

# PLIES

A USAFBI PUBLICATION

JAN 2025  
ISSUE #2  
PLIESMAG.COM

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fingerboarding

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### USAFBL

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CEAFLIP

(WE OBVIOUSLY STILL HAVEN’T GOT ONE)

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VITO AT 6SKATES / SWEETS KENDAMAS / MIKE SCHNEIDER / SLUSHCULT

SPITBOARDS

COVER PHOTO: USAFBL Dallas Event 2023

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# LETTER FROM PLIES


A USAFBL PUBLICATION

**Yo, last month was straight-up insane!**

**We were aiming for 2,000 downloads, and y'all completely blew that out of the water—5,000 in just 15 days after the mag dropped! You all are absolute legends. The feedback from our advertisers and the folks featured in the articles has been unreal, and we were trending all over socials because of YOU. Big love and a huge thanks for making it happen!**

**Now, it's time to keep the momentum rolling like we do in the USAFBL universe. We're all about pushing this thing forward.**

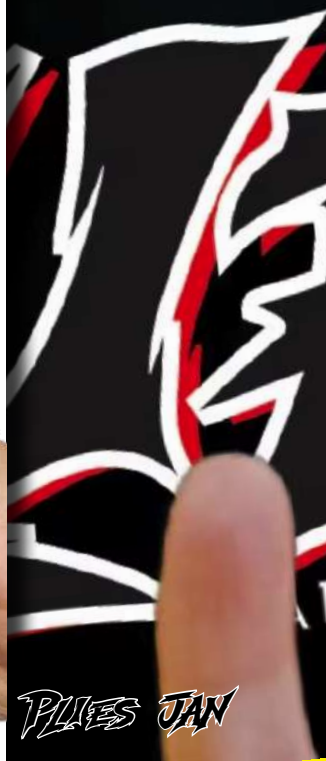
**This month's issue is gonna bring more of the same good stuff—killer articles, rad features, and major support from our advertisers. But here's the deal: if there's something you want to see in PLIES, don't be shy—hit us up at [pliesmag@usafbl.com](mailto:pliesmag@usafbl.com). We're here to make this mag everything you want it to be because this is your fingerboarding magazine. We're just the crew hustling to crank it out for you.**



**Stay stoked, and  
let's keep this ride  
going!**

2024, PLIES

RBO  
ZINE



PLIES JAN



# reserve this page for 2025 USAFBL EVENTS

make sure you tell ppl there is going to be OVER 50 **sanctioned events**



tell 'em to get their PTO days ready...LOL then just drop the insta graphics we got...



5 BIG Events



maybe put in a map?



oh DO NOT forget to tell em - **3 winners** at national WILL GO TO FAST FINGERS 22 in Germany!!!



## @Superb.FB - Fingerboarding, Family, and Building the Dream

Rob Givens, a craftsman from Redding, California, has been passionate about fingerboarding since childhood. Growing up, Rob spent countless hours honing his tricks on Tech Decks until the age of 13, when he drifted away from the hobby. In 2021, a visit to a local skate shop reignited his passion when he impulsively picked up a fingerboard. That moment rekindled his love for the craft and brought fingerboarding back into his life.

Rob now shares his enthusiasm with his four-year-old son, Oliver, bonding over skateboarding and fingerboarding sessions. This connection has made fingerboarding more than just a personal hobby—it's become a family tradition. Building on his background in carpentry, Rob began creating custom fingerboard parks about a year ago, combining his skills with his creative vision. One of his standout projects was a SpongeBob-themed park, built alongside Oliver and inspired by their shared love for the show. The park's colorful and whimsical design highlights Rob's creativity and craftsmanship while creating a special memory with his son.

