

# Breaking the Mould <sup>Den</sup> Rahmen sprengen

Bob Carr, Ahrensburg, Germany

**T**his last winter a strange thing happened to me. I was paid by the German government to not work. This is thanks to Calvin, my new son, and the maternity leave I received because of him. With this free time I did what any good juggler would, I visited lots of conventions. In the last four months I have been to eight conventions. (Calvin is now 7 months old and he has been to seven conventions – crazy!) Most of the conventions followed the same formula: Open Stage, Gala Show, Games, with workshops somewhere in between. But there are a few conventions that I visited in the last while that stood out from the rest and deserve mentioning because they are conventions that break the mould.

## J-Camp

The first convention you will find on the Mornington Peninsula, Southeast from Melbourne, on the first weekend in February. University has just started and most are back from summer holidays and this is when the juggling clubs of Melbourne rent a Boy Scout Camp and meet for a weekend of juggling. Nothing happens in the first week of university so it is the perfect time to take off. What is strange about this convention is that instead of inviting a bunch of jugglers to your city for a meeting, a bunch of jugglers from one city meet out in the bush (plus a couple of people that flew in from Perth and from Sydney). There are no official shows, workshops or games. Just a weekend of juggling in nature. Anything that is planned just happens

and everyone finds out. The first time I visited in 2010 a renegade-style open stage happened on the Saturday evening followed by some fire play. This year the desire for a show wasn't there so it wasn't made to be.

Each time I have been there it has been at a different Boy Scout Camp that is equipped with different things, so each time different things happen. Places to play fire or have a show didn't exist at one place, and another had an archery range so you never know what to expect at J-Camp. The one thing you can expect is good food and good company. All of the meals are organised and prepared by the good company that attends.

If you are interested in attending next February, just contact anyone from the University of Melbourne Juggling Club ([www.juggling-club.com](http://www.juggling-club.com)) or Juggle Lab.

## Sudenburg Night of Juggling

For one night in April, in between Hamburg and Hanover, you will find exactly seven hours of juggling and unicycling in Sudenburg. On my drive out to this middle-of-nowhere place, the thought crossed my mind if it was worth it for just one evening of juggling. I am used to having everything spread out over a weekend or more and the idea of having it all crammed into one evening seemed like stress, but I was pleasantly surprised. The time was limited and I had to have all of my fun now and not put it off till the next day.

The idea of a one-day convention isn't new, especially in places where having people sleep in a gym is forbidden.

Last year Hamburg had a night of juggling with disco and gala show which you wouldn't find in Sudenburg because their focus was more on the sport side of juggling. Combat, Jolley Ball and Volley Club Tournament were the highlights of the evening.

Next year mid-April check out [www.sportjongleure.de](http://www.sportjongleure.de) for an intense evening dose of juggling.

## Tropical Islands Invasion



*Tropical Island © Sarah Richter*

Just south of Berlin in a huge dome that was originally intended as a hanger to build giant airships you will now find a rain forest, sauna and water park known as Tropical Islands. During the coldest part of winter jugglers invade this tropical paradise.

This is more about hanging out with other jugglers in bikini or swimwear for three days when it is frozen outside. Instead of workshops and shows there was swimming and sauna. No sleeping in tents or the gym, but on the beach. There was lots of beach volleyball played. The juggling games were held at midnight after most of the normal people had gone home, so we had enough room to play and after the sauna had closed so that most of the jugglers were no longer in the sauna. (Maybe next year the games will happen in the sauna.)

What makes this convention different is that jugglers invade a fun place that is open to the public. You can come early, leave late, enjoy the attractions

and do it all with fun juggler friends. Registration and costs happen individually through the water park. There are restaurants in the park but most brought their own food, even though it was not allowed. For the feeling of sand between your toes while you juggle rings on the beach with no wind,