

Arts & Entertainment

'The new Frisbee'

TOOBEE soars into toy market

By Preston Havens
Staff Reporter

It soars, it flies, it does stunts, it is... a can? To be more precise, it is a TOOBEE, and it is closer to half a can.

The TOOBEE is an aluminum cylinder resembling the top half of a pop can, open at both ends. It weighs less than a marshmallow, and is tossed via overhand spiral, like a football. There, the resemblance to any other known product ends. According to its manufacturers, no one really knows why it flies, but it does fly well.

Greg Stromberg, President of TOOBEE International Inc., said he feels strongly about the success of the TOOBEE. Stromberg's company began offering the toy about three years ago.

"Initially, the inventor (Dale Klahn of Berkeley, Calif.) offered it through a Milwaukee can company. I thought it was neat, so I called him," he said.

Stromberg discovered there was a good response to the TOOBEE in California and wound up buying the patent for the toy. Stromberg said his company works mostly in the promotional market.

"We're a very small corporation and we can't compete with the major toy companies," he said. "So we went to the soft drink and beer people and put their names on the TOOBEE."

The strategy worked. Before long, the TOOBEE was featured nationwide on the TV show "PM Magazine." In several newspapers and a TOOBEE convention was held.

"We set a new world distance record at the convention," Stromberg recalled. "Two hundred and eighty three feet, with a tail wind."

Stromberg says the market for the TOOBEE is actually larger overseas.

"People take them over to other countries, then we get inquiries from those countries," Stromberg said.



A side and front view of Toobees, a new, gliding toy made from tin cans and marketed by Toobee International.

David Cremer/Daily Nebraskan

So far, the TOOBEE is zooming over Germany, Japan, Australia, France and Britain. Here in America, the Baltimore Orioles seem to be among the biggest fans.

"A Baltimore radio station gave some of the toys to the Orioles pitchers, who tossed them to the catchers," Stromberg said. "They even figured out how to throw curves."

Part of what makes the toy so successful,

according to Stromberg, is the opportunity to belong to the TOOBEE air force.

"There is a TOOBEE air flight training manual," he said, "and our mission is to fly around the world." Stromberg added that the aim of the air force is to bring about world peace by bringing people together with the motto, "Success comes in cans, failure comes in cannots."

A few years ago, the TOOBEE was called "the new Frisbee." Has this prediction held up? "No problems whatsoever," Stromberg says. "Mark Danna, co-author of the 'Frisbee Player's Handbook,' has fallen in love with it. We drafted him."

Stromberg is currently working on a special promotion with professional Frisbee players around the world to increase awareness of the TOOBEE.

Reviewer says Sheena only sings for money

By Scott Harrah
Staff Reporter

True musicians are also artists who express their inner feelings, desires and perspectives through music. Today's pop charts are inundated with a rather reprehensible breed of commercial musicians who only make an album if they feel it will sell.

Scottish pop diva Sheena Easton is the epitome of a commercial musician, and her latest L.P., *A Private Heaven*, proves it.

This cut, purportedly written and arranged by Prince, is an atonal wreck that contains some of the most blatantly sexist lyrics ever on vinyl:

The blood races to your private spots/You can't fight passion/When passion's hot/Come spend the night inside my sugar walls.

If Sheena was known as a singer of degrading little "T-and-A" tunes, people might possibly respect her as an artist because that would be the kind of music she performed.

But anybody who sings songs about women being treated like pieces of meat and then sings another song about the merits of her unmentionables obviously cares only about selling records — not art or women's issues.

Easton is also overt about her lack of originality and innovation. Her remake of rocker Tim Scott's funky "Swear" is insurmountably bad. One would think that if she were going to copy a song, she'd sing it with some grace and sincerity. But her vocals on this track are so insipid and devoid of effort that they make "Swear" sound like an advertising jingle.

Sheena is a marginally talented vocalist who can sometimes sing a nice ballad. Hits like "Almost Over You" and "For Your Eyes Only" are some of her best. But the two ballads on side two, "Love and Affection" and "All by Myself," are weak. They sound like they're off in some pensive orbit, not really sure whether they want to be vibrant or romantic. One thing is sure about these tracks, however: both songs are part of a piece of pabulum that isn't worth anyone's time.

