Conducting a survey of any kind produces a certain amount of challenges. One strives to be thorough, but at the same time wishes to be fair and balanced. That said, Amusement Today set some ground rules for its 1998 survey of parks and rides.

Park employees, suppliers, and ride manufacturers were not allowed to participate.

Survey participants were selected at random from various sources of park patrons with experience at many different parks. An equal number of names was selected from four geographic regions of the United States.

Completed surveys were to be postmarked by June 26, with results tabulated July 2.

Two roller coaster charts on pages 6B and 7B list the 25 highest-ranked wooden coasters and the 25 highest-ranked steel roller coasters. First-place picks received 10 points, second-place choices received nine points, and so on, with the 10th choice receiving one point. Total point values determined winners, and those point totals are included on each chart.

Park and ride categories, listed on page 3B, rank the top parks and rides by vote percentages. Only the highest-ranking parks and rides were included in this listing.

Survey overview

The core group selected to complete the survey certainly could boast some well-traveled experience. A greater familiarity with the North American coasters is apparent among those chosen, but the wood and steel coaster lists each landed an overseas entry.

Nemesis at Alton Towers in Staffordshire, England placed at No. 10 on the steel list; and Megafobia at Oakwood Park in Pembrookshire, Wales was among the top five wooden coasters.

Votes were cast for coasters from far reaches, including Serpiente de Fuego at La Feria in Mexico City; Tonnerre de Zues at Parc Asterix in Plailly, France; and Dragon Khan at Port Aventura in Tarragona, Spain.

To the surprise of Amusement Today staff members, even coasters of mixed regard could claim fans out there. All in all, 75 wooden coasters and 91 steel coasters garnered votes.

New for 1998

Because the surveys had to be sent back to Amusement Today by late June, new-for-'98 installations had a challenge to work their way into the ranks in such a short time.

Top performers were Worlds of Fun’s Mamba, ranked the No. 7 steel coaster; and Shivering Timbers at Michigan’s Adventure, rising to an impressive No. 6 on the wood chart. Both coasters are new this season.

Other new coasters to rank highly were VisionLand’s Rampage; Six Flags Over Texas’ Mr. Freeze; and Taz’s Texas Tornado, the legendary Thriller relocated from Germany to Six Flags AstroWorld in Houston, Texas.

Something old...

But modern coasters didn’t necessarily have total control. Coney Island’s Cyclone, the 1927 benchmark for all wooden coasters, rides comfortably in the top 10.

Relocation has proven to be quite the success story for some rides, as the No. 4, No. 10 and No. 15 wooden roller coasters — Comet at Great Escape, Phoenix at Knoebel’s Grove and Wild One at Adventure World, respectively — had been moved from their former homes, only to be reborn winners at their new parks.

See AWARDS, page 2B
AWARDS

Continued from page 1B

Of greater importance is the uncertain future of Playland’s wooden Coaster (No. 22) in Vancouver, B.C., Canada. The relocation of the Pacific National Exhibition may sadly doom this outstanding classic to the wrecking ball. Hopefully, a method of salvation will materialize to preserve this historic ride.

Park categories

Over one-third of the survey participants voted Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio as the best park to visit. Renowned for its sheer number of rides and record-setting collection of roller coasters, Cedar Point continues to be among the top regional destination parks.

Busch Gardens Williamsburg in Virginia was a prominent player in most categories, and stands proudly at second position in the Best Amusement Park category.

Celebrating its 100th anniversary this season, Kennywood Park outside Pittsburgh, Pa. demonstrates its longevity by rounding out the three most popular amusement parks.

Of the 19 waterparks recognized by the survey, Schlitterbahn in New Braunfels, Texas takes its one-of-a-kind mix of attractions and splashes to the top of the list for Best Waterpark. In second place is Blizzard Beach at Orlando, Fla., the only other contender to receive a solid portion of votes.

Survey participants had several categories in which to applaud the outstanding achievements of their favorite parks.

Holiday World in Santa Claus, Ind. took top honors in the Friendliest Park category; with Six Flags Over Texas in Arlington and Busch Gardens Williamsburg completing the top three.

