



Following our last issue, we received quite a bit of correspondence related to our attempt to compile a bibliography of the major journals in the field of physical culture. Our friend from Italy, Biagio Filizola, who recently visited the Physical Culture Collection here at the University of Texas, sent us the following information about Italy's bodybuilding magazines:

Dear *IGH*,

The first magazine published in Italy was *Cultura Fisica*. It started in 1957 and is still current. In 1959, *Sport & Salute* began publishing. It ended in 1965. In 1984, *Sport & Salute* resumed publication and is still current. *Ercole* magazine started in 1961 and lasted for 12 issues. *Vigor* magazine began in 1966 and remains current. *Sportman*, the Italian version of Weider's *Muscle Power* started in 1974 and is current. *Linea & Sport* started in 1978 and is current. *Body's Mag* began publishing in 1987 and remains current. In addition to these, there have been occasional issues of other Weider publications published in Italian. In 1960, there were three issues of *Mr. Universe* published. Eight issues of *Muscle Power* appeared on the newsstands in 1958. Five issues of *Flex* were published in 1988 and, since 1990, we can now get *Iron Man*.

Biagio Filizola
Sapri, Italy

Dear *IGH*,

I am a subscriber to *Iron Game History* and enjoy it very much.

In the combined #4 and #5 issue, you had an impressive list of publications relating to physical training and health. Several publications were not mentioned and I thought that you may be interested in them. They are: *East Coast Bodybuilder*, which had three issues published in 1976; *American Body Builder*, which published a number of issues circa 1976-1978 and *Mighty Men of Old, Biography of Outstanding Strongmen* from 1940.

I am enclosing the Spring 1977 issue of *American Body Builder* for your collection.

Please tell your wife that I enjoyed the Bernarr Macfadden article. I wrote an article on him for the premier issue of *Natural Physique*.

Robert J. Bryla, D.C., P.T.
Utica, New York

We'd like to thank Dr. Bryla for the information and the copy of *American Bodybuilder*. We *did* know of the *Mighty Men of Old* publication, but did not include it because it was not marketed as a serial publication.

On other matters our readers write:

Dear *IGH*,

Just a note to tell you that I thought the March issue of *Iron Game History* was wonderful. You really outdid yourselves on this double issue. There really is nothing else like your publication.

I had already read your tribute to Charles A. Smith in *Iron Man*, but I enjoyed reading it again with the additional detail. I am always interested in hearing about people who have contributed so much to the strength sports, especially from someone like you who has the intimate details of his life.

I was also delighted to find Al Thomas' piece on the Strength & Health picnics. I had just mentioned S&H picnics in *Lean for Life*, which I'm now in the process of writing. Al Thomas really is a good observer and eavesdropper, as he says. I only attended one picnic, I think it was in 1958, and I don't remember anywhere near the details that Thomas does. His nostalgic piece on Bob Hoffman's great picnics really serves to remind us how wonderful the golden era of weight training really was. Looking back, it's amazing how Uncle Bob made York the center of the weight world for so many years. That era is gone now, but obviously not forgotten.

Jan, your piece on Bernarr Macfadden was of special interest to me as well. I've just received a flyer on a Bernarr Macfadden biography by a professor back east somewhere. I've sent off for it. After reading your piece I look forward to receiving it even more.

Congratulations again on the March issue. Please keep up the good work. If you come through New Mexico again this year please allow time to stop in for a bite to eat and a good chat.

Clarence Bass
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Dear *IGH*,

In your response to my earlier recommendation that "both genders be represented on the *IGH* masthead," you said, "We basically agree...but have yet to find a suitable...female athlete...Any suggestions?"

In the current issue of *IGH* Jan states that the great Bernarr Macfadden, the Father of Physical Culture, "...harkens back to the Greeks by reminding his readers that the greatest beauty is seen in those (female) bodies where the muscles are fully developed, as in the statues of Venus, Juno, Diana and Minerva." While in Washington recently, I viewed and photographed several statues, including those of Venus and Hercules at the Smithsonian. My photos, of course, do not do justice to those statues. I'm not an Art Zeller with a camera.

Anyway, those statues are a beauty to behold. So, I would recommend that you use Hercules and Venus on the *IGH* masthead.

Grover L. Porter, Ph.D.
Huntsville, Alabama

***IGH* Art Director, Steve Bittick, has been looking for some time now for a suitable engraving of a “heroic” female who can hold her own with the Farnese Hercules we use on our front cover. All of us at *IGH* continue to agree with Dr. Porter’s philosophy of equity but we have yet to find the right artwork to make the shift.**

Dear *IGH*,

I particularly appreciated your tribute to Charles A. Smith. It covered Charles’ life very well and revealed some facets of his life of which I was unaware. For example, I did not know that he suffered from diabetes-having been under the impression that he lost his leg due to arthritis. In his letters to me he hardly ever referred to his physical condition.

