

## The buzz on the X Trials

"It's all so cool. I can't wait to go especially because it's free."

— Matt Herens

"I've seen things like that on TV and can't wait to see it for real."

— Andrea Albert

"Girl, I don't know nothing about the X Games. I'm not really into that kind of stuff."

— Lauren Barnard

"I like the Disney movie Brink. I think it's really cool even though I could never do it."

— Hannah Clifton

**"THE X GAMES ARE COOL!"**

— Kurt Galvan

"I was never interested in skateboarding and Rollerblading."

— Emily Mensel

"The X Games are cool. I own a skateboard and they are my heroes."

— Tomek Furtak

"A waste of time. I don't like seeing people being thrown up in the air."

— Hanna Furey

"I think it's an honor to have such a big sports tournament come to our city."

— Lindsey McDowell

"It's good and has good sports."

— Lisa Albert

"I don't even know what the X Games are."

— Patrick Mellon

"I think it would be a good idea because ESPN is near Lake Compounce. It's fun and people should go watch it to do something different."

— Rebecca Wilk

"It's OK. Yes, I would go see it. It sounds like fun."

— Mary Pelletier

"I love the X Games! I think it's a great idea to have it at Lake Compounce so I can go and see it. I love to Rollerblade."

— Sam Guenther

"It's all right. It's another thing for kids to do."

— Chantal Gauvin

"Just great that ESPN is in Bristol... and is bringing one of their events home."

— John Krampitz, history teacher

**"I JUST WANT TO GO."**

— Chris Knibbs

"I didn't hear about that."

— Sarah Schilling

"It's a great idea. It'll influence more kids to go Rollerblading."

— Garrett Lavertu

"I'll try to get there if I can. I'm looking forward to seeing Mat Hoffman. He's my favorite athlete."

— Scott MacDonald

"I think they're pretty exciting. They have a high element of risk."

— Mary Hyde, science teacher

"They're cool. We need a skate park in Bristol."

— Kenny Bujak

# ESPN comes home for the X Trials

By MIKE NGUYEN  
The Tattoo

Sun, skates, and a whole lot of teenagers are expected to attend the exciting and gravity-defying X Trials this summer, coming this month to Grand Prairie, Texas and next month to ESPN's home sweet home: Bristol, Conn.

And what better place to throw a Generation X event than Lake Compounce, the oldest running theme park in the nation?

This weekend extravaganza will take place June 15-17, just in time for Father's Day and will feature a variety of sports, including "men's and women's park and vert aggressive in-line skating; flatland, park and vert bicycle stunt and park and vert skateboarding," according to information released by ESPN.

If you have no clue what any of that means, it's not for the faint-hearted.

Just think lots of people in the air with bikes, Rollerblades, and skateboards.

The X Trials started in 1997 as an afterthought following the successful debut of the X Games in Providence, R.I. and Orlando,



Photo courtesy of ESPN

An in-line skater shows his best moves at an ESPN extreme event in Japan this year.

Fla.

This year's seventh annual summer games will be held in Philadelphia starting August 17. Just hope no one tries to ollie over that Liberty Bell.

But back to this year's X Trials. There are two qualifying

rounds for the X Games — the first will be held in Texas in a couple of weeks — and then the final Trials in Bristol.

The Trials will be taped (yes, that means anyone who is there might be on international television) and covered extensively by

ESPN, Bristol's shining sports network. The tapes will be shown over the summer a number of times on the network.

It's about time ESPN held an event in its hometown, don't you think?

And since ESPN's hosting this shindig, expect some just as big names in the extreme sports league.

Although not confirmed, skater star Colin McKay and BMX bike gods Dave Mirra and Ryan Nyquist are just some of the names expected to travel to Bristol for the Trials.

And yes, even Tony Hawk, the skateboard legend himself, is slated to grace Lake Compounce with his presence. Yes, he's the one that made the top-selling video game, Tony Hawk Pro Skater.

Oh yeah, did we mention it's free? That's right, you won't need to spend a dime on admission into Lake Compounce to see the event, but it wouldn't hurt spending a few extra bucks to try the new Boulder Dash roller coaster while you're there.

