

# Bloomer Rope Jump Contest

by Paul Morning  
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Bloomer's rope jumping boom began in 1960 when a former coach named **Wally Mohrman** became the physical education teacher in the Bloomer schools. Knowing the value of the exercise, he decided to stir some interest with a contest. The emphasis was on speed jumping... how many times a student could whip a rope under his feet in a given period. During its 50 year history, interest has grown, champions have been crowned and records have been set.

Rope Jump Record Holder **Paul Morning** and four students were on hand to tell us about the Bloomer event and to demonstrate their talents.

According to Morning, each January almost 20,000 kids, primarily from schools throughout Wisconsin, train hard and compete at their local schools with hopes of becoming one of the 250 kids to make the trip to Bloomer for the finals, which are held each year on the last Saturday in January.

Kids compete in one of four divisions for boys and four for girls... grades 1-2, 3-4, 5-6 and 7-8, plus there is an open division for adults brave enough to give it a shot in front of hundreds of spectators. The rules are quite simple... in 10 seconds, jump over a standard manila hemp rope as many times as possible. Each jumper gets two attempts... the best one counts... and the contestant with the most jumps wins.

Way back in 1979, Paul Morning set the record that may never be broken... 72 jumps in the allotted 10 seconds. He also gained some notoriety for Bloomer and himself with appearances on the TV show "Real People" and the "Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson.

Morning concluded by recommending that everyone, kids and adults, give rope jumping a try just for the enjoyment and exercise. It is an excellent cardiovascular activity that also improves balance, coordination and quickness.

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From left: Rope jumpers Margaret Morning (kindergarten), Adrienne Morning (2<sup>nd</sup> grade), **Paul Morning**, Elliott Morning (5<sup>th</sup> grade) and Ella Niebergall (5<sup>th</sup> grade)