



GRIPPING THE WAVE
by
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Growing up in Canoga Park, California, my family would go on vacation in the summer to Rosarita Beach in Mexico. My dad brought inflatable for us to ride the waves. I, along with my Uncle Bud, cousins, brothers and sisters all had a great time.

One day, when I was 9 years old, I had been riding the waves and my hand began to hurt really bad. I looked and saw a rope burn in my palm from holding on tightly to the nylon rope on my raft each time I would catch a wave. I showed it to my mom and told her that there should be handlebars on the rafts to prevent getting rope burns. She said, "That would not work, there is no way to attach the handlebars to a raft."

A few years later, rafts had been banned from use at beaches, and instead many were using Morey Boogie Boards. These were fun to use and soon some had a strap you could hold on to while riding. I would use the strap and found that with a lot of wave riding the strap would stretch and my hands would hurt. This was the same problem I experienced with the nylon rope on the rafts. Kids who didn't have the strap or didn't want to use it would complain that their hands would get hurt when they rode onto the beach. As they held the sides of the boards with their hands their fingers lapped around the bottom of the board. These fingers would scrape against sand and/or rocks when they hit the beach. Once again I found myself wanting to put handlebars on my body board.

We were still living in Canoga Park, California when my dad started taking me to Topanga Beach. At that time there were still houses on the beach and it wasn't a state park. It was a friendly community of boogie boarders and surfers all just wanting to have fun in the waves and the sun.

I was using the short board most of the time then but soon chose a longer board. As the years passed I found my desire to be on the beach around surfers and boogie boarders was so strong that I would hitchhike there on weekends and sometimes I would even ditch school to be there. I was using surfboards and body boards by then. Both were fun and the body boards were getting better.

I had also taken to skateboarding. I am sure I was developing better skills at both by learning the different techniques and skills of both riding waves and riding concrete.

As I grew older I found more and more surfers and boogie boarders on the beach. We all seemed to be maneuvering and trying for the same waves. I decided to take a break and try to develop my idea of handlebars on a boogie board.

The first few I made, broke or would not float well. I then took an old Morey board the one with the orange bottom. I then took a longer board and cut it down to the same size as the Morey board, attached a handlebar through it with bolts, near the front. I scooped out an area under each handle grip to make room for my fingers. I used polyurethane and bolts to hold them together and covered the top with roofing material. This is the design that worked best. It was hard on top like a surfboard but now had a new way to keep better control of it. This was also the one Gary Revel and I would later take and give to Mattel Toys with an idea that they might go into business with us to manufacture the boards. That has not happened, as yet.

By the time I finished making this one, that really worked great, I realized that I needed to patent it. I looked in the yellow pages for a Patent lawyer and pretty much just started dialing. After a few thousand dollars changed hands and about a year later I had my patent. Besides the simple idea of a board with handles, the patent also covered a hooded version and a knee board.

I decided to take it to Mattel because that is where Tom Morey, who had brought his boogie board to beaches around the world, was positioned. Mattel had bought his company and he went with it to Mattel. I called Mattel and talked to a number of people telling them all about my boogie board with the handlebar. They arranged for us, Gary Revel and myself, to bring it to



them. By then Gary had signed an agreement with me to represent me as a manager/agent in the effort to bring the board to market.

We drove to Mattel, on the day arranged, and walked into the building and to the front desk. I told the very attractive lady at the front desk who I was and why I was there. She came around from behind the desk and picked up the board, said she'd be sure to get it to the right people. Gary thanked her, as she took the board up a flight of stairs and disappeared.

We decided to leave it at that and drove back to Canoga Park.

About a month later Gary and I were notified that Mattel would not be making a body board with handles.

I went back to the design stage and started making new boards with soft foam tops, plastic grips and just in general better boards. With these new boards I often drew fans that wanted to use them when I would take them to the beach. Gary also took them to the beach, doing his own research, and found children especially liked them. He told me that his most heard comment besides them being just lots of fun, more fun than a regular board, was that the kids didn't hurt their hands on the sand when they rode up on the beach.

