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# Machismo machine on the market

## All is made fair in arm wrestling

By Paula Wade  
Staff Reporter

Remember, people laughed at hula hoops in the beginning too. But arm wrestling — that macho saloon-table sport — is now a successful franchise business.

Jack Barringer, inventor of the World Class Arm Wrestling Machine, has already sold 27 franchises for exclusive use of his machine in tournaments. The franchise fee: \$15,000.

Barringer, of Ames, Iowa, is one of 125 franchisors who will be flexing their entrepreneurial muscles at this weekend's Franchise Show at the Memphis Cook Convention Center Complex.

The show, which features all kinds of franchise opportunities, will be open from noon till 6 p.m. today and Sunday.

Barringer said his machine always draws big crowds at franchise shows.

"The sport of arm wrestling has been around for centuries, but it's never grown because of the controversy about certain grips and arm-length advantages. So I started thinking, if I wanted to make the sport perfectly fair, what would I come up with?"

So Barringer, who has been promoting and organizing arm wrestling tournaments as a business for 12 years, invented a machine with rubber grips that allows individuals, and even teams of two, to wrestle each other fairly. It took 3½ years and \$350,000 to perfect the device.

"The machine is no more than an equalizer to make everything even. It's still man against man," Barringer said. "The machine makes it possible for a left-hander to compete with a right-hander,

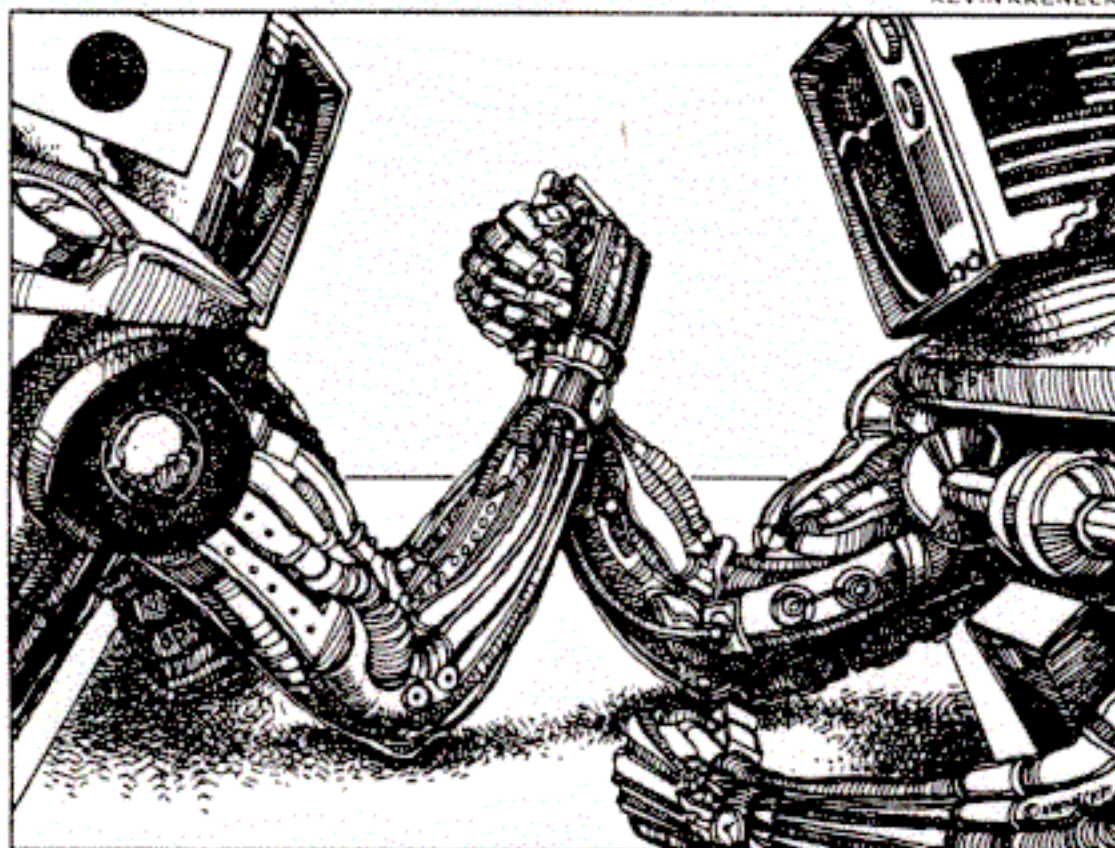
just by switching a gear."

Buyers of his franchise get the right to use the machine to hold arm wrestling tournaments at shopping malls, fairs and elsewhere within a certain territory. The franchisees are taught how to promote and organize the events and are allowed to lease the machines from Barringer for the tournaments.

"I'm not selling the machine, because game machines are here today, gone tomorrow. They're faddish. I'm promoting a sport," Barringer said. He said local, regional and national tournaments will be held in preparation for an international tournament planned for the fall of 1988.

Barringer said he has sold 27 franchises for arm wrestling tournament businesses in the United States and the United Kingdom. He will leave in two weeks for Australia, Japan and New Zealand to sell franchises there. In eight weeks, he and his machine will tour Europe.

# Capitalism making a comeback



KEVIN KRENECK