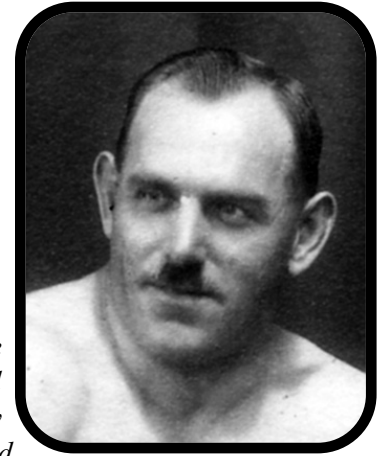


# WAS HERMANN GOERNER TRULY MIGHTY?

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*The following article was submitted to us as a draft last year, but between that time and this, one of the authors—Mark Kodya—passed away. Mark was a doctoral student in sport history at Penn State University and his loss has dealt a heavy blow to our field. His interest in the history of the iron game was very serious, and had his long-time ill health not taken him at such a young age he would almost certainly have finished his doctorate and gone on to make many scholarly contributions. In April of this year a symposium on the history of sports and exercise was held at Penn State in his memory and I was asked to speak. This invitation was a great honor for me, and I did my best to present a paper of which Mark would have been proud. It is also a great honor for us to publish the article Mark co-wrote with Gherardo Bonini and Joe Roark because it breaks new ground and helps us to better understand the remarkable and, at times, sad life of Hermann Goerner.*

