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## FORWARD ::

Summer, 2008: a summer of new hopes and ambitions waiting to be fulfilled.

Despite being a rather tame year in terms of new water blasters on the market, so many changes and promising things have occurred in the online network and in other areas that I can not help but feel optimistic about what the future has in store.

Despite its rather sudden launch, iSoaker.net has grown quite nicely over the past few months. Activity has increased and its general layout and feel have more-or-less stabilized in its phpb 3.0 home.

iSoaker.com, too, has had some major changes made to it. Once intended for a 2009 upgrade, the updates made to iSoaker.com had been going so quickly and smoothly that it was decided that it would be better to simply launch the new site 6 months early and tweak any remaining bugs after the bulk of the updates were online instead of attempting to maintain two parallel sites during this time.

Unfortunately, due to the nature of the upgrade, a lot of external links pointing to iSoaker.com were broken after the re-organization. While some re-direction files were set-up, not all external links that were broken could be easily given a simple re-direction pointer. Hopefully the search engines will update their databases soon after crawling over the new site. As well, some of the Flash-based product browsers no longer work with the new site. I hope to get a similar sort of Flash-based Product browser up and running again in the future, but that will take a little more time.

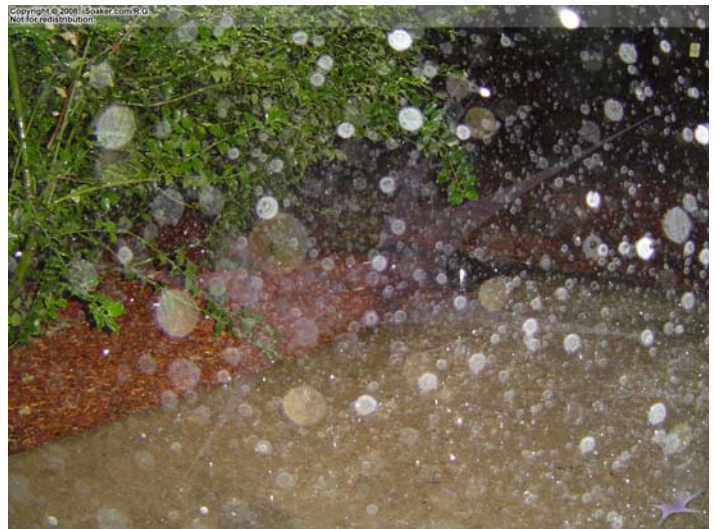
In general, though, the site should feel easier to browse, allowing visitors to find the sort of information they are looking for quicker than before, having a more intuitive directory structure.

iSoaker.com, itself, has just turned eight (8) with the root site behind iSoaker.com turning ten (10) in a couple more weeks. I have a few plans to tweak aspects of the site's design which should be ready for uploading soon.

At any rate, Summer, 2008 is just beginning and there is a lot of soaking to be done! There is one MAJOR change occurring for me really soon, but I am not quite ready to disclose that one yet. All in due time! \*smile\*

For now, hoping you enjoy the articles in this issue of the Rogue Report and may you have a great soaking-filled summer!

Fear NO soaker!



During a summer thunder storm: *"No matter what your water blaster is; Mother Nature still rules in the realm of Leaving NO one dry!"*

## WHY I'M STILL HERE ::

By: Adrian | Rogue Member

There was only ever one thing that I wanted from this community, and I fully intended to leave once I got it.

One of my best friends had broken his CPS 2000 (Mk.2 for those who care about such things) a few weeks before WaterWar3. I spammed every water warfare board I could find, asking for a trigger repair. Didn't get much in the way of responses, and believe me, I was checking daily. August 11th 2002 rolled around, and with a little ingenuity, a Dremel, and a rusted money clip I found in the gutter, we managed to fix the soaker roughly half an hour before the fight.

Things went as they go, and by the end of the day I'm planning how to make next year better. In all honesty, I could've beaten myself up ala Jack's Smirking Revenge™

in Fight Club the next year, and it would've been an improvement.

So, I stuck around Aquatica. I think it was the invasion boards, but I've never been up on the various incarnations of soakerdom. I've just followed the people.

Peeked in on the forums from time to time, just used them to fuel my addiction to soaking. I was communicating with a friend of mine online almost daily, discussing battleplans and soakers, mods, that sort of thing.

I'm fairly certain I posted from time to time, I really don't remember. Not anything major, and definitely not anything that contributed to serious discussion.

Winter came, and somewhere around the middle/end of January, start of February 2003, I found the appalling EES guns at Target. I'd been around the rest of you soakerphiles long enough to know when something was a blasphemy to the spirit of Lonnie Johnson, and immediately reported the travesty I had beheld.