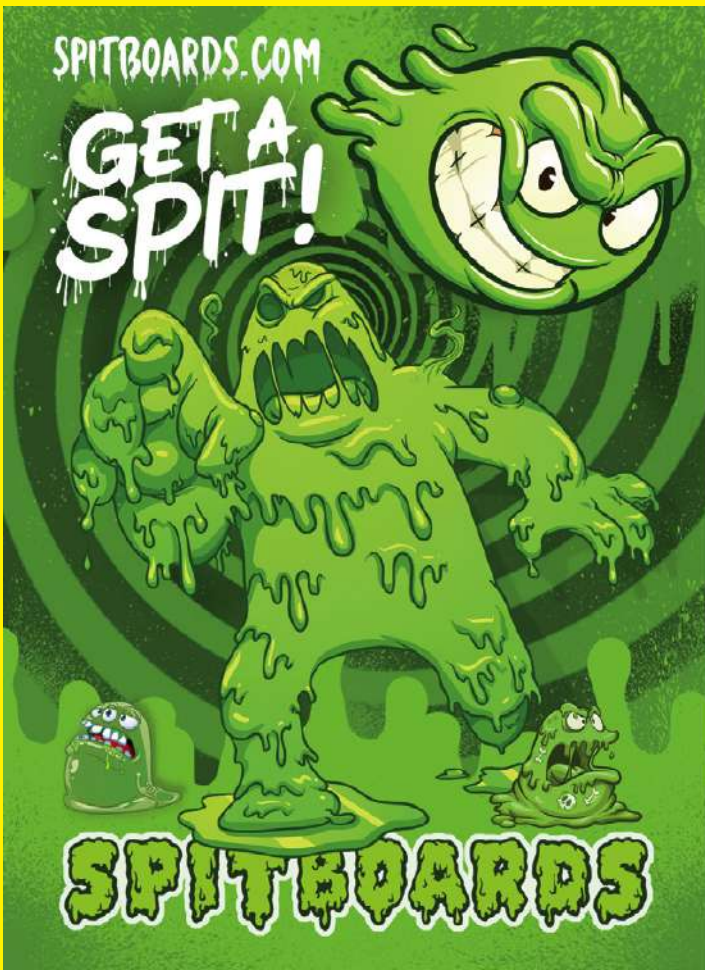
A pivotal moment in Rob's fingerboarding journey came when his friend gifted him a Chems fingerboard, his first high-quality setup. This opened his eyes to new possibilities in fingerboarding, showing him that advanced tricks and techniques were achievable. It inspired him to explore the craft further and take on more ambitious projects.

Recently, Rob has begun recreating parks and iconic skate spots, delivering them to local shops to share with the community. His first park, placed at Subculture in Red Bluff, California, has already received praise, with more parks planned for other locations. These creations allow Rob to share his passion and give back to the fingerboarding scene that has brought him so much joy.

Rob's journey continues to grow as he combines his love of fingerboarding, his craftsmanship, and his dedication to the community. By creating innovative parks and obstacles, he's helping to inspire others while enjoying meaningful moments with his son, ensuring that fingerboarding remains a vibrant and creative outlet for generations to come.







Good news! FlatfaceFingerboards.com is fully restocked with new items from flatface, blackriver, berlinwood, dynamic, and many more brands!



WE KNOW THIS IS A FINGERBOARD MAG, BUT HAVE YOU EVER TRIED KENDAMA?

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# FROM FARM TO TABLE a Barnyard Fingerboards Story

Greg, a 37-year-old craftsman from Edmonton, Alberta, has been immersed in fingerboarding and skate culture since the mid-90s. His journey began in 1995 when he crafted his first fingerboard from laminated cardboard, school glue, and LEGO wheels. This DIY creation marked the start of his deep connection to the art.

In 1996, everything changed when a Scholastic Book Fair introduced him to Tech Decks. Choosing one over a book, Greg embraced fingerboarding with growing enthusiasm. Throughout school, he expanded his creativity, building ramps, welding rails, and crafting skate obstacles, while also excelling in full-sized skateboarding, even constructing ramps in shop class.

