

FREESTYLE

2008 SEASON WRAP-UP

Contributing writers: Richy & Maria Carrasco, Keith Butterfield, Rene "Shigueto" Marubayashi, Stefan Åkesson, Emily Bettis, Bob Staton

With street skating at its peak and skateparks in nearly every city – could freestyle be re-emerging? The answer is yes – freestyle is alive, well and growing. Today there are manufacturers catering to this discipline of skateboarding, and with the help of the Internet, skaters are networked – sharing videos, trick tips and equipment advice, creating a global freestyle community. In this current era, most skaters get into freestyle because they are motivated by the challenge of trying to become the next Rodney Mullen or any other legendary freestyle hero. It's a mix of old-school influence with a new-school perspective — the new generation striving to make their own mark.

Momentum for the sport is building with fresh talent and new events every year. Here's a look at some major competition highlights from this past season.

■ TROCADERO GRAND PRIX PARIS, FRANCE (MAY 2008)

A favorite destination on the international slalom circuit, the annual event in the heart of Paris is now an epic locale for freestyle competition too. After years of impromptu freestyle jam sessions following the racing main events, the organizers decided to incorporate a freestyle contest into the event lineup this time around. The location in front of the Eiffel Tower can't be beat, and the crowds were impressed with the professional level of skating shown over the weekend. This year's event attracted both pro and am freestylers from all over the globe, including Brazil, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, France, Latvia, Canada and USA. The enthusiasm of the guys who showed up here to compete was incredible. Most of them skated non-stop for five days

straight — almost like they were at a freestyle training camp and couldn't get enough of it! Here are the top results of the weekend:

Freestyle

1. Günter Mokulys (GER)
2. Stefan "Lillis" Åkesson (SWE)
3. Rene "Shigueto" Marubayashi (BRA)

FS Battle Zone:

1st place Rene "Shigueto" Marubayashi (BRA)

FS Best Trick:

1st place Rene "Shigueto" Marubayashi (BRA)

High Jump

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Vincent Langlade (FRA) | 135cm (53") |
| 2. Martins Liepins (LAT) | 120cm (47") |
| 3. Dominik Kowalski (GER) | 120cm (47") |

■ US NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS OF FREESTYLE SKATEBOARDING

WEST COAST/EAST COAST, SEPTEMBER 2008

The Nationals consisted of two events, one on the West Coast in Glendale, Calif. and one on the East Coast in Wake Forest, N.C. Some top freestyle pros from around the world showed up on both coasts to compete along with the US skaters. Tommy Harward, Jeremy Elder and Bob Staton worked together to put on this two-part event. At Glendale, Kendra Bell set the new women's high jump record at 42" and former Bones Brigadier Kevin Harris took first place in the Masters and 360 events. At Wake Forest, Günter Mokulys from Germany took first place, holding off local hero Tommy Harward. Young gun Greyson Asthon swept the Am division on both coasts. The top results of the Nationals are as follows:

Glendale:

Masters

1. Kevin Harris (CAN)
2. Stefan "Lillis" Åkesson (SWE)
3. Keith Butterfield (USA)

Pro Battle

1. Alex Liebendorfer (USA)
2. Keith Butterfield (USA)
3. Darryl Grogan (USA)

Jr. Battle

1. Greyson Asthon (USA)
2. Bastian Åkesson (SWE)
3. Alex Liebendorfer (USA)

360s

- | | |
|----------------------------|------|
| 1. Kevin Harris (CAN) | 38.5 |
| 2. Bob Asthon (USA) | 30 |
| 3. Keith Butterfield (USA) | 10 |

Men's High Jump

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Vertron Russell (USA) | 51" (129.54cm) |
| 2. LeVon Staton (USA) | 51" (129.54cm) |
| 3. Rene "Shigueto" Marubayashi (BRA) | 48" (122cm) |

Women's High Jump-

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Kendra Bell (USA) 42" (107cm) – | |
| | New Women's World Record |

WAKE FOREST:

Pro

1. Günter Mokulys (GER)
2. Tommy Harward (USA)
3. Sean Burke (USA)

Am

1. Greyson Asthon (USA)
2. Kai Dunkel (GER)
3. Mike Osterman (USA)

Best Trick

Sean Burke (USA)

■ WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS OF FREESTYLE

SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL, OCTOBER 2008

Hats off to Brazil. This is a country that has no apparent hang-ups with image but rather is more concerned with having fun and charging full speed ahead in all aspects of skateboarding. For the

second time in recent history, São Paulo hosted the World Championships of Freestyle. Brazil was well represented at the Choaro Skatepark event, which also attracted competitors from Germany, Sweden and Chile. Günter Mokulys kept his season winning streak firmly intact, placing first in the pro division. Brazilian local Rene "Shigueto" Marubayashi gave Günter a run for his money, finishing in second place, and Sweden's Stefan Åkesson made sure to clinch the third position. Brazilians ruled the rest of the events, showing their longstanding commitment to excellence in freestyle skating. The top results of the Worlds are:

Pro

1. Günter Mokulys (GER)
2. Rene "Shigueto" Marubayashi (BRA)
3. Stefan Lillis Åkesson (SWE)

Masters

1. Rogério Antigo (BRA)
2. Paulo Folha (BRA)
3. Maurício Ki-Suco (BRA)

Am

1. Rodrigo Texaco (BRA)
2. Lucas Mansano (BRA)
3. Lucas Fraga (BRA)

Best Trick

1. Per Canguru (BRA) s/s Carousel double

360s

1. Lúcio Flávio - 25 spins (BRA) ■



Kal Dunken. Kick flip variation. Photo: Maria Carrasco



Stefan Åkesson - Hand Plant. Photo: Maria Carrasco



Pro Podium - World Championship, Brazil. Photo: Felipe Francisco



Rene Shigueto - nose wheelie, Brazil. Photo: Felipe Francisco



Tommy Harward - handstand kickflip - US National Wake Forest NC. Photo: Jake Swarr



Keith Butterfield - Impossible - US Nationals Glendale, CA. Photo: Station