Got a bit of online celebrity status when General RAK put my name and discovery on the front page of his website. (If you're reading this, RAK, I always liked your site)

Followed Aquatica over to ClubAquatica, even though I never understood why we were leaving perfectly good boards – I was able to post on them for a good year afterwards. Oh well.

I liked ClubAquatica. It had an awesome blue background and I won the logo banner thingy contest, which to a sixteen year old was kinda cool. There are a couple of names I'd like to lob out in front of you here, people from my generation or before that have left us: Cmdr Bob, M4, Mafo0, Soakologist, BlueViper42.

At this point, I think I was just starting to hear the name Duxburian, or pay attention to who he was.

For whatever reasons, ClubAquatica got locked to the rest of y'all (though I was able to post there for a good year afterwards, and often went there to admire the color scheme).

I was kinda aimless in soakerdom for a while there, and I think it was a couple of months before I discovered WaterWar.net. All my old favorites were there, and the community seemed a lot bigger for some reason. There wasn't as much visible strife there (I seem to remember at ClubAquatica BV asked a senior member to perform a lewd act, and the following response involving a CPS 2000 nearly drenched my monitor in Coca-Cola that flew out my nose) and the place as a whole seemed like a good hangout.

WaterWar4 came and went, and was undistinguished by anything other than slightly more anger than a water fight should contain (Probably residual fallout from the year before. I swear, the cloud of anger and unhappiness generated on 8/11/02 is still out there floating around, causing panic and confusion among the rabbits) and the most creative use of a sled that I have ever seen.

Lessee here. 2003...I turned 16 just after "The Bad Year" so I would've been nearly 17. I had wrapped up my 4 year running summer job as a concession stand clerk for a basketball camp for the local school system, where I hung out in a janitor's closet slash concession stand and talked water warfare with my friends. I was looking for a serious summer job, and was looking at what I wanted to do with the rest of my life.

Somewhere in here I was asked to moderate WaterWar.net. I think. I'm a little fuzzy on the exact train of events. I think that was my first job as a mod.

Gods, there's so much I want to pack in here, and I have absolutely no concept of a timeline for any of it. So, I'll just plug in events where they seem to fit, and if you see something out of order, I expect you to yell at me for it. \*smirk\*

Somewhere around there, General RAK either founded or was involved in the founding of the IYouth project. As part of this, he got a forum of his own where I was active, as well as on the main IYouth boards. Both have been consigned to the dustbin of history now.

Around that time (I think it was winter '04), WaterWar.net imploded. Server overload, something like that. Bang. Gone. Orphaned from my soaker friends a second time, I hung out at SSCentral for about 3 weeks before I found my way to iSoaker.com forums.

At this point I feel I owe explanation to some people. It's seemed to me since the beginning that there have been 2 main camps in soakerdom – the iSoaker.com camp and the SSCentral.net camp. The only reason I followed the iSoaker.com camp from Aquatica to WaterWar to iSoaker.com/forums to iSoaker.net was familiarity, I have nothing against SSCentral, in fact I like it quite a bit. The same people signed up at iSoaker, the forums looked the same, and it was based more around stock soakers rather than mods and homemades. I've never been smart enough to make a watergun from scratch, and the only mod I ever tried nearly destroyed a \$50 Monster XL (Mk.2 for those who care).

Seems to me there was another set of forums in there, headed by M4, Mafo0 and myself. Blue and orange color scheme if memory serves. It's where I asked many

questions about fortifications in regarding the impending WaterWar5.

I knew WaterWar5 was going to be my last war. I was 18, I think I had a job at that point, I think I was already in college (trust me, when you're nearly 22, your late teens start melting together), and my friends were going their separate ways.

So, WaterWar5 had to be good. Had to be great. Had to be the best. We decided to hold it in a forest just down the street from my house. This forest has always been a source of mystery to me. Still is. I wasn't allowed to tramp through it by myself until about age 15, due to the rogues gallery of misanthropic miscreants that we were assured hung out just off the trails. I've wandered every streambed, climbed trees, cut it back, serpented through the wilderness, gone offroad, seen it demolished, and there are still places that nearly 6 years later, I have only once or twice stumbled upon. That woods is wrapped up in a mythological...heck...mythology to me. It's a place where I grew up, a rite of passage, a place where I spent the vast majority of my 18th summer, just me and my friends. It's like that big national park behind Calvin's house. Always around the next bend in the trail there's something even more beautiful and awe inspiring and worthy of exploration than the last wonder you just walked past. The way my life has been influenced by that woods, I'll probably propose to someone 'neath that big lilac tree in the clearing some day...