After high school, Greg's focus shifted to skateboarding and his career in the trades, leaving fingerboarding behind for years. However, in 2022, a spark reignited his passion when his mom discovered a collection of his old fingerboard gear. Delving back into the scene, Greg stumbled upon a video featuring Mike Schneider of FlatFace Fingerboards. Inspired by Mike's dedication and creativity, Greg began crafting miniature skate spots from found materials, rekindling his love for the craft.

Eager to share his creations, Greg launched @barnyardfingerboards on Instagram, connecting with a community of enthusiasts. Encouraged by their support, he founded Barnyard Fingerboards—a name inspired by Mike Vallely's iconic "Barnyard" pro model and Greg's farm upbringing. The brand emphasizes unique, imaginative skate obstacles and backdrops, standing out for its creative flair and homage to fingerboarding's DIY spirit.



Pho-



"I never thought a Scholastic Book Fair would change my life, but trading a book for a Tech Deck in 1996 set me on a path of creativity and connection that I'm still exploring today."

One of Greg's most transformative fingerboarding experiences came from Joey, aka @backsidesmithgrinds, a Redemption pro. Joey challenged Greg to transition from the old-school three-finger technique to the now-standard two-finger style. This shift not only refined Greg's skills but also deepened his appreciation for fingerboarding as an art form closely tied to real skateboarding.

In park-making, Greg's crowning achievement was creating a "leap of faith with a twist" for Justin (@ask8dirty). This large-scale project involved intricate bends and a custom rail, pushing Greg's creativity to the limit. The finished park was showcased at events and became a testament to Greg's craftsmanship. Inspired by its success, he built a park for himself, fully realizing his artistic vision.

Today, Barnyard Fingerboards is more than a brand; it's a thriving creative venture. Greg is working on a full-length team video featuring friends like Jarid, Remmy, Binx, and Hayden, aiming to motivate them to push their skills. He's also perfecting a slick-bottom UFMC-embossed board, striving to release a unique product that fills a gap in the market.

Follow Greg's journey on Instagram @barnyardfingerboards and Facebook at Barnyard Fingerboards.





# Solemn.fb: Ink, Wood, and Hustle

Straight out of Rockford, Illinois, and now repping Freeport, Michael Rock-Nelson is living proof that the spirit of skate culture is alive and kicking. At 31, this self-proclaimed kid at heart juggles a whirlwind life of tattooing, fingerboarding, skateboarding, and raising a family—all while running his own fingerboard deck brand, Solemn.fb.

Michael's fingerboarding journey started in 2015 as a way to cope with anxiety. Little did he know it would spark a full-blown