About that time I contacted Real TV. They really liked the idea and after some time and effort on both our parts did a show which featured my body board with handles.

After this I would be recognized, occasionally, while I was on the beach and riding the waves. Many would ask to use them, try them out for themselves, which I always tried to accommodate.

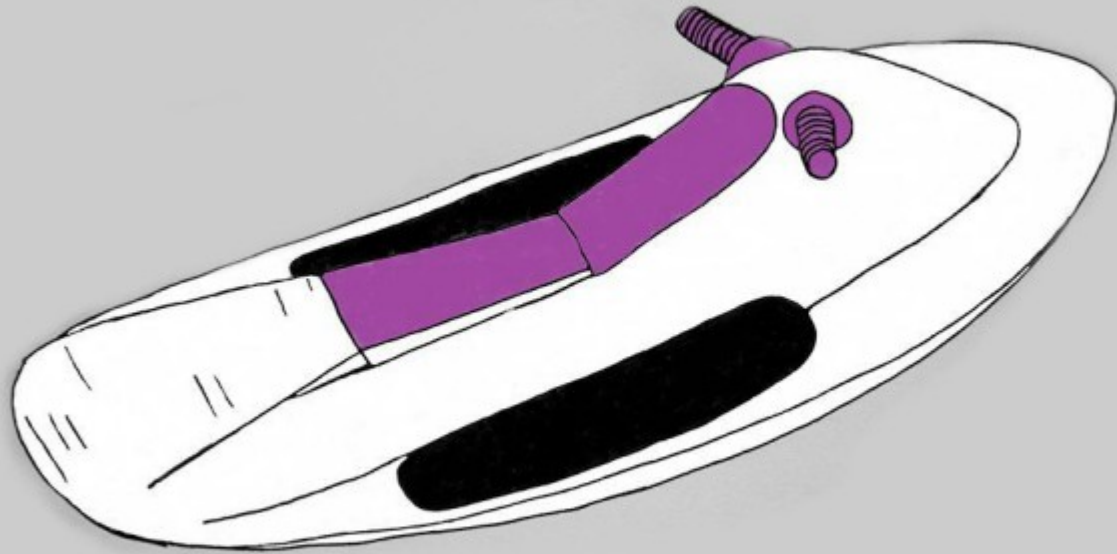
I kept making new prototypes, always trying to find better ways to make the perfect board. I didn't really have a budget as such so had to be creative in finding ways to make new prototypes. I gave a couple to an attorney, who had signed with us to help get the board to market and also to a business associate in India who had a company that thought they could make it happen. Gary and I are still waiting on both those efforts. I would even give one to someone at the beach, once in a while, just to be doing it.

I now had over 20 different prototypes. Each one unique but still very similar over all. Now we have a new unique design and have a new patent on it. We have named this one, Bike Grip Board. The maneuverability and control of these boards is terrific. Everyone that tries it loves it. I no longer try to contact Mattel, or any other company that makes body boards or surfboards. We put up a Web Site, <http://bikegripboard.com> and are leaving it for interested parties to find us. We have a couple of different models in our patent that covers even sitting and kneeling on one. A person can change their position as they ride the wave on this one. Materials for making boards, handles and bike grips continue to improve. Overall the board will only get better as time goes by.

I am looking back over the years and remembering that as a young boy I wanted handles on the things I was using to ride the waves at the beach and I have what I dreamed of. I dreamed of having handles on an inflatable raft and then a boogie board and now it is the body board that has become the thing that really works well with the bike grips. Today I can go to the beach anytime and have exactly what I wanted when I first thought of it at 6 years of age. Having more control and maneuverability is the ultimate reality of that dream come true. I don't plan to stop letting people know about it until everyone can get the same thrill I get when I catch that first wave on any day I choose to be on the beach.



BIKE GRIP BOARD



<http://bikegripboard.com>

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