Ahem, back to the narrative at hand. So there we were, somewhere around June 1st, four highschool kids with nothing much to do and a burning desire to make this last big neighborhood gathering the best ever. So, armed with a bunch of dowels we found in my garage, we sallied forth to beat back the wilderness. Hacked about 100 feet down a main (though overgrown path), got blisters, thought "screw this" went to Kmart, and bought machetes. 4 teens buying machetes get weird looks at the checkout, trust me.

A little more than 2 months later, there's an intricate patchwork of paths carved through the clearing on the north side, and some vague plan to transport more water guns than a dozen kids should have in there along with enough water to turn Darfur into a greenhouse. Night before, my 2 friends filled up a garbage can with water and we "stole" their van, drove it over there, and dragged this danged heavy reservoir back into the woods, parked the can by where their fort was going to be. That was fun.

Next morning was a flurry of activity. Cajoling, coercing, and roping various wandering friends into the activities, and, well, you can read about it online, Members Only Stories/Articles Section of iSoaker.net. All resemblance to reality ceases directly at half-time, my team actually lost that war. 'Course 3/5ths of our team up and went to a

volleyball game, leaving us running 3 to 6, so we did ok considering the odds.

Somewhere in that vague timeframe, Cloud/Soakologist/Dan got the crazy idea to restart Aquatica. It was my idea, I take full blame for that. In all honesty, the only thing I wanted was to recreate that awesome blue color scheme.

We got a guy named Veteran on board with that, and the secret half-accidentally spilled a little early. Things went as they go, and I think Aquatica2 got renamed Hydrology or Soakology or something. It's a little known fact I believe, that Cloud/Soakologist/Dan got his name from the now-defunct shoe website Kicksology, and that influenced not only his name, but the replacement forums we set up.

I wanna say somewhere in there, maybe late summer 2004, I read The Massive, Epic, Incredibly Awesome, Unnamed Warstory by Wetmonkey. Looked at it, said "hey this is really cool, but slightly unrealistic." A guy named Razor/SpaceCowboy commented on it, said instead of all these fanboy fantasies of massive waterballoon artillery battles in the Appalachian Mountains, how about something involving small-squad combat?

I said, "hey, I can do that," and what I then called Story1, later known as WaterWar5, was born out of my experiences in the real WaterWar5. It was really half experiment (can I do this?) and half monument/marker/memorial for my team. My team split up directly after WW5. Entropy, the natural coming apart of things, the eventual reason behind the future cold-death of the universe. We just fell apart, and we don't speak hardly at all anymore, certainly not as a group.

WW5 was well received, and I pitched the idea of doing a spiritual sequel to a rather hermit-like (he doesn't get online much) friend of mine, one you know as The\_Narrator. He took that and ran with it. 2 things were happening at this point: Narrator and I had somewhat of a spiritual/political/ethical awakening (becoming adults after all), and this influenced what was going on in my head. Also, I was gnawing on the idea of being an author myself at that point, and I laid down the rough draft of an outline for a political revenge war story I'd later name With Your Shield Or On It, a stand alone novel that was (and is) supposed to lead into a two part series on the third American Revolution.

Mr. Narrator stole some of my characters and wrote up a backstory for them, trashed it, and wrote a new backstory (now known as Outcasts), giving some one-dimensional thoughts life of their own. An aspiring novelist in his own right, this also gave him an opportunity to grown his writing – bringing more mature characters to a more mature audience. That got published on iSoaker.com (first under

my name, since Mr. Narrator is a rather private fellow) and then under his name for all time afterwards. I think that was finished and posted in 2006.

Late 2005, I was helping my colleagues at a small music store put Sin City out on display for the next days opening and I happened to slack off and read the back of the box. 3 intertwining noir stories. Nifty. I put it down, went back to work.

Before I go anywhere else with that train of thought, I have to switch tracks for a moment. This was 2005. It'd been a year since my last waterfight. I was a mod online, and I was watching Hasbro Fedex the SuperSoaker brand to hell on a handcart. There was this great upstart brand called WaterWarriors that was lighting a fire under Hasbro's tootsies, and despite this I wasn't seeing any forward motion in waterwarfare. The MXL was kind of the pinnacle of water warfare – after that, everything else was holding ground at best, backsliding at worst.