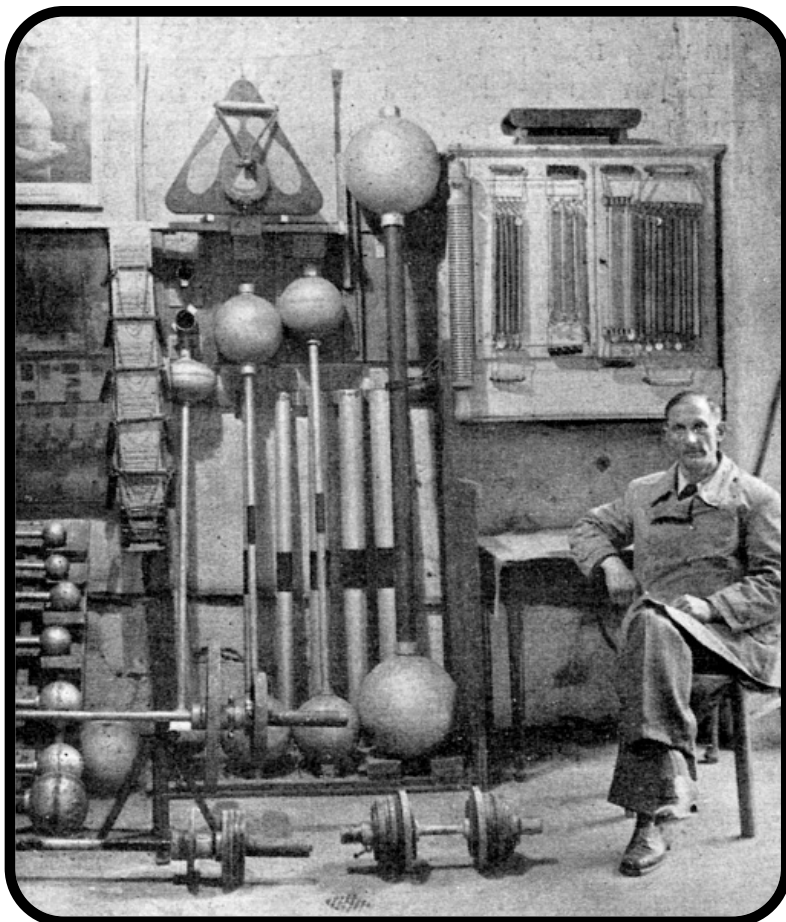
—Jan Todd

In general, when a sport figure reaches the highest international standard, he transcends his or her home country's borders and becomes an international star. Leipzig weightlifter Hermann Goerner (1891-1956) appears to be an anomaly where his own country is concerned. An examination of the three main books in English about weightlifting history, *The Super Athletes* by David Willoughby (1970); *The Iron Game* by David Webster (1976); and *Anvils, Horseshoes and Cannons* (1978) by Leo Gaudreau—plus current internet resources—clearly demonstrates that English-speaking fans and experts have viewed Goerner as a true phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, according to the available German literature, Goerner played a far smaller role in the sport.<sup>2</sup> Even Leipzig, his home town, seems uninterested in keeping his memory intact.<sup>3</sup> Although two German cyber-sites devoted to strength sports do mention Goerner, they lack the unbridled enthusiasm of their English counterparts.<sup>4</sup> How was/is it possible for them—and others—to have neglected him to such a degree? Each of the English-language reference books credits Goerner with a stellar career comparable in magnitude to that of such mainstream German athletes as Erich Rademacher (swimming), Max Schmeling (boxing), or Rudolf Harbig (athletics) and, more recently, Boris Becker and Steffi Graf (tennis) and Michael Schu-

macher (auto racing). However, these German sport stars are recognized in Germany to a much greater extent than is Goerner, even when one considers that weightlifting is a relatively minor sport. Initially, one might think that Goerner's historical greatness has been buried by his homeland as a result of his membership in the Socialist-oriented Workers' organization (he was a member from 1909 to 1913 and again from 1919 to 1920) or because he turned professional in 1921. While both his some-time Socialism and professionalism may have been factors, there is more to the tale.

Goerner was born in Haenichen near Leipzig on 13 April 1891. In 1909 he joined the Socialist Worker club "Atlas" and then served in World War I where he lost an eye when he was hit by more than 200 pieces of metal shrapnel. Surgery removed most of the shrapnel from his body, but not all. During World War II, Goerner was interred in a concentration camp because of his membership in the Workers' organization. Subsequently, he was welcomed as a refugee in Klein Heidorn, now part of Wunstorf, Lower Saxony, where he died on 29 June 1956. His tombstone is engraved with the words, "*Der Stärkste Mann der Welt* (The Strongest Man in the World)."<sup>5</sup>

Apparently, this claim either escaped the attention of—or was not accepted by—his countrymen. As



Before World War II, Edgar Mueller lived in Leipzig, where he had a fur-trading business and also ran what John Dawe describes as “one of the best known and most fully-equipped gymnasiums in Germany,” a portion of which is pictured here. His home and fur-trading company were destroyed during the air raids of World War II, along with most of his collection of weight lifting books, magazines and other memorabilia. After the War, Mueller stayed in Leipzig, trying to keep his gym alive until 1947, when he moved to Braunschweig, West Germany to escape living under a repressive system.

previously indicated, Goerner is ranked considerably lower according to a review of German journals, reference books, encyclopedias, and current websites than he is in similar English-language references. His record in national and international contests, however, is not in dispute. He was runner-up in the 1911 European Championships in Leipzig; he was third in the 1913 National Championships in Kassel; he placed fourth in the 1913 World Championships in Breslau, and he was runner-up in the 1919 National Championships in Munich.<sup>6</sup> But whereas English-language literature credits him with several world records and astounding feats, the German sources reflect only a world record in the Two Hands

Snatch with 120 kilos [264 pounds] and a not-unanimously-credited world record in the Two Hands Clean and Jerk with 157 kilos [345 pounds], both made in 1920.<sup>7</sup> What could account for this discrepancy between the English and German historical memories of Hermann Goerner?

