

# Platte County Parks and Recreation Holds First Atlatl Event

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Spears flew through the cloudy bright skies of the Platte Ridge Park soccer field last Saturday, June 13, as the public tried their hands at an ancient form of spear throwing known as atlatl. Platte County Parks & Recreation and the Missouri Atlatl Association sponsored an Atlatl Demonstration and Contest with hands-on learning clinics and target skill testing.



Participants came from as far away as St. Louis and Sedalia to participate including atlatl specialist, Ray Madden from Joplin who demonstrated speed and accuracy with every throw.

Several rookies to the sport were on hand including Presiding Commissioner Betty Knight and First District Commissioner Kathy Dusenbery. Both commissioners were using the atlatl with ease after a few short lessons from Atlatl Association members.

Throwing contests were held continually throughout the day. Featured contests included the rabbit contest, short distance accuracy contest, a modified European round, and the International Standard Accuracy Contest. Jon Wood from Madison, MO, attained the high score of the day and a personal best in the ISAC contest.



The overall atlatl contest winner was Ron Mertz, who received a knife donated by George Bigelow of Kansas City, KS. Overall second place went to Jon Wood with Ray Madden coming in third.

In the women's categories, first place went to Liz Davenport and second place to Rachel DeFelice. Neither contestant had thrown an atlatl before the June 13 event. The winners received certificates including an award for Rookie Atlatl Thrower which went to Kevin Brauer of LaMonte, MO.



Brauer received a handmade stone point donated by Alexander Woods of Iowa City, IA.

Platte County Parks & Recreation will be keeping their calendar open for the possibility of hosting an annual atlatl event at Platte Ridge Park. For more information about Platte County Parks, call 858-3419 or visit [www.platteparks.com](http://www.platteparks.com).