



AMERICAN WOODWORKER

ROLLING SHOP CABINET • SHOP TEST: BENCHTOP MORTISERS

FEBRUARY 1998

# AMERICAN WOODWORKER®

FEBRUARY 1998 #64

## Build Norm's Rolling Shop Cabinet

### A Jig for Super Strong Drawers

#### PLUS PLANS

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- Satinwood Box
- Bar-Clamp Bookshelf

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**SPECIAL FEATURE**  
*Turning the World's Biggest Bowl*



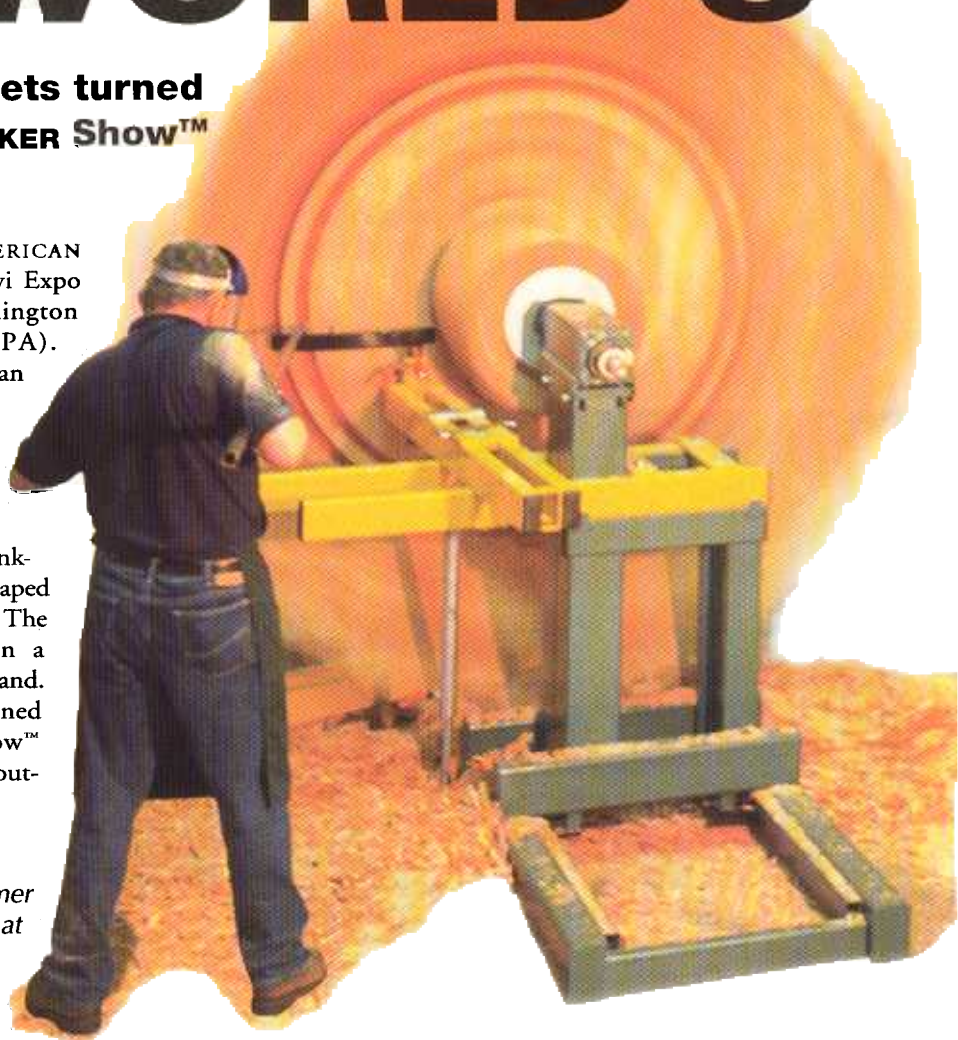


# THE WORLD'S

**A record-breaking bowl gets turned at The AMERICAN WOODWORKER Show™**

It happened last fall, when the AMERICAN WOODWORKER Show,™ came to the Novi Expo Center (in Novi, MI) and the Fort Washington Expo Center (in Fort Washington, PA). Thousands of showgoers were greeted with an amazing sight—the world's largest bowl being turned by renowned British turner Stuart Mortimer.

During the three days of each show, Mortimer and a team of assistants—including AW contributing editor Steve Blenkins—enthralled the crowds as they hollowed and shaped the 8-ft.-dia., two-ton chunk of Sitka spruce. The blank spun slowly (about 25 rpm) on a Tyme/Multico lathe brought over from England. Another gigantic turning adventure is planned when The AMERICAN WOODWORKER Show™ comes to the Ontario Convention Center, outside Los Angeles, from March 6 through 8. ▲



*Big spin.* Turner Stuart Mortimer turns the world's largest bowl at The AMERICAN WOODWORKER Show™ in Novi, MI.

PHOTO BY JIM RAWLINSON

## THE BIRTH OF A BOWL



**1** *Bucking a chunk.* David J. Borek of Maple Specialties in Washington slices off a 5,600-lb., 8-ft.-dia. bowl blank from the butt end of a spruce log. The tree that yielded this behemoth blank was 285 ft. tall.

PHOTO BY DAVID J. BOREK



**2** *Cutting away the waste.* Mortimer removes excess wood from the inside and outside of the blank with a chainsaw, reducing the weight to around two tons. A center stem is left for attaching to the lathe's tailstock.

PHOTO BY ANDY RAE



# BIGGEST BOWL



3

**3 Finding center.** Mortimer and AW contributing editor Steve Blenk find the center for attaching the faceplate by pivoting a weighted string around the outside of the blank.



4

**4 Mounting on the lathe.** Chains, heavy strapping, and a forklift hoist the big blank onto the headstock. A unique pivoting chuck on the tailstock allows for slight imbalances as the blank spins.



5

**5 First inside cut.** Using an 8-ft.-long, custom-made gouge with a replaceable cutting tip, Mortimer makes the first inside cuts.



6

**6 Two-time turning.** Mortimer and Blenk do double duty turning the outside of the blank.



7

**7 Big finish.** Mortimer brushes on several gallons of Danish oil to slow down the drying of the green bowl and prevent cracking.

# AMERICAN WOODWORKER®

October 2, 1997

Dave Borek  
Maple Specialties  
43306 Southeast North Bend Way  
Suite 1 & 2  
North Bend, WA 98045

Dear Dave:

Please accept this as a belated thank you for your Herculean efforts in finding the "giant" spruce log and having it delivered to us in Detroit, on time. I've enclosed a snapshot of Stuart Mortimer turning the log on the Tyme Highlander Lathe at the American Woodworker Show. It was truly an awesome sight!

Without you and your steadfast determination this remarkably successful event could not have happened.

Again, thank you for all of your support.

Best regards,



David Sloan  
editor & publisher

encl.