### The Inquiry

As indicated above, David Willoughby, David Webster, and Leo Gaudreau each wrote an authoritative reference work providing a comprehensive historical account of the strength sports. However, they based their information about Goerner primarily on his official biography, *Goerner the Mighty* (1951), written by his close friend, the respected and authoritative trainer, Edgar Mueller (1898-1979).<sup>8</sup> Although this biographical work has never been translated into German, Mueller did introduce Goerner’s athletic career in four articles in the German magazine *Athletik*, the oldest journal devoted to strength sports, having been founded in 1892. The articles appeared in 1951, the same year as the book.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps the publication of a concise historical book about the strength sports by the long-time German official Ernst August Kampmann in 1950 moved Mueller to publish his strong response in *Athletik*.<sup>10</sup> Kampmann claimed that another Leipzig native, Arthur Hennig (1878-1921), more commonly known by his stage name, Arthur Saxon, was “the strongest man of all times.”<sup>11</sup> In his *Athletik* articles, Mueller paid tribute to Saxon, but pointed out that Goerner equalled or exceeded Saxon’s best lifts and therefore deserved a reputation as the stronger man.<sup>12</sup>

However, even though Goerner (or Mueller on Goerner’s behalf) had claimed all—or almost all (see below)—of the most important records mentioned in *Goerner The Mighty* from the time of an introductory article that appeared in *Health and Strength* in 1926, the German literature ignored these claims.<sup>13</sup> The claims were kept alive in the English-speaking countries, however, by *Health and Strength* and related English-language journals such as *Iron Man*, *Muscle Power*, and *Strength & Health* until Mueller provided a definitive account of Goerner’s career in *Iron Man* magazine

(1949) and then, two years later, in *Goerner the Mighty*.<sup>14</sup> Approximately two years ago, two of this article's authors, Joe Roark and Mark Kodya, stimulated a debate over the reliability of Goerner's reputed performances in the e-Forum, *Iron History*.<sup>15</sup>

### Goerner in *Goerner the Mighty*

*Goerner The Mighty* does not leave its readers room for alternative opinions: if the book is true, then Goerner was arguably the greatest strongman of the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>16</sup> But the book, in its introduction, asked its readers implicitly to accept it as truth although it is an unreferenced work. [Ed. Note: In the book's forward, written by Irving Clark, a British Amateur Weightlifter's Association (BAWLA) referee, Clark argues that the phrase, "If Edgar says it is so, it is so," should be applied to Mueller, whose book was based on a small, post-war index of records; many conversations with Goerner; and Mueller's "amazing memory."] Mueller apparently lost his archives in a fire in 1943 and had reconstructed most of the facts about Goerner using what John Dawe, editor of *Health and Strength*, called Mueller's extraordinary memory.<sup>17</sup> However, Dawe claimed in later years to have helped Mueller and to have even written portions of *Goerner the Mighty*.<sup>18</sup> In a foreword to the book, Irving Clark stated that Mueller showed him, several times, newspaper and magazine clippings in support of Goerner's lifts.<sup>19</sup> In *Goerner the Mighty*, however, only a few facts (such as the ones in the last chapter of *Goerner the Mighty*) are corroborated through excerpts from other sources, some of which can no longer be found in European libraries and archives, making verification impossible.<sup>20</sup>

Let us now analyze Goerner's best performances, as chronicled in *Goerner the Mighty*: 177 kilograms [391 pounds] in the Two Hands Clean and Jerk, on 11 July 1920 in Dresden, under the eyes of the famous professor Ferdinand Hüppe (1852-1938), a weight which was not officially exceeded until after World War II; 360 kilograms [793 pounds] in the Two Hands Deadlift, in Leipzig on 29 October 1920; and 330 kilograms [727 pounds] in the One Hand Deadlift on 8 October 1920.<sup>21</sup>

Also, according to *Goerner the Mighty*—and Willoughby, Webster, and Gaudreau—Goerner snatched 125 kilograms [275 pounds] and jerked 160 kilograms [352 pounds] in a victory against Karl Mörke in a one-on-one duel on 4 April 1920 at the Restaurant Hall of Leipzig's Zoological Garden.<sup>22</sup> In that case, the world

amateur record in the Two Hands Snatch would have been 125 kilograms [275 pounds], not the 120 [264 pounds] Goerner is credited with in the German sources.