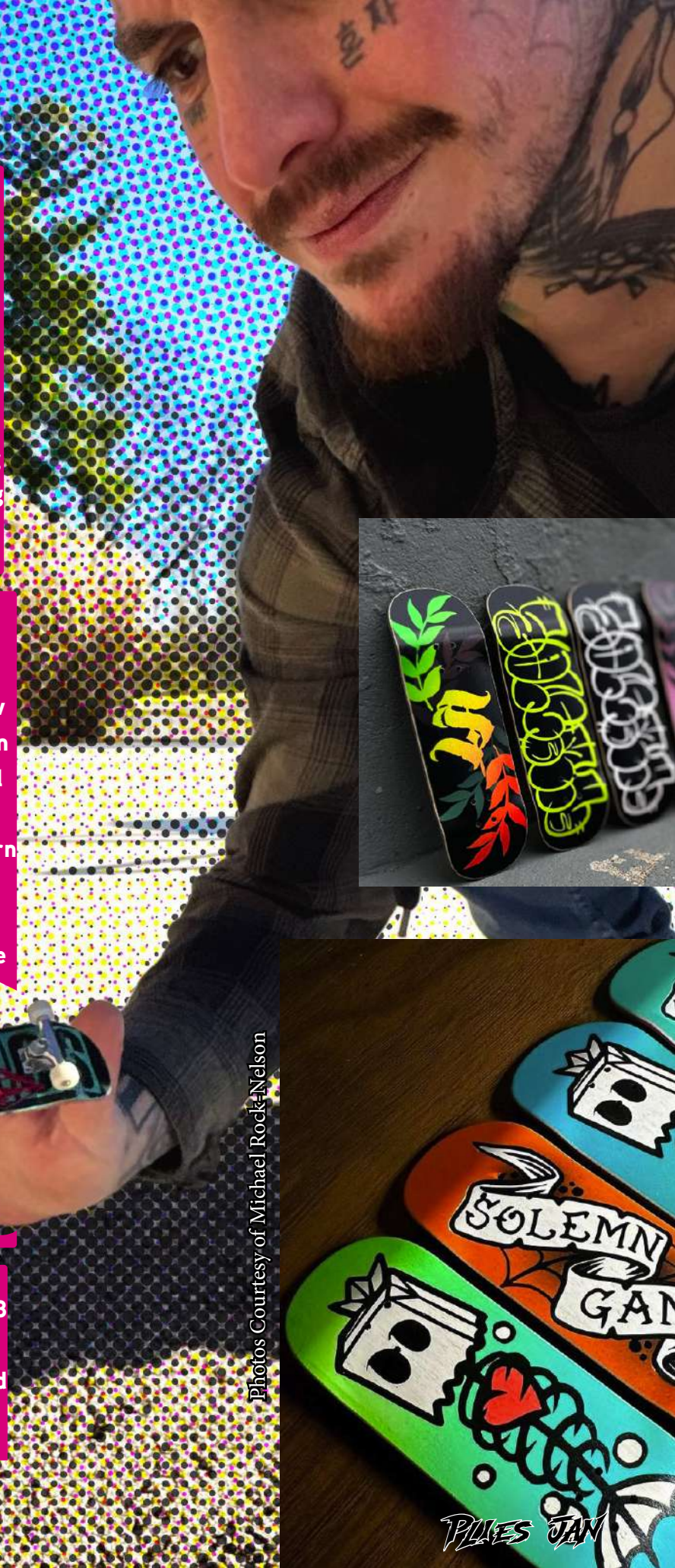
obsession. "I hated missing drops," Michael admits, "so I just started making my own decks. Problem solved." Solemn.fb was born from that DIY ethos, and he's been creating custom decks ever since.

His hard work and passion

earned him two medals at USAFBL events and a recent sponsorship

from Wysocki Wheels.

Tattooing, however, has been Michael's ride-or-die for over 13 years. He stumbled into it as a rebellious 17-year-old and found salvation in the art. "Tattooing saved me from myself," he



Photos Courtesy of Michael Rock-Nelson







says. Over the years, Michael has honed his craft, falling in love with the bold, clean lines of American traditional and neo-traditional styles.

But the job isn't without its quirks—like the time he tattooed a pistol on a guy's butt cheek. "It paid my phone bill, so I didn't ask questions," he laughs.

Between running Solemn.fb and tattooing, Michael still finds time for family adventures, especially with the newest addition to the Rock-Nelson clan—his baby, born this year. Fatherhood, he says, has been an absolute blessing, adding another layer to his already packed life.

Michael's most unforgettable fingerboarding moment? Winning gold at his first USAFBL event. But the highlights don't stop there—meeting legends like John from Cowply, Jake Simms, and Alex Christ, and attending the grand opening of the Black River store in Chicago, rank high on his list.

As he looks ahead to 2025, Michael is set on expanding his reach. He dreams of hosting local fingerboard events and hitting as many tattoo conventions and fingerboard comps as possible. Whether it's tattooing bold designs or crafting the next must-have deck, Michael Rock-Nelson is carving out a legacy rooted in creativity, hustle, and community.

Keep your eyes peeled—this guy is just getting started.







