

# Engineering students schling dog-launch ideas

## HOT DOG from page 1

students only drove trains.

### Wienie Winger war

More than 30 groups of four or five students have until early December to come up with the perfect idea to stretch the launching distance of Der Schlinger from only 50 yards to at least 65 yards.

Fairbury marketing director Marc Rude said he was excited for the project to get started because in the world of hot dog projecting, Der Schlinger just ain't gettin' it done.

"Obviously we're not getting to all the fans," he said of the gun's limited firing power. "If I get a really good shot, I get to maybe row 30."

(And in case you were wondering, Der Schlinger schlings the 2.29 ounce hot dogs about 70 mph.

Not fast enough to maim, Rude said, "but it wouldn't feel good.")

Rude and his launcher hurl hot dogs at Memorial Stadium, the NU Coliseum, Buck Beltzer Field and the Lincoln Star's Ice Box.

For those venues, the launcher is ideal, he said.

"We can reach everyone at the Ice Box and coliseum," he said. "In fact, we have to tone it down there or we'd just bounce them off the walls and ceilings. Which, I guess, can be fun."

But he said it would be more fun

to have the hot dog launcher shoot franks to the far reaches of the football stadium.

That's where the students and the friendly academic competition come in.

Each group of students competes against each other to devise a plan for such an apparatus.

The best four plans, two from the civil class and two from the mechanical class, actually will be constructed.

Associate Dean John Ballard said the department has agreed to fund the prototypes of the top four designs up to \$1,000 and possibly a little more.

"I don't like to write blank checks," he said. "But this is a great learning tool for the students."

And after the classes' final flung frank has fallen, Fairbury has said it would reimburse the department if a suitable superior schlinger was developed.

The new wiener winger can consist of improvements on the existing design or a completely new concept, said mechanical engineering Associate Professor Kevin Cole.

"He doesn't care how it works," he said of Rude's motives. "He just wants to promote hot dogs."

Rude agreed and said the educational aspect was great, but the most important thing for him "is that the hot dogs go farther."

"We want to be able to reach all Husker fans."

The project will count for about

40 percent of the students' final grade Sicking and Rohde said, and will be based on criteria such as sketches of the launcher, estimated costs of materials on one year of operation, firing distance, weight of the device and the expected durability of the design.

The mechanical engineering students must also complete a research paper on the project.

"It's turned into a hot dog-shooter class more than anything," said Bryan Troester, a sophomore civil engineering major. "But it's more fun than going to class and listening to them lecture."

Sicking said the project isn't as weird as it sounds.

"From an engineering perspective, this is just another design problem," he said. "To the layman, it would appear a very unusual project."

And Cole said the gun's use of carbon dioxide, or what engineers like to call a "pneumatic system," was elementary.

"You learned everything you need to know in a high school physics class," he said.

Yeah, right, said freshman civil engineer major Julie Williams, describing the project's level of difficulty.

"It's hard because we have no background, no experience and no knowledge of what we have to do."

Rohde agreed.

"Right now we're trying to get

through some of the basic things they need to know."

Sicking said the idea of teaching students how to build a hot dog launcher wasn't a piece of cake for the professors.

"Our challenge as professors is to relate the hot dog launcher to other types of engineering designs," he said.

And if the professors had their way, every group would come up with a brand new system.

"The general nature of younger designers is to try to improve existing designs," Sicking said. "But we'd like them to think outside the box and change the launch technique entirely."

Though designing a hot dog-shaped shooter probably isn't a career, Hotchkiss said the concept is actually what these students will be doing after graduation.

"This is an example of a real-world project that has to be done in a finite amount of time with a finite amount of money," he said. "This is what real-world engineering is all about."

Freshman civil engineering major Jeremy Bishoff also sees the academic aspect to operation hot dog launcher.

"It's one of those things that keeps your attention," he said. "I think it's good that we're out there doing the stuff that engineers are doing instead of just hearing about it."

### Birth of a Schlinger

The idea for a hot dog launcher didn't originate in Fairbury, Rude said.

He got the idea after watching a "Monday Night Football" game last year between the Philadelphia Eagles and the Dallas Cowboys, in which a hot dog launcher was used by a Philadelphia vendor.

"I called the Eagles on Tuesday morning and found out where they got their launcher from," Rude said.

It came from a small packing plant in Pennsylvania that had developed the idea, then sold the rights to a larger manufacturing company.

Rude made another call to that company, and he was soon admiring his brand spankin' new hot dog-shaped bazooka.

He put its cost in the \$2,000 to \$10,000 range.

The schlinger made its first appearance at this season's opening Husker football game, Rude said, and has become quite the attraction.


"People loved it right from the beginning," he said.

But only about 100 in the crowd each game really love it, he said, because they're the only ones getting free hot dogs.


"We want to involve more people," he said. "We really want to be able to shoot them farther."

Rude is just glad calculating a way how to isn't part of his job description.

"I'm a hot dog salesman," he said




*Some things are worth waiting for.  
This moment is one of them.*



# Borsheim's

*Where lifetime relationships begin.*

FOR A COMPLIMENTARY ENGAGEMENT PACKAGE,  
CALL 1.800.642.GIFT



**BORSHEIM'S.**  
A Berkshire Hathaway Company

Regency Court, 120 Regency Parkway, Omaha (402) 391-0400 (800) 642-GIFT

**FREE** Pair of **SKIS!**  
With each room booked!

**Breckenridge/Vail**

From **\$189<sup>00</sup>**

Trip Includes:

- 6 day/5 night Lodging Jan 4 - 9, 1998
- 4 days of day/night skiing at Breckenridge, Keystone, Vail, or Beaver Creek (2 days at Vail/BC)
- Parties, Races, the Works!!

\*Free skis (\$300 value, bindings additional) while supplies last  
Add \$37 tax and service

Call Student Express  
**800-258-9191**

Snowplows need extra room. Stay 100 feet behind and pass only with extreme caution.



**RUBY BEGONIA'S**

**Your One-Stop Halloween Shop.**

We've got your costumes right here! Large basement full of men's & women's clothing. Open Daily. Evening hour during the last week of October. Rent & Sell Clothing.

**438-4438**  
1321 'P' St



## The Secret Garden

**Award-Winning Musical!**

This classic story has enchanted children for generations. Flashbacks, dream sequences, a strolling chorus of ghosts, and some of the most beautiful music ever written for the Broadway stage dramatize THE SECRET GARDEN's compelling tale of regeneration.

**STUDENT SPECIAL!**  
\$6 Admission Tonight Only! 7:30 PM

Continues Oct. 31, Nov. 1-2, 6-9, 13-16, 20-23.  
Call 489-7529 for ticket information!

**LINCOLN COMMUNITY PLAYHOUSE**

2500 S. 56th St.  
Lincoln, NE 68506

with support from the Nebraska Arts Council