Karl Mörke (1889-1945) was a fierce opponent who used the continental style in shouldering a barbell or a dumbbell for the press or the jerk. The continental style, so called by Britons in reference to the German and Austrian lifters of the early twentieth century, consisted in taking the bar from the floor and bringing it up to the shoulders after having rested it one or more times on the body. This movement was rooted in gymnastic exercises and was generally executed with two classic stops, at the waist and at the shoulders, but some lifters, especially the Austrians, employed multiple rests, so that they were virtually rolling the bar up the body. The "clean" style, done in one movement from the floor up to the chest, is now the accepted international standard; it was initially advocated primarily by the French and Italians.<sup>23</sup> When France re-organized the international governing body for weightlifting in 1920 they imposed this "clean" style as the only one permissible internationally.

Before World War I, German and Austrian lifters stuck to the continental style, but the confrontation with France led some champions of the new generation, among them Goerner, to adopt the "clean" style. The continental style consistently allowed higher poundages, of course, especially in the jerk. For example, the world record before 1914 belonged to the Austrian lifter Karl Swoboda (1882-1933), who lifted 185.5 kilograms [408 pounds] in this manner.<sup>24</sup> In comparison, the German Hermann Gässler (1889-1970) held the world record in the jerk with 157.5 kilograms [347 pounds], although the French and (after 1922) the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) recognized only his 151 kilogram [332 pounds] performance done in France on 28 February 1912 because only the latter lift was taken to the shoulders in one movement.<sup>25</sup> In sharp contrast to the well-documented information Mueller imparts as to the records of Goerner's opponents and contemporaries, the data regarding Gässler's records are lacking. As we will see later, the records of the two lifters, Gässler and Goerner, often inter-relate.

As a professional, Goerner toured South Africa five times from 1922 to 1937. On 4 September 1926, in Kalk Bay near Cape Town, Goerner supposedly lifted 135 kilograms [297 pounds] in the Two Hands Snatch.<sup>26</sup> This was some ten years before the same official record, among amateurs, was made by the Briton Ron Walker

(1907-1948). Another relevant Goerner/Mueller claim is the 120 kilograms [264 pounds] One Hand Clean and Jerk Goerner supposedly performed in Leipzig on 9 November 1919.<sup>27</sup> The IWF ceased to recognize official records for this lift in 1950, at which time the world record was 117.5 kilograms [259 pounds], so Goerner would have remained unapproached in more than 30 years had the IWF recognized his 264 pound lift. *Goerner the Mighty* also contains numerous other accounts of claims of other astounding performances concerning “odd lifts” mainly performed in the period 1931-1934 while he was mostly in Leipzig.<sup>28</sup> For example, Goerner was accustomed to lifting the bar with unusual grips and at unusual points of the bar.

### The Reliability of *Goerner the Mighty*

In the IronHistory e-Forum, Mark Kodya, one of the authors of this article, advanced doubts concerning some of Goerner’s performances, the reliability of some photographs, the absence of contemporary reports about Goerner’s duel against Mörke and, finally, the difficulties inherent in Mueller’s statement that, due to the loss by fire of his archive in 1943, he had to reconstruct Goerner’s whole career based on his memory. [Ed. Note: *The IronHistory e-forum was begun by Joe Roark in 2003, and it is dedicated to the study of the history of the “iron sports.” Anyone who shares this interest should investigate the forum as it’s a way to interact with people of like mind and to contribute to the sharing of new information such as that found in this article.*] Kodya referred also to the doubts expressed in 1952 by Kurt Hennig (1881-1952), alias Kurt Saxon, brother of Arthur and a member of the Saxon Trio, who recalled in the pages of *Health and Strength* that Goerner was unable to match several of Arthur Saxon’s feats when the two men (Goerner and Saxon) had trained together in earlier years.<sup>29</sup> It is especially interesting to reflect on Gaudreau’s account of Goerner. Among the three mentioned authoritative sources—Willoughby, Webster, and Gaudreau—Gaudreau’s work expressed the most doubt about Goerner. Even so, Gaudreau characterized Kurt Saxon’s negative opinions regarding Goerner as suspicious. According to Gaudreau, these opinions did not match the usual credulous manner of Kurt, who—Gaudreau thought—was perhaps simply defending the memory of his brother Arthur, the strongest and most famous member of the trio, who in 1952 was still considered a candidate for the title of “strongest man of all times.”<sup>30</sup>