But, anyone can release his or her extremeness at the Xperience, "a free of charge interactive zone where specta-

tors of all ages can 'do what they view,'" according to the X Trials flyer.

What exactly are these spectators going to view? Sport-climbing, skateboarding, and bungee jumping.

Again, not for the faint-hearted to watch.

Hey, things like this don't come every day in Connecticut. The event is expected to bring tens of thousands of people into Bristol from around the region and extreme sports world, not counting the millions of TV viewers who will watch.

So if you can, grab your board, your bike, or your blades, and slide on down to Lake Compounce for an exciting weekend of wheels and gravity. Can't make it personally? No problem.

The Tattoo, your favorite teen-filled newspaper, will be recapping the days' events and getting you behind-the-scenes at the Trials with your favorite and not-so-favorite stars on the spot.

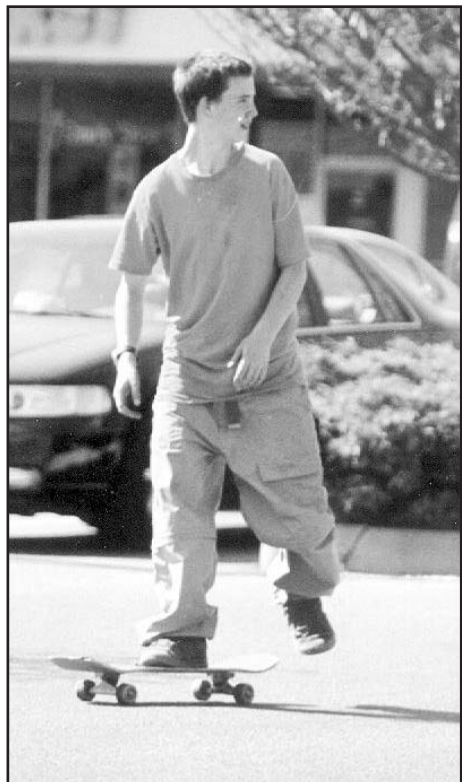
All of this will be available through our website at [www.ReadTheTattoo.com](http://www.ReadTheTattoo.com), so check us out on the Internet if you can't make it to the real event.

## Gotta love those blades, bikes, boards

By SARA GREENE  
The Tattoo

With the X Trials competition at Lake Compounce zooming up faster than a skater on wheels, the excitement in the area is growing.

Like teens throughout the country, local youths are really into the three



Sarah Jordan / The Tattoo

sports that will be showcased at the X Trials: inline skating, skateboarding, and freestyle BMX.

ESPN and Lake Compounce are expecting fans from all over to make the trip to Bristol next month to watch the X Trials.

"The X Games are cool," said Tomek Furtak, a student at Chippens Hill Middle School. "I own a skateboard and they are my heroes."

Beyond the many Connecticut teenagers who head to Lake Compounce to check out the X Trials will be those who dare to compete.

Steve Landyr, a 17-year-old junior at Watertown High School, said he'll compete in freestyle BMX if there is an amateur class.

Landyr, who learned freestyle BMX from a couple friends seven years ago, is serious about his sport. He said being a good athlete not only takes talent but practice.

Three to four nights a week, Landyr practices at the CT Bike on South Street in Bristol. He also practices at the Woodbury Skate Park and the Woodbury Trails.

Landyr said he does freestyle BMX, "for the fun and challenge."

Since he began BMX riding, Landyr said, he's suffered one major accident. A year ago, he fell off his bike doing a dou-

ble spin and ruptured his spleen. Landyr said the accident only made him better at his sport.

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For 14-year-old Sam Guenther of Bristol, inline skating is the best.

Since her aunt taught her how to in-line skate five years ago, it's become Guenther's favorite sport.

But for Guenther, it's more than just a hobby — it's life.

"It's fun and gives you a rush of energy," said Guenther.

Guenther said she'll probably go to the X Trials at Lake Compounce.

She wants to see all the cool, new Rollerblading moves, Guenther said, and has even thought of competing in the Trials.

Whether you're a spectator or a player, X Trial fever is sweeping Bristol.

Don Aliff, an eighth grade student at Northeast Middle School, thinks of skateboarding as a real adrenaline pumper.