Cedar Point clearly was the best at moving lines, as 38 percent claimed it had Best Capacity. In fact, only one other park, Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif., could claim a respectable vote share in this category.

The category Cleanest Park garnered mentions of 25 parks, so it would appear the industry is looking pretty spruced. Almost one-fourth of the votes were cast in favor of Busch Gardens Williamsburg.

A Disney stronghold was evident, with the California park beating out Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. for the second-place spot.

The most dramatic lead of the survey was in the Best Landscaping category, with Busch Gardens Williamsburg collecting over 10 times the votes of anyone behind them. Tying for a distant second place were Disneyland; Walt Disney World; and the first-place winner’s Florida sister park, Busch Gardens Tampa.

Busch Gardens Williamsburg also took the spotlight in Best Shows. Six Flags Fiesta Texas in San Antonio and Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. were voted solid performers in this category as well.

In the topic of Best Food, 19 parks caught attention with something good to eat, all the way down to Hoffman’s Playland in Albany, N.Y. Top spot again went to Busch Gardens Williamsburg, with Kennywood Park taking second place. EPCOT in Orlando, Fla. and Knoebel’s Grove in Elysburg, Pa. tied for third.

Ride categories

Among the individual rides, a few categories examined what the industry is doing right. Some simply voted for Disney or Busch for ride theming, but three rides tied for best theming.

Sharing accolades for first place are Nemesis at Alton Towers, Batman The Ride in several Six Flags Theme Parks, and Alpengeist at Busch Gardens Williamsburg.

A mere fraction of a percentage behind these three is Walt Disney World’s Twilight Zone Tower of Terror.

Among the waterparks, only two attractions took a significant lead: Schlitterbahn’s towering Master Blaster, gathering 29 percent of the votes; and the highly themed Journey to the Center of the Earth at Hyland Hills Water World in Denver, Colo.

In the category of Best Simulator/Interactive Attraction, Universal’s Back to the Future is tops. Disney’s Space Tours rides into second place, with Universal’s Terminator 2 close behind in third. Iwerk’s Dino Island gained an honorable mention with a solid 11 percent.

Favorite rides (noncoaster) are Intamin’s Giant Drops, such as Kennywood’s Pittfall. S&S Towers, such as World’s of Fun’s Detonator and Cedar Point’s Power Tower, are second in popularity; and ThrillTime Entertainment’s prevalent Sky Coasters placed third.

— Tim Baldwin

Thank You!
1998 Golden Ticket Awards

Thank you to the staff and to all the readers of Amusement Today for this honor. As the first-ever recipient of the Golden Ticket Award for Friendliest Staff, we’d like to thank all of our staff members for a job well done.

Photos courtesy of Busch Gardens/Holiday World
Above, a young guest enjoys some of the highly touted food at Busch Gardens Williamsburg. Below, a rider gets pointers on enjoying the bumper boats at Holiday World, voted Friendliest Park.
### Park and ride winners

#### Best Amusement/Theme Park
- **Cedar Point** Sandusky, Ohio 37%
- **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** Williamsburg, Va. 16%
- **Kennywood** West Mifflin, Pa. 9%

#### Best Waterpark
- **Schlitterbahn** New Braunfels, Texas 28%
- **Blizzard Beach** Orlando, Fla. 12%

#### Friendliest Park
- **Holiday World** Santa Claus, Ind. 22%
- **Six Flags Over Texas** Arlington, Texas 17%
- **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** Williamsburg, Va. 10%

#### Best Landscaping
- **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** Williamsburg, Va. 62%
- **Disneyland** Anaheim, Calif. 6%
- **Walt Disney World** Orlando, Fla. 6%
- **Busch Gardens Tampa** Tampa, Fla. 6%

#### Best Shows
- **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** Williamsburg, Va. 19%
- **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** San Antonio, Texas 14%
- **Walt Disney World** Orlando, Fla. 12%

#### Best Food
- **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** Williamsburg, Va. 21%
- **Kennywood** West Mifflin, Pa. 15%
- **Knoebels Grove** Elysburg, Pa. 9%
- **Epcot Center** Orlando, Fla. 9%

### Cleanest Park
- **Busch Gardens Williamsburg** Williamsburg, Va. 24%
- **Disneyland** Anaheim, Calif. 14%
- **Walt Disney World** Orlando, Fla. 11%

