



# Monkeying Around in Hawaii

by David Graham

Recently the ISA held its 83rd annual conference in Honolulu, Hawaii. This year's site for the International Tree Climbing Championship (ITCC) was at the University of Hawaii-Manoa campus. The trees were grand, yet foreign, to Midwestern climbers, as well as to photographers of climbers.

Several years ago, I began taking the portfolio head shots of the ITCC climbers for the ISA. This led to attending other ISA functions for capturing moments. Eventually, I rose to the challenge of taking action shots of tree climbers.

Taking pictures of climbing may seem like an easy task, but holding a camera with a telephoto lens in a skyward direction and trying to catch a climber inside the tree canopy can be very difficult. The darker interior of the tree contrasts with the bright, sunny sky, and getting a good shot is possible, but predominantly impossible.

The largest of the grand trees on campus was a baobab. It is native to the savannas of Africa and India, and was foreign to many of the contestants for the work climb. Joe House, Wisconsin's tree climbing champion and representative competitor at the ITCC, described the experience. "It was like climbing an elephant."

On Friday, the climbers met at the site for gear inspection. Then all the contestants, judges, scorers, and technicians ran through all the events. This day I found to

be the most relaxing, and great pictures were easy to capture with all the contestants in a relaxed mood.

Many former champions were at the ITCC, including Mark Chisholm of New Jersey. He has represented his state for seventeen years, and still climbs like a youngster. On Saturday, I saw him compete in the footlock event, setting a new world record of 13.800 seconds. Not resting on his laurels, Mark competed Sunday morning in the head-to-head footlock competition and took first place.

House had an outstanding climb there also, placing third overall in the head-to-head footlock event, which equaled his Saturday third-place finish in the secured footlock. Way to go, Joe!!!

Fifty-six climbers, catch all the judges, take action shots, shoot the winners during the ITCC awards ceremony on Saturday night, then start all over again on Sunday for the Masters Challenge, I love it!!!

I give all my shots to the ISA for their use and for the photo gallery page of the ITCC. The 2007 photos should be posted on the ISA Web site soon.

I will pick up in the next issue of *The Wisconsin Arborist* with "Joe House and the Great Monkey Pod Tree at the Sheraton Royal Hawaiian Coconut Grove."

*Aloha from DWG*