



This column is named in honor of the *Strength & Health* feature which appeared in that magazine from January of 1956, when Harry "Bosco" Paschall took over the managing editorship from Jim Murray, to May of 1986, when the final, by-then-slender issue limped into view. The reconstituted "Iron Grapevine" will carry news and information about the world of physical culture. The emphasis will be on the past but such things as the passing of noted figures in the field and the current activities of veteran members of our fraternity will also be covered. We invite readers to help us with this column; in fact, without letters and calls from interested people, *The Iron Grapevine* will be far less than it can, and should, be. So if you have something of interest, or if you have learned of the death of someone in the game, please send that information to us here at the University of Texas and we, in turn, will share it with the readers of *IGH*. (The first installment of Paschall's "Grapevine", by the way, introduced the elusive Seminole strongman, Jackie Bobo, who was said to have exceeded the world record in the clean and jerk in training, using the crudest of exercise equipment down in the swamps of the Everglades. Remember?)



In the next issue of *IGH* we hope and intend to include several regular features or columns which, for one reason or another, we did not carry this time. One of the columns will usually be written by Jan Todd and will be primarily concerned with women who have made important contributions in the past to physical culture. We also plan to always include a "Letters" section, and the only thing that would stop us would be, of course, no letters. So if you have comments, suggestions, or axes to grind, send them our way.



We had the pleasure of a visit between Christmas and the New Year from Harold Weiss, an attorney and longtime lifter from Memphis, Tennessee. Hal, as he's known, is also a serious collector of books and magazines in the strength field, so when he and his wife come to Texas to visit his daughter and son-in-law in Houston, he usually manages to come to Austin for a few hours at the Collection. While he was here, we drove out to visit Charles A. Smith, who is recovering well from some earlier surgery. Hal, who once cleaned and pressed a pair of 120 pound dumbbells, told us a wonderful story about visiting Sig Klein's gym back in the 1940's and asking Sig to give him

a chance to clean and press a pair of challenge dumbbells. Besides his successful law practice, Weiss is a member of the Baker Street Irregulars, a group devoted to the Sherlock Holmes stories. In fact, Hal has written an article in which he analyzes the Holmes stories in order to prove that Arthur Conan Doyle knew a great deal about physical culture. *IGH* has been promised a copy so you can look forward to seeing it in these pages in the coming months. Hal has also located a 102 year old man who personally knew George Hackenschmidt when the Russian Lion was an active athlete. A taping session is now in the planning stages. Watch for the transcript.



A telephone conversation with Jack Elder of East Texas brought the welcome news that this vigorous, 76 year old man had recently broken the national record in the deadlift for men over 75 years of age. Jack's career as a lifter goes back to the 1930's, and he used to go all the way to York for some of the big meets. The meet in which Jack deadlifted 350 was promoted in Longview, Texas by John Inzer, and it included such things as superheavyweight powerlifter Gus Rethwisch, dressed as the character "Buzzsaw" he portrayed in the Schwarzenegger film, "Running Man", engaging in a mock tight on stage and then cranking up his chainsaw and chasing his "opponent" offstage, from which area were heard bloodcurdling screams followed by the reappearance onstage of Rethwisch with a (supposedly) severed head, which he proceeded to roll across the stage. We wonder what Dietrich Wortmann would have thought of the show. In any case, it's a fine thing to know that Jack is still active and still interested. His son, by the way, is a very successful orthopedic surgeon.



It is with real sadness that we report the death of Kimon Voyages, a body builder whose prime was in the 1940's and 1950's. Voyages, who operated a successful chiropractic clinic in New York with his two sons, suffered a stroke during the holidays and died on the 26th of December, one week short of his 68th birthday. Readers may recall his feats in high rep squatting or his outstanding thigh development. Dr. Voyages was a member of the Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen and he retained a keen interest in the physical culture field.



Many of you will remember Lou Riecke, the New Orleans weightlifter who holds the distinction of being one of the very last Americans to have set a world record. Lou had a long career in lifting, from the 1940's to the 1960's, and he snatched 325 in 1964 in the 181 pound class, using the split style, and to our knowledge this was the last world record in the snatch made with the "fore and aft" technique. After he retired from lifting, Lou followed his friend, Al Roy, into strength

coaching and he served in that capacity for the Pittsburgh Steelers during their glory years, earning four Super Bowl rings in the process. We saw him recently in New Orleans and he looks wonderful—lean and quick as always and full of energy and ideas. He recently sold his successful business and is at work on a project which will use computers to bring accurate training techniques to high schools that do not have a qualified strength coach.



