

ASR September '06: Virtual Tour.

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We're back from the September, 2006 edition of the Action Sports Retailer trade show. According to ASR, over 22,000 people walked through the San Diego Convention Center for ASR this weekend: skate shop owners, surf shop operators, buyers from large chains looking for the newest swimwear fashions, manufacturers looking to find new vendor customers, vendors cross-selling amongst each other, bright-eyed entrepreneurs with something new, and loads and loads of the hippest of the hip, the teeniests of bikini and the blingest of bling.

We've got a lot of photos, all stashed in the Galleries for you. But for those looking to find a little information about the items in the pics, we've gotcha covered. Read on, to see what we've found, encountered and gawked at.

There were a number of displays in the lobby, outside the trade show. This was one that caught our eye. Those of us that remember the days that these wheels rattled gaps and chirped on rocks look on with admiration of their roots. Those too young to respect the past gawked at the relics like townies, mouths agape as they leer at the monkey man of tanzoonia. A remarkable oddity that should have some impact, if only they could comprehend.

Who could survive without energy drinks? I mean really, is there enough stoke to satiate? t

The Nuclear Pickle? We'd thought they discontinued that! Well apparently not, because here they are, in the Bomb Factory booth. They retail for under \$130, complete and were just one of the many surprises that awaited us at ASR

Yes, that's a latex bikini being painted on, and yes, this one's kinda blurry. Yes, there was a large crowd around this booth on the first day of ASR. On the second day, they were gone. Yes, there are more pictures of the craziness in the Gallery...

This is surfboard art by Marcie Oneill, brought by an Australian company called SpaceJunk Deluxe . Really cool art, well worth checking out. Now, only if they did longboards.

This surfboard was set into the plank of wood it was hewn from, by Greg Noll. It was set on dowels so it could rotate, and caused traffic jams. tTis picture does not do it justice; it was beautiful. These guys always bring something incredible to the shows.

New foam core from OS3, This one is twice as fast as the first Fish Out of Watter, 'cause it has flames! RobbieO and his crew had at least four new 'glass-over-foam models in the booth! Cover your eyes! Sacrilege!! The Nike guys were literally hidden, tucked away in a small, semi-enclosed booth with about 20 different shoes in glass cases. The Consolidated guys are really, really upset about the Nike thing. This is a 4x8 foot panel in their booth. Per Welinder's setup at Blitz Distribution was full of activity and crowds, all weekend long. A mini-kid, on a min-ramp. He ripped, and did it for hours.

At the 888 booth, there were two Earthwing decks. It was cool to see a little slice of Silverfish flavor at the convention. They've got slide gloves in development, so keep your eyes out for them in a few months!

Bling it up! Form over function? We have all heard of the company and seen the setups on that website, but seeing them in person and checking out how they work was fun. Unique, to say the least. The inventor has a much more interesting story than you would think and a passion to match. As some would mock, even loathe, the idea of rocking some \$100+ spinners on a deck maybe it's time for us to acknowledge the drive to innovate that really is behind these wheels. Check out Skub .

Banned from the 'Fish, and proud.

Yes, yes indeed. Self mockery.

We heard all about somebody being upset to find out there's this Swiss company... nice fellas, actually. Feet right on the ground...

Tiki cooler. They also had versions with solar panels and light up LED eyes.

Dan Gesmer is pleasant, wants you to buy his wheels & trucks and has scary stories about some dude selling simian art/simian love at a local art gallery.

The Shut NYC lineup including the 30/9.5" Surf. Killer innovation in shapes and design and the graphics really pop. Check out the jagged sidecuts on the deck to the far left. Shut says they're bringing it back to the roots. Keep and lookin out.

ASR is absolutely filled with swimwear designers looking to make a mint, and all it takes is one or two large buyers to see something...and order 30,000 of them. Lisa was eager to show us that her top doesn't fall off when her straps do. Progress?! Bah.

GFHBoards provides our ASR basecamp for many reasons, but they're finally coming out of their shells. They've left their humble roots behind and have started acting as they really are: Rock stars. It's apparent that the fame is taking a toll on team racer Ronnie Iverson, as you can see in this pic. What a rough life he has. Anyone that was unaware of the awesomitude of the GFH company was well informed by the team heckler seen here on the left. With them living the high life and not paying an iota of attention to our media team, we were able to glean lots of dirty news from their party stunted lives to be used in future blackmail campaigns. (seal oil blood bushings, what?)

Michael Brooke and Christian Hosoi. You could tell where Christian was in the show, because young skaters would scream, "Hooosoooooy!" in exaggerated martial arts falsetto when they saw him. Funny the 30th time? The dude has a great sense of humor and a gentle humility.

Hollow core, carbon fiber surfboards? That's one way to overcome the annoying little foam shortage! It's also a great way to spend a wack grip on the lightest board you will ever ride. These things are expensive and really light. Even after we'd tell people it was going to be light, we'd hand'em an 8-footer and watch it nearly launched overhead. Mindblowing. We want to hook these guys up with RobbieO... Hobie. An original in surf, in skate and in catamarans. Now, a clothing label with a booth occupied by eager buyers from Nordstrom's.

Crowds, aplenty. These guys are enjoying something we absolutely rely upon for these three days: 24oz. energy drinks. There are bins and bins of these things, on ice, free for the drinkin'.

How to waste money at ASR

- Buy a space
- Hire a couple models
- Money wasted

(The deal was, they were from Alpinestars, and acted like mannequins, all day. All three days.)

Dave Reul broke into song so fast, he didn't even get his second boot on... late in the days, the skate-related booths tend to feature off-the-wall craziness like the guitar jam at the Ninja Bearings booth. Sawyer and Kludy, resting after hours of heavy, intensive work in the swimwear section.

Remember the "Pool Rules" art display promoted in a Newsflash here on the 'fish? One of the features in the exhibit were hand-drawings by Jay Adams.

Stick a fork in it. When it's all over on Sunday, the breakdown starts before the show even dies, officially. An hour later, the floors are bare, union stewards push piles of trash into bigger piles, and we're looking to sleep. See more of our coverage at the ASR Gallery