Photo: @trukloops at USAFBL Event





**HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR**

2024 @CEAFLIP



# Midnight Run for a Fingerboard Legend: The Black River Adventure

By Sebastian Baquero @seb.baq



It was a late Friday evening in Niagara, Ontario, when my father-in-law and I packed up the family Caravan for a journey like no other.

**Our mission? To retrieve a rare, German-made Black River fingerboard park from an old skate friend deep in the heart of Maryland.**

The park, a relic of the fingerboarding world, had been sitting in my friend Ed's basement for over a decade. As a lifelong enthusiast of the downhill skateboard and fingerboard communities, I couldn't pass up the chance to bring

this treasure back to life. The challenge? A near 20-hour round trip through the winding, dark mountain roads of Pennsylvania and the highways teeming with wildlife.

**The Van's headlights cut through the darkness** as we crossed the border and started our descent into the U.S. The excitement of the mission kept us sharp and eager, even as the road stretched endlessly before us. My father-in-law, a man of few words but steady presence, took the wheel for the first leg. We shared stories, snacks and laughter to keep each other awake, the rhythmic hum of the tires providing an oddly comforting backdrop.

Pennsylvania's mountainous terrain soon enveloped us. The road twisted and turned, mostly with little to no lighting. Our nerves were tested by the ever-present danger of deer darting across the highway.

Hours later, we arrived in Maryland, greeted by the soft glow of dawn. My friend's house stood at the end of a quiet cul-

de-sac, a suburban oasis where the legendary fingerboard park had been hiding for years. Seeing it in person felt surreal. Black River fingerboard parks are the pinnacle of craftsmanship, handmade in Germany and produced in limited quantities. Each model is a masterpiece, sought after by enthusiasts around the world. The fact that this one had made its way to North

America, and was now destined for a new life in Toronto, felt like a piece of skateboarding history in motion.







Loading the park into the SUV proved to be a puzzle. Its size exceeded the vehicle's capacity, forcing us to leave the back door open. Securing it with straps and bungee cords, we began our journey home. Before we left, my friend gave me a fascinating history run-through of some of his original boards—gifts from OGs in the skate scene who had passed them on to him. It was a glimpse into the rich heritage of fingerboarding, making the moment even more special.



and adjust the straps.

As the sun set on the second leg of our journey, we finally crossed back into Canada. Toronto's skyline welcomed us, and with it, the anticipation of delivering the park to its new home. **Our final stop was 6Skates, Toronto's beloved fingerboard store and community hub.**

We were greeted by a group of eager locals, ready to help unload and set up the park for an "after hours" session. The park fit perfectly within the shop's vibrant space, its presence immediately drawing admiration from everyone. Knowing it would be enjoyed by the Canadian fingerboarding community and international visitors alike made every mile worth it.

Reflecting on the adventure, I couldn't help but smile. The journey was more than just a retrieval mission; **it was a testament to passion, perseverance, and the bonds formed through shared experiences.**

**The Black River park, once in a Maryland basement, now has a new lease on life, inspiring a new generation of fingerboarders in Toronto.**



The return trip brought its own set of challenges. The forecast called for a snowstorm, so we prepared for the worst. We plastic-wrapped and boxed the park as much as possible to keep it dry. Fortunately, luck was on our side; instead of snow, we faced rain for most of the drive. It wasn't until the last hour before reaching the Canadian border that we encountered light snow. Even so, the drive remained tense as the open back door required frequent stops to check the cargo



Photos By: Sebastian Baquero



# Dude Guy Revolution: Recycling Creativity

Clark Checketts, an engineer from Ogden, Utah, is a passionate hobbyist who finds joy in skiing, skateboarding, drone flying, and fingerboarding. Above all, he cherishes his family, who inspire his creative pursuits.