Gilbert Michaud, a friend from Quebec, recently sent us a set of very interesting photographs about a 19th century strongman-giant, The photos were of a granite boulder of about six feet in diameter. Embedded in the boulder—which is in Quebec—is a plaque explaining that Modeste Mailhot, known as the “Canadian Giant,” was born in 1769 and died in 1834 and that he had singlehandedly rolled the huge boulder out of a proposed roadway. Mailhot was a man of truly majestic proportions, having been 7’6” tall and having weighed as much as 617 pounds. Shorter by three inches but heavier by over 100 pounds than his fellow Canadian, Angus McCaskill, the “Cape Breton Giant” (1825-1863). Mailhot had great vigor, as indicated by the fact that he lived to be 64 years of age, not a mean feat in those days, particularly if you weighed as much as four men of average size. Michaud is looking for more information on this phenomenal man and we will pass it along when and if it arrives.



One of the interesting people who attended this year’s annual dinner of the Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen was a young man—Steven Sadicario, who appears professionally as “The Mighty Stefan”. Sadecario, who is only 31, is 5’6”, weighs 180 pounds and he does what Ottley Coulter used to call a “strong act.” Among his listed feats are bending steel bars, tearing cards, breaking chains and lifting sledgehammers. He has made many appearances in the New York City area and he can be contacted by calling 201-233-2784. We are pleased to provide The Mighty Stefan with a little exposure; it’s always good to see someone interested in maintaining the craft of the strongman.



Those who were active in the early days of powerlifting will remember Dr. Lyle Schwartz, who devised the still-popular formula which bears his name and allows men of different weights to be fairly judged for the “Best Lifter” trophy. Lyle was an accomplished lifter in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s and he served with distinction for many years as an official and a member of the executive committee of the United States Powerlifting Federation. For years, Lyle was a professor at Northwestern University in Chicago but several years ago he and his wife moved to the Washington, D.C. area

and he began work as the Director of the Institute for Materials Science and Engineering for the U. S. Department of Commerce.



Charles A. Smith, a former writer for various Weider publications in the 1950’s, has been retired for some years from his work with the juvenile court system in Austin, where he still lives. Smith spent his boyhood and young manhood in England and he sent us the following recollection.

“Back in the middle to late thirties, I was working out at a club in London called the First West Central Weightlifting Club. It was presided over by “Milo” Brinn, the old vaudeville strongman. Our lifting club was above Brinn’s pub, the Grafton Arms, and quite often George Hackenschmidt would drop by to visit Brinn and chat about the golden years of the vaudeville strongmen. After they’d finished their chat, ‘Hack’ would often ask if anyone was upstairs in the club and, if the answer was no, he’d say, ‘I think I’ll go up and look around.’ When this happened we’d wait a few minutes and then sneak up the stairs and peek through the glass panels of the clubroom doors. And there would be ‘Hack’, into his sixties, doing a one arm bent press with the Berg bar, the two big discs and the collars, about 145 pounds.” [Ed. note: Hackenschmidt was born August 2, 1878.]



At the end of January, a group of veteran weight men gathered in Venice, California for the first annual Muscle Beach Weight Club Reunion. Most of those in attendance had been involved in the club called the “Dungeon”, as opposed to the “Pit” (which was on Venice Beach and much more well known to the general public). But the Dungeon was one of the first really heavy iron gyms on the coast and those who gathered to relive those glory days included Zabo Koszewski, Bud Mucci, Buddy Pryor, Hugo Labra, Harold Connally, Louie Paul, Steve Neece, DeForest Most (the “mayor” of Muscle Beach), Seymour Koenig, Jack Hughes and Bob “Bugsy” Siegel. We hope to be able to include more news about the gathering in the next Grapevine.



One of the things we old-timers have to put up with are frequent claims from people about some exercise or machine or routine being “new” and “revolutionary” when the truth is that the exercise, machine or routine was older than the person who’s calling it new. From where we sit, it seems a good idea to point out these sorts of mistakes. Not only is it a way to educate the new people in the game, but it also is a way to give credit where credit is due by explaining who really did invent a certain exercise, machine or system of sets and reps. In any case, if you see or hear of something that fits into one of these categories, let us know and we’ll try to set the record straight.