This inquiry has primarily sought to identify and verify data regarding all lifts claimed for Goerner during the periods 1911-1914 and 1919-1920, which encompasses Goerner’s entire amateur career. At the outset, the study checked possible differences between *Goerner the Mighty* and the two other biographical treatments Mueller wrote—the one from *Iron Man* in 1949 and the four articles in *Athletik* in 1951, in which Mueller, in his native language, presented Goerner to German readers. Three curious and controversial points emerged.

First, the record clean and jerk of 177 kilograms [391 pounds], which is described in *Goerner the Mighty* without mention of the status of Goerner’s amateur standing, was labelled by Mueller in *Athletik* as a “professional” lift. Mueller’s article in *Athletik* verifies that it was a “professional” feat, as he states that Goerner earned a remarkable sum for that lift—a lift that as of 1951 was still a German professional record and still in excess of the amateur world record.<sup>31</sup>

Secondly, *Goerner the Mighty* described another sensational performance in Leipzig on 18 August 1933 in which Goerner deadlifted a bar with a seat on either end (in which two men sat) for the incredible total weight of 376.5 kilograms (830 pounds). In *Iron Man* Mueller disclosed the identity of the sources of the live weight—none other than Edgar Mueller himself and Erich Hennig.<sup>32</sup> In his *Athletik* article Mueller repeated the information, but provided only the surname Hennig.<sup>33</sup> Besides Arthur and the aforementioned Kurt, Hermann Hennig (1884-1958) was the third member of the Saxon Trio. Probably, Erich Hennig was simply a homonymous sportsman, but the imprecision remains disquieting: was “Erich” actually one of the celebrated Hennigs? Was he a relation? In any case, why did *Goerner the Mighty* not provide more details? Should Dawe have intervened here to avoid any questions?

Third, in *Athletik* Mueller explained that Goerner’s club “Atlas” belonged to the *Arbeiter Athletenbund Deutschlands* (Worker’s Athletic Union of Germany) from 6 April 1919 to 31 March 1920, which was not recognized by the *Deutsche Athletik Verband* (German Athletic Federation, similar to the American AAU).<sup>34</sup> Because of this, in order for Goerner to take part in the German Championships on 19-20 August 1919 in Munich, he was obliged to compete for the *Arbeiter Turnverein Leipzig von 1845* (Leipzig Workers’ Gymnastic team).<sup>35</sup> Moreover, Mueller affirmed that the *Deutsche Athletik Verband* did not recognize Goerner’s

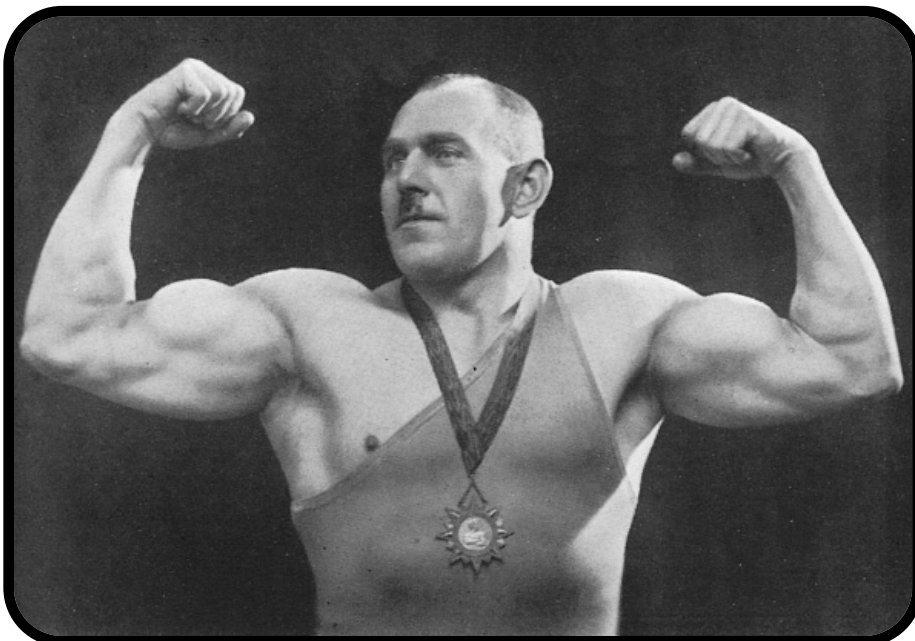
world record of 120 kilograms (264 pounds) in the One Hand Clean and Jerk, supposedly done on 9 November 1919 because, apparently, his connection with *Arbeiter Turnverein Leipzig von 1845* was not sufficient to warrant official recognition for the lift.<sup>36</sup> This lack of recognition was omitted in *Goerner the Mighty*. The archives of Atlas are unfortunately lacunose—filled with holes—but in their records Goerner's best in the One Hand Clean and Jerk was 102 kilograms [224 pounds], done at the end of 1912.<sup>37</sup> The documents concerning *Arbeiter Turnverein Leipzig von 1845* and those stored in the Sport Museum of Leipzig do not even mention Goerner.<sup>38</sup>

