



Machine is used in arm-wrestling tournament in DeKalb, Ill.

Machine inventor trying to get a grip on arm-wrestling

By MITCH BORETZ
Daily News Staff Writer

THE ODD LOT

Arm-wrestling has entered the modern era.

Thanks to inventor Jack Barringer of Ames, Iowa, those bothersome barroom disputes over unfair grips and differing arm length are a thing of the past. His World Class Arm Wrestling Machine pits raw strength against raw strength — and even lets a righty battle a lefty fairly.

Up to four tough guys can work on the machine at a time, in individual or team contests. Each grips the appropriate handles, which are connected by a steel bar, and the machine declares a winner with a bell and flashing red light.

Barringer, hoping to capitalize on the Sylvester Stallone movie "Over the Top," which has an arm-wrestling theme, is selling franchises around the country. For \$10,000, much less than it costs to make a Stallone movie, Barringer will provide a machine to a bar or health club, which then can run contests.

The franchise holder, who will have area exclusivity, can charge \$275 to \$350 for each tournament and \$10 for each participant, according to the plan. Sponsors can be arranged for prizes.

So far, World Class Events Corp. has sold four franchises in Alabama, Illinois, Wisconsin and New Jersey. The franchise holder in DeKalb, Ill., already has had a tournament, complete with whistle-toting referee.

Barringer is offering franchises rather than selling the machines outright to prevent the overexposure that killed the mechanical bull, which became the macho barroom tool of choice after the movie "Urban Cowboy" came out.