Clark began fingerboarding in middle school but didn't start crafting his own products until 2020, when COVID gave him the time to experiment. He started designing 3D obstacles, wheels, and decks, and his hobby quickly grew into something bigger.

Inspired by a post from Sadood about recycling skateboard wheels into fingerboard wheels, Clark decided to try it himself. The recycled wheels gained attention, and his innovative approach built a loyal following.

While recycled wheels remain a key product, their labor-intensive nature led Clark to develop Formula One and Formula Two wheels—high-quality, affordable options for more fingerboarders. To meet demand, he brought Jordan Franke (@franke801) on board to help make recycled wheels.

Clark also acquired Level Ledges, expanding his creativity into concrete obstacle design. With his brother Seth working full-time, DGFB and Level Ledges have grown into thriving brands, bolstered by Seth's artistic contributions.

*It's cheesy to say, but I never could have imagined that my silly little account I made to post my fingerboarding clips on would become the family of brands, creators, riders, and friends that it is today." - Clark Checketts*





## Team Riders

**Michael (@whimps\_):** One of the first testers of recycled wheels and a strong supporter since meeting Clark at a local meetup.

**Jalen (@jahaqua):** Admired for his style and skill at local events.

**Brett (@shred\_handed):** Met at Clark's first event, where Brett won "Best Trick."

**Julio (@shmoked.j):** A kind supporter of the brand and an active YouTuber.

**Cory (@corzlyte):** A skilled fingerboarder whose support means a lot.

**Mystery Rider:** A new team member will be announced soon.

**Pro Models / Whimps Pros – F1 Conical Lock-ins / Corz Lyte Pros – F2 Green Streets**

Clark worked with the South Ogden city board to approve a fingerboard park at a new skate park. The project, supported enthusiastically, will feature accessible designs and is set to open in Spring/Summer.

Announcing Brett as a team rider at an 801FB meetup was unforgettable. Watching the Utah fingerboarding community thrive has been as rewarding as building the DGFB brand.

Clark plans to continue creating decks, hand-painted Level Ledges obstacles, and snowskates for winter.

**Social Media @dudeguy.fb and @levelledges**







**Rider Profile: Bossman**

Deck: December Trucks: Dynamic Wheels: Blackriver Classics

Fingerboarding since: 2000

Sponsors: Bullgod, Fathers Skate Supply, Wisco Rails

Favorite Trick: Front foot impossible 5-0 Impossible

Favorite Fingerboarder: Jake Romer (@StitchySkates)

SOC Media - TIKTOK: DailyDoseOfFingerboarding INSTA: @Mister\_Chivalry

“Fingerboarding to me is being able to shrink the world down

to where you're your only limit.”

Bossman (Ryan) is the local fingerboard Pro at FENIX Fingerboarding Texas and the Head Judge for our USAFBL Competitions.

Come by and Catch him at the FENIX Shop Mondays and Wednesdays!



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- @thfingerboarding
- @msquared.fb
- @potternuggetz
- @charliehanson1988