*Goerner the Mighty* and Mueller's *Athletik* articles are in complete agreement on one aspect of Goerner's career which is a subject of the present inquiry: the claimed duel against Mörke and the claimed main records of 1919-1920. However, an examination of the most important books in the field of German sport history did not confirm either of these claims.<sup>39</sup> A deeper investigation of contemporary sources appeared to be warranted.

### Two Facts from 1913

Before the outbreak of World War I, the apparent good relationship between *Arbeiter Athletenbund Deutschlands* and *Deutscher Athletik Verband* allowed Goerner to compete wherever he liked. According to the *Kraftsport Illustrierte Jahrbuch* (1908), the club "Atlas" belonged to *Mitteldeutscher Athletik Verband*, a federation not associated with the *Deutscher Athletik Verband*.<sup>40</sup>

As a result of the difficulty of resuming sports in Germany after World War I and the diffusion and absence of related documentation, we have a clearer picture of Goerner's career before 1914 than in the years 1919-1920. A proper journal for *Arbeiter Athletenbund Deutschlands* re-started in late 1920, however, and another important Workers' journal, *Vorturner*, was first published in 1921. *Athletik* and the famous Viennese journal *Allgemeine Sport Zeitung*, the most reputable and widely circulated German-language sport periodical, both call into serious question two sensational feats



This double biceps shot of Hermann Goerner appeared on the cover of *Goerner the Mighty* when it was released in 1951. It was also included in a set of post-cards sold by Goerner as a professional athlete.

claimed for Goerner as a footnote to two events he lost.

On 27 July 1913, according to *Goerner the Mighty*, Goerner shouldered, in two moves (in continental style)—but without lifting the bar overhead—200 kilograms [440 pounds].<sup>41</sup> The venue and date given coincide with that of the World Championship in Breslau, where Goerner placed fourth and cleaned and jerked in competition 135 kilograms [297 pounds]. It would seem to be a given that, barring injury, someone able to continental 200 kilograms [440 pounds] would be able to exceed 135 kilograms [297 pounds] on the same day in the clean and jerk.<sup>42</sup> Equally suspicious is the feat attributed by *Goerner the Mighty* to Goerner during the German championship in Kassel on 21 September 1913. *Goerner the Mighty* claimed that Goerner was able, on that date, to clean 130 kilograms [286 pounds] with one hand and then lift the bar overhead, failing to get credit for the lift only because he was unable to "fix" it at arm's length for the required five seconds.<sup>43</sup> According to the official, published report of that competition, Goerner's best one hand clean and jerk was 92.5 kilograms [203 pounds], which both Rondi and Trappen exceeded with 97.5 kilograms [214 pounds]. The report stated that Goerner cleaned 120 kilograms [264 pounds], but apparently he did not clean 130 kilograms [286 pounds], obviously a necessary step for almost fixing the bar overhead.<sup>44</sup> [Editors' Note: What's more, Goerner's official

best in the Two Hands Clean and Jerk in September is only five kilos (11 pounds) more than the 130 kilo (286 pound) One Hand Clean and Jerk Mueller claims Goerner lost less than two months later only because he was unable to hold it overhead for the entire five seconds required.]