Ludicrous lyrics, cheap vocals and an apathetic attitude make Sheena Easton's *A Private Heaven* public hell.



In our last episode, *The Argus* had to leave orbit of the planet *Ong* in order to make an emergency delivery of farm machinery to the planet *Punt*. The investigative team on *Ong* had just passed the wreckage of the *Vesta* after following some mysterious footprints in the snow.

Matt Piersol

Drinkwater hollered, "Whos — what are you running for?" "Have a look," Shatfield said, holding out his binoculars. "Straight ahead."

While Drinkwater focused the binoculars, Jack strained his eyes. He could only make out a blur of pink and green in the distance. It was the only vertical object in the horizontal landscape.

Drinkwater's jaw flapped open. "Maybe it's a joke. Maybe somebody off the ship came down right after we did," he said.

He handed the binoculars to Wong. "Maybe it's a trap," Jack said. "Here, let me see."

"Are you kidding?" Wong said. "There's nothing anybody could hide behind for miles."

"Let me see," Jack repeated. Wong

handed the binoculars to Shatfield. The column lurched forward. The tracks they'd been following led right up to the pink and green blur which proved to be a snowman, or rather a snow-woman. It wore a pink bikini top. A green survivor was perched on its head.

"How did that get here?"

"Maybe one of the *Vesta*-survivors left it."

"Naw — somebody else on ship probably came down. They're playing a prank."

"Hey, take a picture of me with it!"

Jack noticed some bamboo-like tubes sticking out of the snow around the snow-woman. This puzzled him. As the squad drew closer, Shatfield snagged his foot on something — a long, tent string. Just then, a figure rose up out of the snow — a huge hairy blob. Then another burst forth. Another and another. Shedding their covering, these proved to be ferocious-looking creatures with bodybuilders with bad teeth and white, braided beards.

Before any of the squad could react, they were all tackled. Jack felt utterly helpless. One of the creatures easily gripped his calf as if it were a drumstick. Jack was now a captive of the *Galoot* tribe.

Something short-circuited in Drinkwater's brain. His instinct put these words in his mouth: "They made me do

it!" he bawled, until he regained his composure.

"Oh fudge," thought Jack, looking up at the snow-decoy looming above him. "That could be the last thing I see in this life."

One of the *Galoots* blew a bone whistle. About 30 others converged on the scene. One of them had draped over his shoulders what looked like a huge, slain jackrabbit with antlers. He plopped it on the ground and made motions indicating to Jack that he and Sloans were to carry it.

They were all prodded towards the southwest. Jack was scared. His mouth felt dry and his knees weak. He couldn't forget what he'd heard about the inhabitants of *Ong*. They were reputed to castrate and fatten their captives like cattle for feasts — or they kept them as slaves and put them to chewing on hides to soften them until their teeth fell out.

Wong was crying. Drinkwater was praying out loud. Sloans was spitting out four letter words at the *Galoots*. Some of the *Galoot* children gleefully responded by trotting alongside Sloans, giving him titty-twisters, poking him with icicles and pelting him with snowballs. Jack's arms hurt. The giant rabbit with antlers he and Sloans were forced to carry weighed at least 200 pounds. Jack noticed his reflection in its vacant, brown eye.

REVIEW **D.I.S.C.**

Easton was cast into the music scene a few years back with "Morning Train," a hit song about a housewife's love of domesticity. "Modern Girl," the follow-up single, was ironically about the joys of being a successful woman in a male-oriented society. Even in her early days, Easton was a princess of paradoxes.

After hearing the first two songs on her new release, listeners will feel compelled to crown her the Queen of Contradictions.

"Strut," the cut that opens the album, is a ridiculous feminist number with a lackluster beat and questionably cogent lyrics:

Strut/Pout/Put it out/That's what you want from women/Come on, baby/What's she taking me for?

Music fans might have respected Sheena for this song's light social commentary if she hadn't recorded the track that follows it, "Sugar Walls."