

DC SKATE PLAZA
with the Heater Skateboards Team



Gumbie Crooked Grind the 12 Rail Photo by Bart Tararuj

IT'S NOT A STATEMENT JUST DAN SHOWING OFF

the only injury of the Heater Skateboards trip to the DC Skate Plaza in Kettering, Ohio. Well sort of the only injury. Jason at CharmcitySkatepark was kind enough to drive the 11 hours from Baltimore to Kettering and was more than happy to drive but apparently the Charmcity van was not. Their transmission suffered the only other injury (besides Dan Corrigan's insanely long bloody middle finger) 16 miles from the Skate Plaza. It hadn't taken a complete shit yet but they could tell it was coming and they were scared. The thought of getting stuck on the way home in the West Virginia mountains that they had just cannonballed down in the van at 130 mph, 7 dudes deep, scared shitless that the tires were going to melt off, was frightening! But they were so close, Jason just pressed on despite the ehheh ehhhh of the tranny.

They pulled into the parking lot and they saw the gem that is the DC Plaza. Everyone's first reaction (although the plaza is huge) was, "it looks so much bigger on the internet!" It does appear to be giant on the internet, but it really is a big park; loads of parking, big spacious grassy areas for the picnicing parents, and loads of the most buttery smooth pavement they had ever seen or had the pleasure of skating! The ground is so perfect you can see your reflection in it. But surprisingly, it's not slippery. The ledges, the ledges are everywhere! So many of them; big ones, small ones, just right ledges, uneven ledges and gap to ledges. Every buttery kind of ledge you can think of, waxed to perfection. A few are getting a little chunky but you can still power right through them with little to no effort! One thing that really surprised me was the lack of flatbars. There was not a single one. Unless you count the 3ft high bar that is running along the top of one of the ledges. Not your typical flatbar, but I guess since this park is a utopia, you shouldn't expect to see any flatbars in heaven. There is also a plethora of handrails, really manrails because none of these puppies are small. There is a couple of 3 stair rails, some 6 stair rails, 7 stair rails, 9 stair rails, and a 12 stair rail! Work your way up. Gumbie crooked his way up to the 12 stair rail, one 1st try crooked grind at a time. There is also a big 4 stair rail that is amazing. DC and Dyrdek strived for street authenticity and of course they threw a couple 3 flat 3 double kinked rails in the mix! Unfortunately for us, the landing on the double kinkers was the only space in the whole park where it can get muddy. They are angled out on the edges of the park facing the grassy area that has'nt quite finished growing yet. Blaming it on the mud is a nice way to cop out of manning up on the double kinker!

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▼ DAN CORRIGAN BACKSMITH

Photo Bart Tararuj



Sketch 8:00AM in the Plaza's parking lot getting ready for the 8 hour skate session.



◀ OHIO RESIDENT AND PLAZA LOCAL JEFF TRACIN FRONT BLUNTING THE HUBBA

Sequence by Jason Chapman



Sketch gap to tall crook Photo by Bart Tararuj

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The park is absolutely amazing! There is a real flow you can get going if you just want to fly around the park, but watch out for the little kids on ninja turtle boards decked out in full safety gear, not realizing that the most hazardous thing in the park is them! A note for the transition skater, I know that after age 30 mini ramp is your only option (I know from experience) but you will find absolutely no transition at all here. Not even a bank to go to fakie on. There are skinny wedges to provide speed to the lower levels but that's it. I am not complaining, just noting so the pool boys don't get their pads on for nothing. "Concrete, concrete, where concrete?"

So after an amazing 3 hour session, the Heater Team, Sketch, Gumbie and Dan Corrigan along with Charmcity riders Kevin and Zach and Jason Chapman, owner and operator of both, hopped back in the van almost forgetting about the transmission was slipping. To everyone's delight no slippage! We made our way to a hotel conveniently located in a town 10 miles back towards home. It was a pretty nice set up, I would suggest staying there but I can't remember the name and I didn't steal a pen, notepad, soap or a towel with the name on it. Across the street from the hotel was one of every fast food chain on the planet. Everyone fueled up and we all claimed dibs on the shower, shitter and so forth. I walked in on Gumbie who enjoys leaving the door unlocked while he takes a shit. You know you can never look at friend the same after you catch him wiping his ass. If you can avoid seeing your buddy wipe his ass, I highly suggest doing so at all costs! After that little bit of trauma I ordered 40 Year Old Virgin on the hotel TV and immediately fell asleep. That isn't a reflection on the movie, driving 11 hours and non stop filming/skating for 3 hours will tucker you out. There is an important factor about the trip that I have to mention that I keep forgetting to mention. Sketch was in charge of CD's/entertainment. Usually he is really on top of shit, but of course not when we go on an 11 hour ride, no! A 2 hour trip to Philly, Yeah. 3 hours to New York, hes on it. This trip he brought one Bauhaus disc. Bauhaus is kind of an acquired taste and I don't think it helped the ride go any faster, which I am sure aided in my exhaustion.

Did I mention this was a two day, one night trip which means we woke up at 7:00 AM the next morning to try to get as much skating in as possible. Getting this rowdy bunch up was much easier than expected. I think the allure of the perfect skatepark was more than they needed to motivate everyone. I love Baltimore, Maryland more than any place on the planet. How can I not? We're #1. #1 murder rate, #1 teen pregnancy, #1 STD's what's not to love. The only real problem is no Waffle Houses. Whenever I am traveling I always try to hit up the House....Uhhm Grits.

We all piled in the van, tranny was making some crazy ass noises, but we hit up the Waffle House and made it to the Plaza by 8:00AM.

It was a school day so we thought we would have the place to ourselves but no such luck, even at 8:00 in the morning there was people there. Not that big a deal, because all the locals are supercool. Although Jersey's are alive and well in Ohio. We met Jeff Tracin one of the locals that ruled the park. Dude had lines style and great board control. I knew one of his homies that used to live in Bmore. We hung with them for a while and Jeff frontblunted the big hubba within a couple of tries. I wasted 2 hours filming Zak try to kickflip the big rail. He was eating shit, sticking two out of three but he just couldn't ride away. After crooking every rail in the park 1st try, Gumbie had to man up and crook the 12 set handrail. He road at it about 30 times. I had finally given up on him, when he finally jumped on the rail and locked a perfect crook and grinded all the way to the bottom. That pussy had to ruin my story, he made every other crook 1st try, why not this one! He had it anyway. That bailing ass biach.....Anyway it was getting really late and we did not want to be driving at 4:00 in the morning on a transmission that was possibly going to laugh at us when we tried to climb those 8% grade WestVirginia hills to get back to sweet Baltimore. I looked up and Gumbie had just gotten into the perfect crook, rode away as clean as the buttery concrete at the Plaza. Right after that the sun started to set, and with the darkness coming and I finally convinced everyone to get in the van so we could attempt our long ride home. Luckily on the way home the only trouble with the van was when Gumbie and Sketch peed in a bottle that Zach had chewed a hole in. It was the next day the van's transmission took a pooh! But I would trade that van any day for that trip. The DC Plaza is one of the best skate spots on the planet!