TEAKTUNING.COM



**GO TO THESE**



<b>DATE</b>	<b>NAME / EVENT</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
1/4/2025	Frozen Fingers	St. Pual, MN USA
1/5/2025	Sunday Night S.K.A.T.E League	Chicago, IL USA
1/12/2025	Sunday Night S.K.A.T.E League	Chicago, IL USA
1/19/2025	Sunday Night S.K.A.T.E League	Chicago, IL USA
1/26/2025	Sunday Night S.K.A.T.E League	Chicago, IL USA
2/1/2025	Finger Masters	Berlin, Germany
2/1/2025	Texas Rendezvous	Houston, TX USA
2/2/2025	Sunday Night S.K.A.T.E League	Chicago, IL USA
2/9/2025	Sunday Night S.K.A.T.E League	Chicago, IL USA
3/22/2025	Starlight Fingerboard Camp	Sealy, TX, USA
3/22/2025	Homie Sesh #3	Umatilla, FL, USA
3/23/2025	Starlight Fingerboard Camp	Sealy, TX, USA
4/26/2025	After-Vous	Boston, MA USA
4/26/2025	Rendezvous 37	Dracut, MA USA
4/27/2025	Fingerboard Con	Boston, MA USA
8/15/2025	USAFBL Regional - West Event	Portland, OR, USA
8/16/2025	USAFBL Regional - West Event	Portland, OR, USA
8/29/2025	USAFBL Regional - East Event	Philidelphia, PA, USA
8/30/2025	USAFBL Regional - East Event	Philidelphia, PA, USA
9/5/2025	USAFBL Regional - North Event	Detroit, MI, USA
9/6/2025	USAFBL Regional - North Event	Detroit, MI, USA
9/12/2025	USAFBL Regional - South Event	Atlanta, GA, USA
9/13/2025	USAFBL Regional - South Event	Atlanta, GA, USA
10/10/2025	USAFBL National Event	Indianapolis, IN, USA
10/11/2025	USAFBL National Event	Indianapolis, IN, USA
10/12/2025	USAFBL National Event	Indianapolis, IN, USA



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# LISTEN TO THESE



USAFBL FINGERBOARDING PODCAST



The Big Spin



Mike Schneider



D2 SKATE PODCAST



## Season 2 Episode 88 | Plies Magazine

On this week's episode on the podcast, we have Brian O'Neill back on the mic! We talk about the creation of Plies Magazine. We talk about some of the content that is going into the magazine. What to expect, where to download the free monthly issues and so much more!

Release Date: Nov 27, 2024



## Episodio #9 | La Nueva Ola Ft. Mauricio Pantoja & Sebastian Tobar

En este emocionante episodio de D2 Skate Podcast, titulado "La Nueva Ola", celebramos el renacer y crecimiento del fingerboard en Chile con dos grandes figuras de la escena: Mauricio Pantoja, dueño de la icónica marca BrossWood, y Sebastián Tobar, creador de parques públicos que se han convertido en epicentros para la comunidad de fingerboard en Santiago.

Mauricio, un rider con una trayectoria de décadas en el fingerboard, nos cuenta sobre su legado en la escena chilena, su visión detrás de BrossWood y cómo ha sido clave en el apoyo a eventos que impulsan el deporte. Además, nos habla de su pasión por fortalecer la escena local y su dedicación al desarrollo de nuevos talentos.

Release Date: December 6th 2024



## Season 2 Episode 90 | Big Dog FB

We have Jake of @bigdogfbofficial and @stitchyskates on the podcast this week! Jake being a "Jake of all trades" We talk about everything from his love for fingerboarding edits, to creating a whole slew of obstacles and products. We leaked some collabs and we leaked the 2025 USAFBL regional event on the episode as well!

Release Date: Dec 11, 2024



## Season 2 Episode 91 | USAFBL's 2025 Regional and National Events

It is finally time! The long awaited date and location drop of USAFBL's Regional and National Events is here! Join us as we announce this information, and we reveal a more indepth look at what the events will hold for 2025. Did we mention that we are sending 3 lucky fingerboarders to Fast Fingers 22? Trust us this is not an episode you are going to want to miss!

Release Date: Dec 18, 2024



## Brandon Gillett (Wrkshp)

In this episode of The Bigspin, we're joined by Brandon Gillett, the founder of Wrkshp, a fingerboard brand established in 2021 in Southern California. Wrkshp brings a fresh perspective to the fingerboard scene with a deep-rooted passion for nostalgic skate culture and an unwavering commitment to craftsmanship. Brandon shares the highs and lows of starting a fingerboard company, the challenges of growing a brand in a competitive space, and how skateboarding continues to inspire every deck Wrkshp creates. Whether you're a fingerboarder, skater, or someone who appreciates the art of deck making, this episode is packed with insight and inspiration. Wrkshp may be new to the fingerboard world, but its dedication to quality and authenticity is already making waves.

