

Procedure:

- ◆ Review the proper throwing technique from lesson one. Allow students time to practice so that they become comfortable throwing again.
- ◆ Explain the "sandwich catch". This catch uses two hands to catch the boomerang in a "sandwich". The thrower should face the boomerang as it completes its circular path back to the thrower. Then using one hand as a guide, directly in the path of the boomerang, and the other as a clamp, catch the boomerang flat between the two hands. This is the most basic and easiest of all catches. Allow the students time to practice the "sandwich catch" before moving on to more complex catches.
- ◆ If you are using the ringer style of Backyard Boomerang, the students may want to try a finger catch. To catch the boomerang on the finger, have the thrower point at the circle in the center of the boomerang as it completes its path. The thrower should not jab or jerk at the boomerang, but simply point and allow the boomerang to land on the finger.

Trick Catch:

- ◆ After mastering the basic "sandwich catch" the students may progress to other catches used in Trick Catch competition. Catches are listed below in the order of their completion in competition.
 - 1 – any two hand catch
 - 2 – left hand clean catch (boomerang does not touch any part of the body or arm above the elbow)
 - 3 – right hand clean catch
 - 4 – two handed behind the back catch

- 5 – two handed under the leg catch
- 6 – foot catch (using the feet to catch the boomerang without letting it touch the ground)
- 7 – two hand clean catch
- 8 – left hand eagle catch (coming down over the top of the boomerang)
- 9 – right hand eagle catch
- 10 – one hand behind the back catch
- 11 – one hand under the leg catch
- 12 – foot catch

- ◆ When running an actual Trick Catch event, divide the throwers into groups of four or five throwers. One person at a time will complete all twelve throws on command (instructor commands “THROW”). One point is scored for each completed catch. If two or more competitors complete all twelve catches during the first round, those competitors will continue throwing in round two, completing the same series of catches until a missed catch. The last person remaining still catching is declared the winner.

Lesson 3

Objective:

- ◆ The students will use creative one and two handed catching techniques to catch a Backyard Boomerang in a game of “RANG”.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1 – Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium

Setup:

- ◆ Students will work in groups of four to six students each. Each group should have an unobstructed circular area of at least 15’ in diameter.

Procedure:

- ◆ Review the proper throwing technique from lesson one, and the various catching techniques from lesson two. Allow students time to practice so that they become comfortable throwing and catching again.
- ◆ After a brief warm-up time, explain the game of RANG. It is similar to the basketball shooting game of HORSE. Allow the students to play RANG until there is a winner in each group. Rearrange groups so that the students can compete against other classmates.

RANG:

- ◆ Decide what order each person will be throwing in. The throwing order remains the same throughout the entire game. The first thrower makes a throw and a catch. The

catch can be ANY catch as long as the boomerang does not touch the ground. The next thrower must then attempt to make the same catch. If he/she is successful, the next thrower must also make that same catch. If he/she is not successful he/she earns the letter "R". The next thrower is then free to attempt any catch he desires. If he is successful, the thrower following him must make the same catch or earn a letter.

- ◆ Once a player earns all four letters – RANG – that player continues to throw in turn, but the throws and catches do not count against anyone else. An alternative would be to have the player with RANG rotate into another group.
- ◆ Encourage the students to be creative in making their catches. Suggestions include jumping catches, head catches, smiling hip catches, and hackeys (hitting the boomerang into the air with a body part before catching it).

Lesson 4

Objective:

- ◆ The students will be able to throw and catch a Backyard Boomerang in the individual and team game of Position.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1 – Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium
- ◆ 1 – cone or marker for each group

Setup:

- ◆ Students will work in groups of four to six students each. Each group should have an unobstructed circular area of at least 15' in diameter.

Procedure:

- ◆ Review the proper throwing technique from lesson one, and the various catching techniques from lesson two. Allow students time to practice so that they become comfortable throwing and catching again.
- ◆ After a brief warm-up time, explain the game of Position. Review some of the problem solving techniques from lesson one so that the students will be able to adjust their throws to make the boomerang come to the desired area. Have the students play an individual game first, where each person is his/her own team. Then group the students into teams so that some of the more accurate throwers are grouped with those that are not as strong.

Position:

- ◆ Two or three teams of four players can compete against each other in an area. Decide what order each person will be throwing in. The throwing order remains the same throughout the entire game. The first thrower from the first team makes a throw from

beside the cone and catches the boomerang when it returns. He stands at that spot, or places his boomerang on the ground to mark where he caught it. If the thrower does not catch the boomerang, he takes two steps (approximately 4') away from where the boomerang dropped going away from the starting cone. The first thrower from the second team then throws and catches his boomerang in the same manner.

- ◆ Then second thrower from the first team must throw his boomerang from the spot marked by the first thrower. The object of the game is to have your team finish closest to the cone after each player has completed two throws in rotation. Each consecutive thrower attempts to get closer to the cone by throwing off-wind or more into the wind to cause the boomerang to land in the desired spot. It is helpful to have the more skilled throwers at the end of the rotations.
- ◆ To play the game without teams, have each thrower make four throws in rotation, each time trying to get closer and closer to the starting cone.