Aliff taught himself to skateboard two years ago after watching people do it on television and around his neighborhood.



Mike Nguyen / The Tattoo

James Gilbert, a student at Bristol Eastern High School, rides a bike at CT Bike.

Skateboarding, Aliff said, is "fun and the ultimate high."

Aliff is certain to be at the X Trials watching, but he said he's not good enough to compete yet.

For plenty of local teens and others who turn out to watch — or compete in — the X Trials, Father's Day weekend at Lake Compounce will be a once-in-a-lifetime event.

"I think it's an honor to have such a big sports tournament come to our city," said Lindsey McDowell, a Chippens Hill student.

## Teens need nurturing, guidance, not guns

By KAISHI LEE  
The Tattoo

America should ban guns in all 50 states.

Its Constitution allows citizens to bear arms so they can shoot wild animals. It is more than two centuries old, yet presidents are afraid to rewrite it.

Innocent lives are endangered.

Not long ago, a 6-year-old girl

### Opinion

was shot by her kindergarten schoolmate. Think about the Columbine High School incident that left the nation in shock. Post-Columbine incidents kept the nation in fear. Lives ended with just one shot....

Killing is murder. Juveniles in America should be dealt with

severely for killing. They should know that carrying a gun and shooting people is wrong.

One major problem is that parents are so busy with work and their careers that they forget their children need family warmth and love. Parents should nurture their active minds about guns, punishment and life.

Secondly, schools should be on the lookout for troublemak-

ers. All schools have cliques. Students not in cliques are the "outcasts." They desire true acceptance and join the "Outsiders" group. They thirst for revenge and popularity. Remember Dylan and Eric....

Schools in America should have gun-detecting devices. They should invite guest speakers to give talks on the dangers of handling weapons, including guns.

Teenagers are going through puberty. They are changing. They need to know what is right and wrong. If they are more aware, they will get on the right track.

A teenager should consider his moral values, his upbringing, his subconscious mind and his integrity before pulling the trigger.

Lee is a 15-year-old student in Singapore.

## The Prom: outdated and overrated

By SARAH JORDAN  
The Tattoo

It's the middle of the crunch at the end of the school year, but nobody is talking about school work, which classes they're flunking, or which teachers they hate.

The topics of today's lunchroom chats are all centered on dresses and dates. It's that time again: The Prom is just around the corner.

Since before I came to high school I've been an opponent of this time-honored tradition.

Stop and think for a moment, do you really know why there are proms? The answer is simple. Back in the good old days when almost no one went beyond high school, and many didn't finish it, the people of various communities needed a way to get their daughters married.

What they came up with was an ancestor of the modern prom.

The original purpose of a prom was to meet your mate before you walked up the aisle. This is a seriously outdated concept. No one with any sense gets married as a teenager anymore.

Besides the origin of the prom I also dislike how drastically it has changed.

Sure it might be a good idea to get young people of opposite sexes to realize each other exist, but is that really what goes on at modern proms? I doubt it.

In my experience, high school, and junior high school for that matter, dances don't really encourage meeting people.

For one thing, the lights are usually so low you can hardly see. The music is often so loud that conversation is impossible.

To suggest that high school-aged kids don't realize there are members of the opposite sex out there is also rather dated.

How often do you hear the term "teen pregnancy?" This is one of the places those statistics come from.

If you were smart, would you put a bunch of teens together in a dark room where you can hardly hear yourself scream? Would you do it if there was little way for you to know if alcohol was being brought in?

Sure, call me a downer. But it's not that I'm against fun. I'd just rather be able to see what I'm doing. I'd also like to be able to talk to people, meet people.

I thought that was the intent of these things anyway.

If we must have a prom, could it be less focused on dresses and dates? Could we do something besides dancing, groping and falling down drunk?

Maybe we don't need to get rid of proms, just change them.

Perhaps we don't even need to do that. If we could have other events, not just dances and football games, wouldn't it better accomplish that original goal — to get young people together outside the classroom?

*Dances don't really encourage meeting people... the lights are usually so low you can hardly see. The music is often so loud that conversation is impossible.*