

Leo Baier makes 52-piece Bunnock sets, shown above, from pastern bones of horses.

"BUNNOCK IS BOOMING"

Small Town Loves This Bone-Throwing Game

If you're looking for something completely different to do on summer vacation, look no farther than Macklin, Sask.

The western Canadian border community of about 1,200 hosts what's believed to be the largest "Bunnock" tournament in the world. Bunnock is a sort of cross between horseshoes and lawn bowling played with the pastern bones (bone between the hoof and fetlock) of horses. It's believed to have originated with the Russian cavalry and was brought to Macklin by the area's German-Russian settlers in the early 1900's.

The game had been nearly forgotten until three years ago. That's when townsfolk organized the first-ever world Bunnock (spelling's their own) tournament.

"We've brought the game back from near oblivion in a big way," says Macklin mayor John Feser.

Last summer, 128 teams of four players apiece - most from Macklin or with relatives in Macklin - competed for cash and prizes of up to \$2,500 in the first tournament. In 1995, more than 200 teams are expected for the Aug. 4-6 championship.

The community has become so enthusiastic about Bunnock it even erected a 35-

ft. high by 16-ft. wide tourist information booth shaped like a Bunnock bone on the edge of town.

Part of the attraction of the game is that it can be played by young and old alike, Feser says. "Our youngest contestant last year was 6 and our oldest was 85," he says.

The game is played with a set of 52 pastern bones. Twenty white bones are lined up opposite 20 other white bones on a 35-ft. court. A blue "guard bone" is placed at both ends of the row of white bones and eight red bones. The object of the game is to use eight red throwing bones to knock over guard bones first, then white bones. The first team to knock down all the white bones wins.

Leo and Mary Baier, of Baiers Boutique in Macklin, make the painted bunnock sets. They get the bones from an Alberta horse slaughtering plant. Sets sell for \$150.

The Baiers have received orders for Bunnock sets from "everywhere there are people of German-Russian ancestry," Mary says.

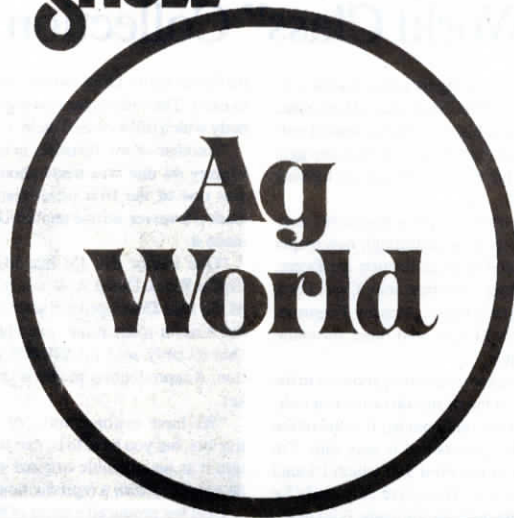
Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Macklin Bunnock Committee, Box 326 Sask., Canada S0L 2C0 (ph 306 753-2333; fax 753-2676).



Big Bale "Locomotive"

Put 14 round bales in a row, add some colorful dressings made mostly from scrap materials, and you have an eye-catching "bale train," say Don and Judy Tyler, Conneautville, Penn. The first three bales are covered with black plastic to form the locomotive while the back two bales are covered with red fabric to form the caboose. Both the locomotive and caboose are equipped with "cabs" made by setting small square bales on top of the round bales and covering them. The train's wheels are made from spacers off old semi trucks, as well as disc blades and old car hub caps. All are spray painted silver. There's a pair of smokestacks at the front of the locomotive. A light bulb mounted inside a 5-gal. bucket and hooked up to an extension cord serves as the locomotive's headlight. The "cow catcher" is made from an old bulldozer grille.

FARM SHOW



Big Brutus, the one-of-a-kind coal shovel, is 16 stories tall and weighs 5,500 tons. Note size of jeep in foreground.

"BIGGEST" TOURIST ATTRACTION AROUND Giant Mining Shovel Brings Visitors To Kansas

A long-time FARM SHOW subscriber who's also had a few inventions of his own featured in the magazine over the years, recently stopped in to tell us about one of the most unusual tourist attractions in America.

Hollis Orr of Cannon Falls, Minn., says he became fascinated by the "Big Brutus" electric coal shovel after hearing about it last year. He sent for more information and recently dropped off photos and literature.

The Big Brutus is one of the world's two largest shovels ever built. At 160 ft., it stands taller than a 15-story building. It took 150 rail cars to ship all the components of the shovel to a P & M coal mine near Hallowell, Kan., in 1962. A crew of 52 men were employed to erect it. Once in place, it operated 24 hrs. a day for 11 years until it was finally shut down in 1974 when the mine closed.

The gigantic machine mounts on huge hydraulic jacks riding on four crawler tracks, each powered by a 250 hp. electric motor. The jacks automatically kept the shovel in the level position on the uneven pit floor. Hydraulic oil was supplied to the four jacks by a 3,200-gal. reservoir. Each jack cylinder is 42 in. dia. with a stroke of 66 in.

The shovel could dig as much as 150 tons - or more than 90 cu. yds. - in one scoop, which was enough to fill three railroad cars.

The 11,000,000-lb. machine had an electric power plant that produced 7,500 hp. under normal operating conditions and 15,000 hp. under peak loads, using as much electric power as a community of 15,000 people. It took four cables, 3 1/2 in. thick and powered by eight 500-hp. electric motors, to lift the bucket. Maximum reach of the boom was 150 ft., maximum dumping height 101 ft., and maximum digging depth 69 ft. Top speed was .22 mph. Big Brutus cost the mining company \$6.5 million. It was built by the By Cyrus-Erie company.

Big Brutus did not dig coal. The huge bucket removed rocks and dirt over coal seams. Then it would roll back as coal strippers moved in.

The electric bill during its last month of operation in 1974 was \$27,000. It was "retired" to a strip of ground next to the pit, which was later filled with water to create a recreation area. In 1984, the P & M mining company donated the big shovel, along with \$100,000 for restoration work, to a group that included many of the workers who originally worked on the behemoth. Big Brutus now sits inside a 10,000 acre Kansas state park and tours regularly take visitors to the top of the big shovel's boom.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Big Brutus, Inc., P.O. Box 25, West Mineral Kan. 66782 (ph 316 827-6177).