Release Date: January 3rd, 2025



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 **6SKATES** | **6SKATES.COM**



Tybee Island, Georgia USA - Bryce McNally embodies the DIY ethos. This laid-back music enthusiast and fingerboarding fanatic has been tearing it up on both fronts.

The Al Gore Rhythms' music demands attention and rewards repeated listens. Fans of instrumental progressive rock and metal will appreciate their technicality and musicality.

Bryce's fingerboarding obsession ignited six years ago. He built his first beer box halfpipe, discovered his power tool prowess and never looked back.

As the scene grew, Bryce hosted local events, fostering a tight-knit community. Now, Bigtoe.fb and Taino.fb carry the torch. Bryce's passion has inspired a new generation of fingerboarders.

Bryce's music journey began at 11 with a pawn shop guitar. He switched to bass in high school, joining "All Out Chaos." Today, he thunders with prog trio "The Al Gore Rhythms."

Formed during an open mic night jam, the trio has evolved into a force to be reckoned with. Their second studio album is underway.

### Legendary Moments

Bryce's most epic fingerboarding experience was the inaugural USAFBL in Chicago. He connected with Levine, Dave Ware and Cody Mexico, forging lifelong bonds.

### Full Circle

On stage, sharing the River Street main stage with his dad during Savannah's St. Patrick's Day festival remains a highlight. That performance also led to a chance encounter with his future partner.

### Next Chapter

With fatherhood on the horizon, Bryce's priorities are shifting. Though events and big projects may take a backseat, his creative spark remains.

### Follow the Madness:

Fingerboarding Instagram: @mcgnarlyfingers  
Band Instagram: @al.gore.rhythms  
Spotify/Youtube/Bandcamp: The Al Gore Rhythms



@mcgnarlyfingers and...



## THE AL GORE RHYTHMS



Photos Courtesy of The Al Gore Rhythms





# Brooklyn's Finest: The Story

Mike Morris, aka msquared, is a 26-year-old fingerboarder holding it down in Brooklyn, NY. Hailing from upstate NY, Mike grew up skating, snapping photos, and, of course, fingerboarding—three passions that thrive in the energy of the city he now calls home. He's been fingerboarding since 2010 back when it was just him and his crew fb'ing tech deck parks, completely unaware of the growing Instagram scene. Once he did realize however, he knew he had to be a part of it.

## Sponsors:

**Zonawood (Decks):** The OG split-ply maker. Mike's been hyped on Zonawood since 2011, so joining the squad is a dream come true.

**Teak Tuning (Wheels):** Teak being rooted in upstate NY give this sponsorship a personal edge for Mike.

**Sausage Ramps (Obstacles):** Quality parks and ledges, built by a good friend. As their first team rider, Mike reps hard.

**Flashbone (Bags):** The Flashbone bag Mike uses in his edits is the same one he bought back in 2011. Anytime you see him use it, he is hitting the streets.

**Sticky Goodness (Stickers):** Mini sticker slaps and vinyls that make any setup pop.

Mike's got no pro models (yet), but his Zonawood 1/1 split-ply outdoor deck has become a bit of a legend. His advice to anyone chasing a sponsorship? Don't chase it. "Find products you love, use them, and connect with the creators. If you're passionate, the rest will follow. Post what hypes you up—it hypes others up too."





# of Mike Morris (msquared)

## Memorable Moments:

Mike's top fingerboarding memory? Christmas morning, unwrapping his first Berlinwood pro setup: the 29mm Flatface Cyan graphic with BRTs and green Winkler Wheels. That board opened his eyes to what fingerboarding could really be. And yeah, he still has it—same setup, same good vibes.

## What's Next:

Mike's stacking clips for two video parts with his sponsors and cooking up a fingerboarding photography project. Keep an eye on @msquared.fb for all the latest.





Photo: Provided by @mikeschneider161



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