I also appreciated the article about Bert Assirati written by Charles. I knew both Bert and Joe very well and had a long talk on the telephone with Joe when he was in his 84th year.

This is just a note of thanks for your fine tribute to one of my oldest friends in the world of weights.

John Dawe
Ottawa, Ontario

The “Joe” mentioned above is Joe Assirati, Bert Assirati’s cousin, who recently sent us the following:

Dear *IGH*,

David Gentle sent two cuttings to me from *Body Power* magazine. They contained David’s tribute to Charles A. Smith and he asked if I would send one on to you. It is good to know that Charles received some recognition in an English magazine.

I received a slight shock when I read on the reverse of the page that Oscar Heidenstam had died. It is many years since I spoke to him but I knew him as he was friendly with my brother-in-law, William T. Coggins, and I had planned to write Oscar and tell him of Bill’s death at age 82.

Bill won the first Mr. Britain contest, started in 1930 by *Health and Strength*, which offered 100 pounds to the winner. On an average, a man earned about 3 pounds a week in those days, so this was a very large sum. This offer was never repeated. Bill was the only man to win this contest twice (1930 and 1932). Oscar Heidenstam won it in 1937.

Joe Assirati
London, England

Dear *IGH*,

As historians of powerlifting, you might be able to provide me with an answer regarding records for older lifters. That is, in an upcoming powerlifting meet at the Lee Circle YMCA, it now looks probable that the great Bob Samuels will compete in the bench press event in the special master’s 75-80 year old class. Do you have a record of a listing in this age group?

Considering the fact that Bob did 375 pounds at age 73, he should be able to do close to 300 on the eve of his 80th birthday. He is in hard training right now, doing sets of five with 225.

I think a story on Bob Samuels would be fascinating, as he has about the most colorful and interesting background of any lifter I can think of, including Milo Steinborn, his old close friend and training partner. Besides his strongman act, early lifting records, and pro wrestling career (he held Jim Londos to grueling draws on two occasions, introduced Georgeous George and Mike Mazurski, etc.), he was a stuntman in Hollywood and worked with stars ranging from Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. to the team of Laurel and Hardy. He was a transitional figure in the iron game, going from the old days of stage strongmen to modern Olympic and powerlifting. He placed second in an international Olympic style contest at age 55, when the man he was coaching, Gary Gubner, took ill.

Unfortunately, our old friend Paul Anderson will not be able to be with us at the contest. He is confined to a wheelchair, and he will probably never be mobile again. He just got out of the hospital after having cancerous patches removed from his skin, and his wife is now running things for him at his youth home.

Allen Smith
New Orleans, Louisiana

According to the latest USPF record list, and other sources we have on hand here at *IGH*, the best bench press made in the 75-79 age group belongs to Henri Soudieres, who benched 215 pounds in the 220 pound class.

Dear *IGH*,

Thanks so much for the complimentary issue of *Iron Game History*. I suspect you of being psychic. For decades I have considered Marvin Eder a ‘will-o-the-wisp’. With the exception of John Grimek, I know of no other athlete who combined such great strength with a truly outstanding physique. As for Jules Bacon, he and Jim Park were brought by Bob Hoffman to Washington, D.C. in the early 1950s. Bob presented a clinic at a sporting goods store and Jules Bacon and Jim Park demonstrated exercises. They were using an old 240 pound York Standard Barbell. When Bob asked Jules to demonstrate the deep knee bend, Jim Park quickly offered to help Jules get the bar into position. I will never forget the mingled look of surprise and contempt Jules shot him. Jules replied, “I can get it,” and proceeded to demonstrate a perfect

clean and jerk, lowered the bar behind his head and proceeded to do 10 perfect deep knee bends. He then jerked the bar to arms' length again and lowered it to the floor. I doubt if Jules Bacon weighed 170 pounds. Of course they both looked like Hercules to me, a six foot, 13 year old, who could not get his weight over 135 pounds.

Good luck with *Iron Game History*.

Pat Percy

Detroit, Michigan

Dear IGH,

You finally did it and it was worth waiting for. I really liked your latest issue. At last we are on the way back to common sense in health and strength. I know our game is in the right hands, like it was in the days of Peary and Mabel at *Iron Man*. I am enclosing \$20.00 to help insure your continued success.

I was born on April 25, 1912. On April 25, 1991 I did 28 chins. This makes over 60 years of chins!

By the way, how is Mark Henry?

Curd Edmunds

Glasgow, Kentucky