

Catching up with Brian Petrie

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If you've been reading the 'Fish long, you know all about Brian Petrie, the skater in New York City concocting and building boards the way he likes them or, lately, the way stoked skaters he respects and supports tell him they'd like one. Out of all this, great decks, wheels and urban warfare has been the result. Now, our man on the move, big MarkGrimace has a report from his latest interplay with the tat-rat from Gotham...

Mystery Revealed Catching up with Earthwing's Brian Petrie

Brian Petrie's expanded line of decks, so far...

So Brian, It's been a while since we talked shop. What's been happening in the world of Earthwing?

First of all, I quit my Job, and just play in the world of Skateboarding now. I have been working on all of the new shapes, testing prototypes, revising prototypes, and now I am detailing the graphics. Most of the last year I have been obsessed with solving problems in Downhill. We produced the 76mm wheel that has gone over well, and have finished testing all of the Mystery Model prototypes and production is under way on that little fella. We could have had it ready long ago, but we pushed to meet goals, and it will be worth the wait. It's really represents the best from Earthwing. A lotta love went into that, and I am proud of everyone that helped out. Special thanks to Conner, and B-Peck. Those dudes are faster than I am, and I trust what they say.

The Mystery Model graphics, sans plain brown wrapper.

OK let's get the cat completely out of the bag then buddy. Let's get to what everyone is asking. You have been stringing us all along long enough. What is the "Mystery Model" and how did it come about?

It was basically called the Mystery Model because I was not completely convinced that I would be able to pull it off. It was a complete Mystery to me, how to make it happen. I was not out to make a top-mount speeder, just to have one in the line. I wanted to make a lighter, stiffer, top-mount with the most foot area over the trucks as possible while avoiding wheel bite with a 76mm wheel. The Mystery Model is a stiff, 3.4 pound top-mount speed board. It's 42"x10.1" with a 31", and 32" wheelbase. We went to Canada to make custom unidirectional graphite and s-glass skins. They are pre-cured under tension to "pre-load" the memory for a stiffer, quicker rebound, with minimal, to zero deflection. The core is a poplar snowboard core. Concave is deep and perfect. With the small production runs that Earthwing makes, it was not easy to get a custom composite made. There will be a stiff version, and a "stupid stiff" version for the heavyweights. It will drop in hopefully by the middle of May, if not sooner.

I have another cat in the bag called the "Magic Model"...This cat will remain in the bag for a while.

Exciting times ahead for speed demons and EW! Now, since the last time we talked you have been constantly revamping your decks and come out with a few new ones. Tell me how the changes came about and what new decks have come, and will come in the future.

The first deck I want to mention is Jessica Corchia's 9.25" x 35". She wanted a super steep, wide nose on her model with wheel wells and some added rigidity. The Drifters were 5 ply maple with woven thermoplastic skins; hers will be 6 ply. With Indy's, you will not need risers, so the deck will be much lower, stiffer, and more stable.

The second deck is the "Bigfoot Drifter". It's a drifter, only 10.1" wide x 35.5" - deep concave. The graphic is hilarious. It is a solid 7 ply, with wheel wells for Indy 215's. Anyone with big feet looking for a slide, or park/pool deck, this sucka is in

a class by itself.

The 3rd deck is "THRUSTER" A.K.A. the Brian Petrie signature model. 9.75" X 36.5", 9", and 10" double drilled spear nose. You either love it or hate it, but it's the best all around deck I have ever skated. Most of it has to do with the shape, and its nutty personality. It's like your best friend or something. Thruster is not really the deck you want to take to dinner with your parents, but it is the deck you bring to parties. There is no tomorrow, and there was no yesterday with Thruster, it only lives in the now with no regrets.

Speaking of Jessica's Pro Model, you have some great riders on the EW team, what made you make hers your first pro model, and will there be more in the future?

First of all, we are all friends. Our goal is to have fun, and make better product. I could honestly care less about reaching podium wins, or bragging rights, or anything else. We are fans of skateboarding, and want to create product that is up to the level we think skateboarding deserves. Jessica is very creative, and inspires a lot of skateboarders. She is afraid of nothing, and has a big future ahead of her. I would like to do a street deck for James Soladay eventually. He pulls off such strange tricks, and when he looks at things he will see a whole new dimension of possibilities that no one else will see. It's all or nothing with him, and he can't hold back. It's probably why he comes in 2nd to Kaspar in the NYC push races on a street deck of all things. I would also like to design a sprinting deck for Kaspar. He spends a lot of time on carbon road bikes riding extremely long distances, and I want a skateboard equivalent to his bike, just made with distance pushing in mind.

Your new wheels are making an impact right now, what will we see from EW as far as wheels goes? And for that matter what else have you got coming down the line over the next year?

I can tell you that we will not ever be changing the slide wheels. That was a lucky hunch with that formula, and it's the best. I hope to introduce a smaller "Slide-A" formula eventually. Immediately, there will be a new 56mm soft center set wheel, a 66mm offset, wide patch wheel - basically a smaller version of the 76mm in an 82a. The 76mm are smoking right now, and we are testing some new ideas with multiple duros, both inside the wheel, and around the contact patch. We are investigating the idea of tread patterns, or grooves, and seeing how that affects the overall rebound, speed, grip vs. drift...I don't know what the perfect wheel is, but it's worth a try to answer that question, and explore every nutty idea. Most of my ideas are complete crap, but if you explore every possible improvement, eventually you come up with something. I am never satisfied, nor would I want to be. Everything can somehow be improved.

Well I guess 2008 will be, again, a year of growth and experimentation for EW. It's been a blast as always talking to you. Is there anything else you'd like to cover before we say good bye? Shouts out? Pie recipes?

I guess I want to say that every day I wake up, I am truly honored to be running this business, and that skaters dig what we do. I will never take it for granted, and will keep pushing. I stand behind my product 100%, and will never turn my back on any skater if there is a problem. If it wasn't for my wife, Angela, I would not be where I am. I would probably be drinking beers by myself playing with power tools all day, thinking about how to make a better pie, talking big talk and not accomplishing a thing. ----- Special thanks to our man on the move, big MarkGrimace.