



World famous Double-Barreled Bynum China Berry Gun

This past year, I was watching the annual “Punkin’ Chunkin” contest and some old memories of my childhood at Bynum came back. The memories were really focused when I watched a paint ball battle on a later date.

When I first moved to Bynum, a lot of the boys my age were engaged in China Berry battles. They were using an adaptation of a sling-shot that looked like the profile of a pistol. The main frame of the thing was crudely cut from a pine board. It had a strip of rubber fastened at what looked like the end of the barrel and a clothes pin on the back end where normally the hammer of a gun was. A China berry was clasped in the end of the looped rubber strip and pulled back to the clothes pin. The clothes pin was then closed on the rubber containing the China berry. When the owner then wanted to let fly with the China berry, he opened the clothes pin. This was a fun contraption but had very limited range.

Cooney Brewer and I made an improvement on this by enlarging the frame to something that looked like a Kentucky long rifle. This had good range and more accuracy. The problem was it was only a single shot and was time consuming to load another China berry into it. Meanwhile you were getting smacked upside the head with green China berries. OWW!

Hence, came our crown and glory. The arrival of the double barreled China berry gun. We shaped two barrels, each with it’s own rubber strip. The barrels were attached to a rough cut stock with each barrel’s clothes pin to each side of the stock. The barrels were secured towards their ends with a block of wood attached on their underside. You had to put the block on the under side to not interfere with the action of the rubber strips when firing off a China berry. Whamo! Splat! OWW! ... Twice.

Can you imagine what mayhem we could have caused if we had paint balls for our China berry guns?

We later built a dirt clod/mud ball mortar out of a fence post and a bicycle inner tube. But that’s another story.