### Best Capacity (fastest-moving lines)
- **Cedar Point** Sandusky, Ohio 38%
- **Disneyland** Anaheim, Calif. 15%

### Best-Themed Ride
- **Nemesis** Alton Towers 11%
- **Batman The Ride** Six Flags Theme Parks 11%
- **Alpengeist** Busch Gardens Williamsburg 11%
- **Twilight Zone Tower of Terror** Disney MGM Studios 10%

### Best Waterpark Ride
- **Master Blaster** Schlitterbahn 29%
- **Journey to the Center of the Earth** Hyland Hills Water World 10%

### Best Noncoaster Ride
- **Giant Drop** Intamin/Ride Trade 21%
- **Space Shot** S&S Sports Power 15%
- **Sky Coaster** ThrillTime Entertainment 11%

### Best Simulator/Interactive Attraction
- **Back to the Future** Universal Studios 23%
- **Star Tours** Disneyland/Walt Disney World 17%
- **Terminator 2** Universal Studios 15%
- **Dino Island** Iwerks 11%
WE'RE EXCITED!

Custom Coasters International
Builders of Quality Wooden Rides


for the

top 25 votes

Custom Coasters International
8461 Cincinnati-Columbus Road • West Chester, Ohio 45069 • Phone (513) 755-0626 • Fax (513) 777-2658
Thank You

for voting

the BEST Wooden Roller Coaster

Six Flags®
Over Texas
Top 25 wooden roller coasters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>COASTER</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PARK</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Texas Giant</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Six Flags Over Texas</td>
<td>Arlington, Texas</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Raven</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Holiday World</td>
<td>Santa Claus, Ind.</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Beast</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Paramount's Kings Island</td>
<td>Kings Mills, Ohio</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Comet</td>
<td>1994*</td>
<td>The Great Escape</td>
<td>Lake George, N.Y.</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Megafobia</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Oakwood</td>
<td>Pembroke, Wales</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cyclone</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Astroland (Coney Island)</td>
<td>Brooklyn, N.Y.</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Timberwolf</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Worlds of Fun</td>
<td>Kansas City, Mo.</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Thunderbolt</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Kennywood</td>
<td>West Mifflin, Pa.</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Phoenix</td>
<td>1985*</td>
<td>Knoebel's Grove</td>
<td>Elysburg, Pa.</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Wildcat</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Hersheypark</td>
<td>Hershey, Pa.</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Georgia Cyclone</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Six Flags Over Georgia</td>
<td>Atlanta, Ga.</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Cyclone</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Riverside Park</td>
<td>Agawam, Mass.</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Grizzly</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Paramount's Kings Dominion</td>
<td>Doswell, VA.</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Wild One</td>
<td>1986*</td>
<td>Adventure World</td>
<td>Largo, Md.</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Great White</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Wild Wheels Pier</td>
<td>Wildwood, N.J.</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Rampage</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>VisionLand</td>
<td>Bessemer, Ala.</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Giant Dipper</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk</td>
<td>Santa Cruz, Calif.</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Screamin' Eagle</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Six Flags St. Louis</td>
<td>Eureka, Mo.</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Jack Rabbit</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Kennywood</td>
<td>West Mifflin, Pa.</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Mean Streak</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Cedar Point</td>
<td>Sandusky, Ohio</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Coaster</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Playland</td>
<td>Vancouver, B.C., Canada</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Rebel Yell</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Paramount's Kings Dominion</td>
<td>Roswell, Va.</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Viper</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Six Flags Great America</td>
<td>Gurnee, Ill.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Blue Streak</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Conneaut Lake Park</td>
<td>Conneaut Lake, Pa.</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fast Facts: Custom Coasters Inc., co-owned by Denise Dinn Larrick, built five of the coasters listed; the Charlie Dinn family has involvement with 12 coasters listed. A Great Coasters International ride is just outside the top 10. Design work by the late Curtis Summers appears on six entries. John Pierce was involved with construction work on one entry. Veteran designers Cobb, Keenan, Prior and Church, and Mitchell exhibit their craft on the list, along with two entries from John Allen, Ed Vettel and John Miller. PTC trains run on 18 of the 25 coasters listed.

