

GEAUGA LAKE TO HOST DUMPLING EATING COMPETITION THE STORY OF A COMPETITIVE EATER: COONDOG O'KARMA

AURORA, Ohio (Sept. 1, 2005) – A real question from Volume 6 of the game Trivial Pursuit:

***"Question:** What was competitive eater Dave O'Karma disqualified for after eating 126 wings in the 2002 Philadelphia Wing Bowl?"* (See answer at end)

Forty-nine-year-old Dave "Coondog" O'Karma didn't get his own question in Trivial Pursuit without years of experience. Even in his teenaged years, this world-famous competitive food eater broke world records for eating hard-boiled eggs and doughnuts while reigning as the pizza-eating champ of Cleveland WJW Channel 8's "Big Chuck and Houlihan Show".

Coondog has most recently competed in various nation-wide competitions such as Nathan's Coney Island Hot Dog Eating Contest, Chili Fest in Las Vegas, the Philadelphia Wing Bowl and the St. Louis Pizza Eating Competition.

"I can eat an entire pizza in 28 seconds," Coondog proclaims. "In fact, I ate pizza against a 600 pound bear, and I won!"

While some people might classify competitive eating as silly, weird or just plain disgusting, Coondog refers to it as a sport just like that of football, baseball, or hockey. Competitive eating, he says, requires all the necessary elements required to be called a sport: measurable abilities in speed, capacity, endurance and technique.

"It takes a special breed of maniac to be good," he boasts. "I consider myself one of the best."

And Coondog, like other great sports stars, gets his time in the spotlight. Some of his notable television appearances include airtime on the Steve Harvey Big Time Show, Sally Jessie Raphael, Food Network and the Discovery Channel. He's been quoted in The Wall Street Journal and Sports Illustrated.

"I AM A FOOD STAR!" Coondog announces proudly. "I bask in my D-list celebrity."

Coondog and his friend, competitor and associate, Eddie "The Geek" Vidmar, teamed up in 2002 following an article featuring Coondog in the Akron Beacon Journal. The two have often competed against one another while organizing these competitions. This time, the team will oversee Geauga Lake's First-Ever German Dumpling Eating Contest at Geauga Lake's 25th Annual Oktoberfest.

(more)

A total of 24 contestants will be selected to compete in four three-minute qualifying rounds Saturday, Sept. 17 at 2 p.m. The top two qualifiers from each heat will advance to the six-minute finals Sunday, Sept. 18 at 3 p.m. Winners will be determined by the number of dumplings they can consume.

Guests interested in registering to compete should send an email to **eatmoredumplings@yahoo.com** explaining why they think they should be in the contest.

The award-winning Mozart's restaurant from Canton, Ohio will provide the dumplings.

But pairing an eating competition with great German food isn't anything new for Coondog and Eddie. The team started one of their first ventures organizing eating competitions together at Mozart's Restaurant's Bier Garden during a bratwurst eating competition. Becoming so packed with customers, the restaurant had to turn people away. Spectators that couldn't fit in the restaurant were left standing on their car bumpers, looking over the fence of the bier garden just to get a glimpse of the unique competition.

"Hey man, it's like being in sixth grade," Coondog laughs. "Some of us are just stuck there!"

To contact Dave "Coondog" O'Karma and Eddie Vidmar, please call (330) 310-3964.

It's bratwurst, bands and brew-ha-ha as Geauga Lake welcomes the 25th anniversary of Oktoberfest Sept. 16-18. Featuring live bands, dancing, international cuisine, German beer and all sorts of unique entertainment, this German-inspired event combined with the excitement of an amusement park is perfect for every member of the family! New for this year are grape stomping competitions, German dumpling eating contests, glass blowing exhibitions and wine and cheese tasting. For more information about Geauga Lake's 25th Annual Oktoberfest, please call (330) 562-8303 or visit geaugalake.com.

Gauga Lake is owned and operated by Cedar Fair LP, a publicly traded partnership listed for trading on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "FUN." In addition to Geauga Lake, Cedar Fair owns and operates six other amusement parks, five waterparks and one indoor waterpark resort.

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"Answer: Vomiting"