I made a mistake one night and watched CSI:New York. I hate Gary Sinise's character on that show, and wish Mac would have a Tragic Moment™ and they'd get a new lead. Anyhoo, that night, the gist of the show was a murder during a Super Soaker contest – a running war in the streets of NY that would leave the last man standing with a cash prize of hundreds of thousands. Also around this time (and by that I mean within several months) Time magazine ran a blurb about 2 female execs who were fighting in a contest identical to that portrayed on CSI:NY. '04-05 also saw the birth of Soakertag contests. I remember nothing about the short-lived fad other than seeing (for about 2 weeks online) pictures of a padded, waist-high arena filled with very attractive young people in various states of dishabille running around with waterguns. The very next slide in the show was some young 20something in orange shorts doing a kegstand. MTV, I swear.

It seemed to me then, and still does, that the future of water warfare (and tied to that, the online community) lay in drawing in the older kids, the ones with disposable cash, some muscle for bigger guns, and a grown-up competitive attitude. Well, how to do that? Well dang, CSI and Time magazine were already talking about it, and Hasbro was bumbling hesitantly in that direction – war games. Competitive games geared towards young adults, games that were fun, games you could play without losing your street cred, games that offered some sort of monetary prize at the end.

Without the older kids, soakerdom dies. The current membership is growing older and not soaking as much, and no younger generation has stepped forward to lead. Triforce\_Elite will not keep us alive, nor will that kid I so mercilessly eviscerated who claimed he could snipe with

his Flash Flood, and who made a thousand topics on that ridiculous flight of fancy.

As he always does, Narrator got an earful from me on the topic of soakerdom's survival. He combined this with elements of the original, discarded Outcasts story, and characters from my fictional universe, and came up with Street Warz. This was finished earlier this year ('08, for any who read this down the road), and posted. He'd still like comments on it BTW, it might just spur him on to write some more of that final story he's mulling over...

Somewhere in there, the iSoaker.com forums went the way of WaterWar.net, and I transferred to iSoaker.net.

I think it was near the end of iSoaker.com forums that I got involved in this project to come up with a central forum, not linked in any way to the heavy hitters (iSoaker, SSCentral). Dux and I (and I think Ben) ponied up for webspace and an address, and WaterWarfare.org was born. Due to a lack of original content, inactivity (most of the activity congregates at the already established sites, that's just the way it goes) and some spambots/hacks/malicious code, the site was somewhat jettisoned, and the membership continued to hang out at their honest first choice, either iSoaker.com or SSCentral.net.

As I sit here at 1:19 on June 14th, 2008, I haven't had a water fight in nearly 4 years. It'll be 4 somewhere in August. My once proud stash of SuperSoakers, Storm pistols (and really solid rifles, if you see any of the 2500s, buy them at once), and W3 guns have been kicked out of what was once shared storage when my brother took over the downstairs, and are collecting dust in Rubbermaid bins just off the downstairs steps. I don't have the heart to Goodwill stuff I sweated on and spent money on and talked about, but they've gotta go somewhere, pronto.

So why am I still here? I'm too tired right now to scroll through 15 pages of 20 some entries per to look for active old members, but off the top of my head there are four people left over from the good ol' days: iSoaker, Ben/Doom, Dux (I know it irks you to be called that. :-), and myself. If I missed anyone, I do apologize.

A few of the old guys still drop through from time to time. Black Six checks in regularly. Space Cowboy drops by once in a blue moon. I think I might have chased off Field Marshall Yang, he's only shown up once in about 4 years. Either that or he escaped from a Chinese gulag and the rubber hose long enough to reach a computer with Internet.

I stick around for the friends. The people at this site have been bystanders in the last 6 years of my life. I haven't shared nearly as much about myself here as I have elsewhere, but it's been good having friends and a light-hearted place to go many times.

If it weren't for iSoaker, Dux, Ben, Wetmonkey, Silent Guy, (the main people I know), and the rest of y'all, Elvis woulda left the building long time ago. I haven't had a water fight in nearly four years, and the majority of my topics are divisively political and off-topic, but I appreciate having a place to go to talk to people around my own age.

The second reason is because I want to give soakerdom that little snarky push towards that shining future of wargames that I see as our hobby's salvation. My overall picture here, everything my friend writes...it's all aimed towards inspiring people to go out and soak competitively. Sadly, I don't see that happening any time soon. Giving up isn't in my blood though, so I stick around.

Third reason is it's a place to publish my writings. I cringe just typing that. That's a very selfish reason, and I'm sorry. But y'all have been a great audience, and given me some great advice, and inspired me in many ways. I'd like to think I've entertained and amused you at times, and hopefully given you stuff to think about (whether or not I've changed your minds on anything, thinking is always good).

I've seen a minimum of a dozen bulletin boards. I've seen literally thousands of members pass through those twelve boards, most of them posting a few times then floating on. It's the one's who've stuck around that are the reason I've stuck around.

Y'all are my friends.

