

News

# Together through brick and pin

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■ Champion brick thrower Jason Peart (18) winds up to fire in practice.

Photos: Simon Pizzey

by Jo Barber

**C**ONTESTANTS in bizarre housebrick and rolling pin-throwing challenges are warming up for the fray of international competition at Stroud this weekend.

For the 39th year, a team of six local men are ready to show off their strength at throwing a 5lb brick.

And half a dozen Stroud women are also prepared to demonstrate their sporting skills with 2lb wooden rolling pins at Stratford Park tomorrow.

Organiser of the brick and pin throwing, which takes place annually between four Stroud towns around the world, is Eunice Guy.

Mrs Guy, who is retired and from Thrupp, phones around the globe to compile results every year after the Strouds all throw on the same date in their respective countries.

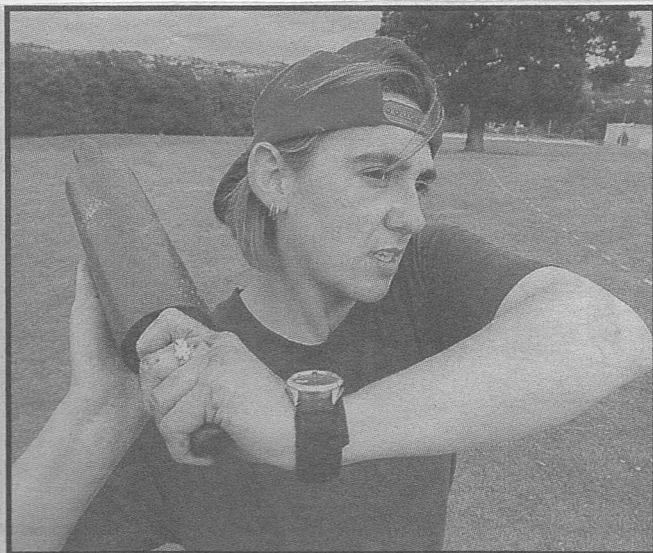
### Content

A rolling pin contestant herself in her younger days, Mrs Guy took up the sport after the ladies joined in the bizarre contest 37 years ago.

Now content with chivvying the Gloucestershire Stroud contestants to train – and hopefully win – the event, Mrs Guy was three times international Champion of Champions for pin throwing.

"I think the whole event must be unique," she said. "It all began in 1960 when the mayor of Stroud, Oklahoma, in the USA came to England and made a special visit to us in Stroud as his namesake town."

Mrs Guy said the mayor visited the council offices, it was



■ Pin power: Michelle Brooks-Olpin grits her teeth before launching a rolling pin.

mentioned his town made bricks and always had a brick throwing contest at their festival day and the unusual competition was born.

Stroud, Gloucestershire, joined in, results were exchanged by cable and after worldwide publicity, the Strouds of New South Wales, Australia, and Ontario, Canada, joined in.

Mrs Guy said the bricks were still supplied, in batches, by the Americans, while the mulga wood pins came from Australia.

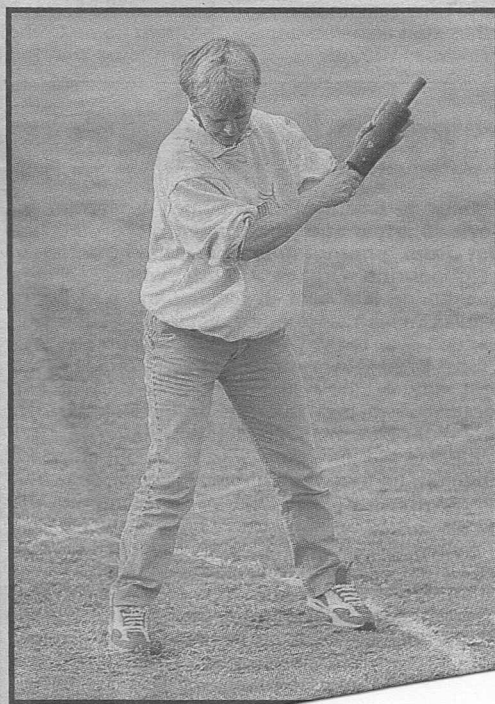
Gold, silver and bronze medals

are awarded to winners and the contest has brought curious visitors, some from abroad, to Stroud.

The bricks and pins always used to be a feature of the annual Stroud Show but since the date for that was moved forward by a fortnight the throwers have been obliged to carry on alone to remain the same day as the three other Strouds.

Tomorrow's brick and pin throwing will start at 2.30pm at the top of Stratford Park.

■ It's all in the stance you know: Sue Griffiths has a go at the noble art of rolling pin throwing.



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