Lesson 5

Objectives:

- ◆ The students will be able to throw and catch a Backyard Boomerang in an accuracy and relay game of Round Rang Relay.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1 – Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium
- ◆ 1 – 5' to 10' circle in the center of the field or gym (marked by a hoop, tape, rope...)

Setup:

- ◆ Divide class into teams of four students each. Position each team evenly away from the circle, out of the path of thrown boomerangs.

Procedure:

- ◆ Review the proper throwing technique from lesson one, and the various catching techniques from lesson two. Allow students time to practice so that they become comfortable throwing and catching again. After a brief warm-up time, explain the game of Round Rang Relay.

Round Rang Relay:

- ◆ Round Rang Relay is a relay race in which the students run to the circle, throw and catch their boomerang, run back from the circle, and tap the next person. Each person goes twice in this relay. The first team finished is declared the winner.
- ◆ The teacher gives the commands "On your mark, get set, go." The first person from each team runs out to the circle and throws his boomerang. He tries to catch it upon its return. No matter where the boomerang is caught, the student runs back to the circle,

and then back to his team and taps the next person. (If the boomerang returns to the thrower in the circle then he just has to run back and tap the next person.) If the student does not catch his boomerang, he must retrieve his boomerang and immediately throw again from the circle. No matter if the second throw is caught or not, the student then retrieves his boomerang and runs to his team to tap the next person. Each student will have two complete turns in this relay in order for the team to be finished.

- ◆ Increasing the distance from the circle that the teams start will increase the anaerobic level reached during this activity. Younger students may be placed about 10' from the circle, while older students may be placed 10 yards. This also depends on how large of an area there is to use.

Lesson 6 A Mini Boomerang Tournament

Objective:

- ◆ The students will compete in four events that are currently used in USBA (United States Boomerang Association) tournaments: fast catch, accuracy, trick catch, and endurance.

Equipment:

- ◆ 1 – Backyard Boomerang for each student (left handed throwers MUST have left handed boomerangs, which are so marked)
- ◆ Large open field or gymnasium
- ◆ 1 – 5' to 10' circle for each group (marked by a hoop, tape, rope...)
- ◆ 1 – stopwatch for each group
- ◆ 1 – cone or marker for each group

Setup:

- ◆ Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Each group will compete in its own area. Students not throwing at any given time are to act as judges for the student in his group who is throwing.

Procedure:

- ◆ The first event will be **fast catch**. The object of this event is to throw and catch a boomerang from the circle five times as quickly as possible. The thrower must return to the circle after each catch, and each throw must be taken from within the circle. The time is started on the first throw, and is stopped when the thrower makes his fifth catch and returns to the circle. (The teacher may want to impose a time limit, such as three minutes, as the maximum time in which each contestant must complete five throws and catches.) Record each score and award placing points as designated.
- ◆ The next even will be **accuracy**. Each student will get five turns, in rotation, to try and land his boomerang closest to the cone in the center of the circle. In this event, the thrower is not to catch or touch the boomerang before it hits the ground. If the

boomerang lands touching the cone, the thrower is awarded 5 points. If it lands inside the circle, but not touching the cone, he is awarded 3 points. If it lands on the line, the thrower earns 2 points. Any boomerangs landing outside the circle earn the thrower 1 point. The winner is the person with the highest total score for all five throws.

- ◆ The third event is **trick catch**. If there is enough room for more students to throw at one time, partner the students so that one person throws while the other counts the number of successful catches. Otherwise, have one student from each group throw at a time, with the other students counting successful catches. Each student will throw on command and try to complete the twelve catches in order as explained in lesson two. Record the number of successful catches for each student. You may want to have a "throw-off" if two or more students tie for first place. In a "throw-off" the competitors that are tied continue doing the trick catches in order until a drop. The winner is the student who completes the most catches.
- ◆ The last event is **endurance**. The object of this event is to complete the most catches in a given amount of time. USBA rules have the participants throwing for five minutes. You may want to shorten the time for younger students. In endurance, one person per group throws at a time. The teacher gives the command "Ready, THROW," and keeps time for each round, yelling "STOP" when time is up. The students who are not throwing should count the number of catches completed in the given time. Each throw must be made from within the circle. Catches count no matter where they are made. The winner is the person who completes the highest number of catches in the given time.

Scoring:

- ◆ For each event, give placing points as follows:

1st place – 11 points
2nd place – 10 points
3rd place – 9 points
4th place – 8 points
5th place – 7 points
6th place – 6 points
7th place – 5 points
8th place – 4 points
9th place – 3 points
10th place – 2 points
11th place – 1 point

- ◆ In the case of a tie, add the placing points for that place and the next place, divide by two, and award that number of points to each person tying. For example, John and Amy tied for third place in accuracy. Add the third and fourth place points together ($9+8=17$), and divide by two ($17/2=8.5$). Amy and John each earn 8.5 points. The next highest person will receive the fifth place points. If three people tie, add the three placing point values together and divide by three.

SCORE SHEET

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