* Indicates coasters relocated from other parks. The Great Escape’s Comet was originally built in 1947 at Crystal Beach, Ontario, Canada. Phoenix at Knoebels Grove was moved from Playland Park in San Antonio, Texas, where it was built in 1947. The Wild One at Adventure World was moved from its 1917 home at Paragon Park in Hull, Mass.

Point totals were tallied from an exclusive number of experienced park patrons equally selected from four geographic regions of the United States. Top choice received 10 points, with the 10th choice receiving one point. Point totals are listed on the charts.
# THE LIST

Top 25 steel roller coasters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>COASTER</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PARK</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Magnum XL-200</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Cedar Point</td>
<td>Sandusky, Ohio</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alpengeist</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Busch Gardens Williamsburg</td>
<td>Williamsburg, Va.</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Montu</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Busch Gardens Tampa</td>
<td>Tampa, Fla.</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kumba</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Busch Gardens Tampa</td>
<td>Tampa, Fla.</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Steel Force</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Dorney Park</td>
<td>Allentown, Pa.</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Raptor</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Cedar Point</td>
<td>Sandusky, Ohio</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mamba</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Worlds of Fun</td>
<td>Kansas City, Mo.</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Desperado</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Buffalo Bill's Casino</td>
<td>Primm, Nev.</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Big Bad Wolf</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Busch Gardens Williamsburg</td>
<td>Williamsburg, Va.</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nemesis</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Alton Towers</td>
<td>Staffordshire, England</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Steel Phantom</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Kennywood</td>
<td>West Mifflin, Pa.</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mind Bender</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Six Flags Over Georgia</td>
<td>Atlanta, Ga.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mindbender</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Galaxyland</td>
<td>Edmonton, Alberta, Canada</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mantis</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Cedar Point</td>
<td>Sandusky, Ohio</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Taz’s Texas Tornado</td>
<td>1998*</td>
<td>Six Flags AstroWorld</td>
<td>Houston, Texas</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Loch Ness Monster</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Busch Gardens Williamsburg</td>
<td>Williamsburg, Va.</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Shockwave</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Six Flags Over Texas</td>
<td>Arlington, Texas</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Big One</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Blackpool Pleasure Beach</td>
<td>Blackpool, England</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Batman The Ride</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Six Flags Great Adventure</td>
<td>Jackson, N.J.</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Superman The Escape</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Six Flags Magic Mountain</td>
<td>Valencia, Calif.</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Batman The Ride</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Six Flags St. Louis</td>
<td>Eureka, Mo.</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Great White</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Sea World of Texas</td>
<td>San Antonio, Texas</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Mr. Freeze</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Six Flags Over Texas</td>
<td>Arlington, Texas</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Batman The Ride</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Six Flags Great America</td>
<td>Gurnee, Ill.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Crazy Mouse</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Dinosaur Beach</td>
<td>Wildwood, N.J.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fast Facts: Ten of the top 25 steel coasters are designed by Bolliger and Mabillard. Six of Arrow’s steel coasters appear on the list. Four classic Schwarzkopf masterpieces hold their own among the latest creations. The two latest designs by Morgan Manufacturing land in the top 10. Single entries from Intamin, Premier and Reverchon complete the statistics.

*Taz’s Texas Tornado originally traveled on the German fair circuit under the name Thriller. It was built in 1985.

Point totals were tallied from an exclusive number of experienced park patrons equally selected from four geographic regions of the United States. Top choice received 10 points, with the 10th choice receiving one point. Point totals are listed on the charts.
Cedar Fair, L.P. thanks Amusement Today for ranking us so highly.

Best Park: Cedar Point

Best Steel coasters:
#1 Magnum - Cedar Point
#5 Steel Force - Dorney Park
#6 Raptor - Cedar Point
#7 Mamba - Worlds of Fun

Best Wooden coasters:
#8 Timber Wolf - Worlds of Fun

Best Park capacity:
Cedar Point

For more information: www.cedarfair.com • (419) 627-2350

(Cedar Fair, L.P. is traded on the NYSE under the ticker symbol "FUN")