## 2008 STOCK SOAKER THOUGHTS ::

By: iSoaker.com

2008 feels like a transition year in a sense. In another sense, 2008 is also year of the mid-size pump-action water blaster.



Hasbro Inc. offers two new members to the Super Soaker line: the Super Soaker Quick Blast and the Super Soaker Bottle Shot. The Bottle Shot seems like an oddity in the Super Soaker line; while it comes with a small bottle-

shaped reservoir, its name is derived from its ability to make use of a variety of common-sized plastic bottles as reservoirs (up to 2L in size). Otherwise, it is a rather minimalistic piston-based blaster. The Quick Blast, on the other hand, actually has a separate spring-based pressure chamber. However, the Quick Blast has no manual trigger. Instead, the nozzle valve is activated when the pressure-chamber is filled enough; a Max-D-type valve get activated

by the sliding piston rod as the pressure chamber fills. A single full pump is enough to fill the pressure chamber and shoot; however, partial pumps or not too forceful pumps will not result in a stream immediately. In this way, streams made by the Quick Blast are consistent despite user's strength or pumping speed.



Buzz Bee Toys Inc. released a large number of primarily pump-action water blasters. New to the Water Warriors line are the Water Warriors Avenger, Water Warriors Hydro Blast, Water Warriors Hydro Pulse, Water Warriors Jet,

Water Warriors M16, Water Warriors Power Squirt, and the Water Warriors Shark as well as restyling of the Water Warriors Kwik Grips and Kwik Grip XLs. My two favourites of the 2008 Water Warriors lot would be the Avenger and the Jet.

The Avenger is a small, Cross-fire-sized piston-based blaster featuring three nozzle settings. While not particularly large or powerful, it performs well for its size and its nozzles offer a good



flexibility of performance on the field. The Jet, on the other hand, is a very small, pistol-sized motorized water blaster. Targeted at those aged 2+, the Jet is powered by three AA batteries and produced an XP215-class stream when the trigger is pulled. The nice thing about being motorized is that it ends up being a simple matter of fill and shoot, perfect for smaller kids. For older users, the Jet may seem rather underpowered, but it can still make for a fun back-up. Of course, being aimed at the young child market, the Jet would make a great, fun, introductory water blaster. The other water blaster new to the Water Warriors line more or less perform as expected for their relative sizes. The M16 appears to be a test, seeing whether consumers are interested in realistically-styled water blasters despite being 2/3<sup>rd</sup> the size of a true M16 as well as having its nozzle mounted on the body as opposed to where the actual gun's nozzle is located. The Hydro Blast is a small pump blaster with limited pump and reservoir capacity, but also rather small in height and width. The Power Squirt, Power Pulse, and Hydro Pulse are all pump-action water blasters that have an external plastic reservoir. The remainder of the Water Warriors line are re-released blasters from earlier years. Perhaps the only other notable change this is the moving of the reservoir fill hole and cap on the Orca, thankfully being moved from the bottom of the reservoir to the top, thus no longer making bubbling noises during pumping as air enters to replace the pumped water.

There is also a new player in the market: the Mizumi water gun line by Stadlbauer Inc. The line contains four (4) anime-styled water blasters:

“The SHUBI (Japanese for defence) water pistol is suitable for anyone who doesn't like getting drenched in the heat of the action. With OYAKATA (Japanese for strength) the ultimate drenching battle is unavoidable. BASHIRA (Japanese for water jet) is absolutely unbeatable. Nothing compares to the function and aesthetics of KEN in the shape of a sci-fi sword for all true MIZUMI enthusiasts.”  
(from <http://www.stadlbauer.at/87.0.html?&L=1>)

These water blasters look quite interesting and feature styling that some members have found aesthetically pleasing. However, as no one has tested any of these blasters at this point in time, little is known about their performance.

In the end, there are some interesting new stock water blasters available. However, the lack of any definite new, larger air-pressure or elastic pressure water blasters in 2008 seems somewhat disappointing, but as the majority of the 2007 Super Soaker and Water Warriors blasters have also been re-released, options for stock water blasters for those newer to water warfare remain decent. There is also the Mizumi line which hopefully more information will be learned in the future. Of course, here's to hoping for even better things in 2009.

## **LAST DROPS ::**

So ends the second issue of Rogue Volume 3. There are many more things brewing behind and beyond what can be presently told. As always, keep an eye on the iSoaker.com Network (<http://www.isoaker.net>) as new information will be posted as it can be made available. In the meantime, myself and fellow members of the iSoaker.com Rogue Group hope you have enjoyed the read and wish you outstanding future soaking experiences.

Soak on!

:: Fear NO soaker! :: iSoaker.com Rogue Group ::