A leitmotiv of *Goerner the Mighty* is that Goerner, *Die Stärkste Mann aller Zeiten*—“the Strongest Man of AllTime”—lost the major national and international competitions in 1911-1914 and 1919-1920 only because he was inadequately prepared for these specific events. This recurring theme is seen to an extreme extent in the cases of the Breslau and Kassel contests, where he was said by Mueller to have been inadequately prepared during the actual competition. Even so, he was apparently still able to astonish Mueller on the very same day but in some sort of unofficial or impromptu demonstration.

#### The Duel Of 4 April 1920

Reading the pages of *Goerner the Mighty*, one gets the impression that “the duel” between Goerner and Moerke followed the victory of Karl Mörke in the 1920 World Championship in Vienna. However, this mistake was the least of the errors in *Goerner the Mighty*. For example, Vienna’s event was held in September, whereas *Goerner the Mighty* placed the duel in April.<sup>45</sup> In any case, even though Moerke had won each of their previous three encounters, in this April Goerner-Mörke duel, Goerner avenged these previous losses with the following results: Right Hand Snatch—90 versus 75 kilograms [198 vs. 165 pounds]; Right Hand Jerk—112.5 with clean style, against “continentaled” 100 kilograms [248 vs. 220 pounds]; Two Hands Press—110 against 120 kilograms [242 vs. 264 pounds], but the press was always Goerner’s weakest lift and Moerke’s strongest;

Two Hands Snatch—125 (apparently a world record), against 110 kilograms [275 vs. 242 pounds]; and Two Hands Jerk—with cleaning style 160 against “continentaled” 155 kilograms [352 vs. 341 pounds]. In an optional exercise, Goerner chose the Two Hands Deadlift, performing 300 kilograms [661 pounds], while Mörke opted for the Squat with 240 kilograms [529 pounds].<sup>46</sup>

It appears from the account in *Goerner the Mighty* that Goerner had secured a crushing triumph over the recognized and official world champion, beating him in four of five events as well as in the extra event. Research, however, soon revealed that there is a significant problem with this scenario. In response to a query, Leipzig’s Zoological Garden wrote in an e-mail that in its archive there was no trace of that contest.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, a book dated 1928 celebrating the Zoo’s anniversary reported some sporting events, but not the famous Goerner-Moerke duel.<sup>48</sup> It would seem that had the con-

test been held, and the World records achieved, some mention of the event would have been unavoidable. The journal *Der Leipziger* indicated that Professor Carl Diem lectured at the Zoological Gardens on the sport around the same time period, but makes no mention of the Goerner vs. Mörke match.<sup>49</sup> The official journal of the German federation, *Athletik*, whose authorization was needed for an amateur one-to-one contest (in weightlifting, an event that smacked of professionalism) also failed to report anything about the supposed contest.

But the most convincing evidence against the duel having ever occurred was supplied by Leipzig’s daily regional newspaper *Leipziger Tageblatt und Handelsblatt für Sachsen* of 6 April 1920. The newspaper reported that on the premises of the “Atlas” club Goerner had improved the World Record in the Two Hands



British weightlifting referee and *Health and Strength* author John Dawe presents the 61-year old Hermann Goerner with a copy of *Goerner the Mighty* in this 1951 photo taken outside Goerner’s home.

Snatch to 120 kilograms [264 pounds] on April 4 the same day as the “duel.”<sup>50</sup> The historian Dale Harder commented that sport history supplies examples of champions able to accomplish astounding feats in two parts of the same day, even in two different towns, and therefore Harder maintains that it would have been possible for Goerner to compete in the contest with Moerke either after or before making the documented record of 120 kilograms. In any case, the published sources and (it has to be stressed) the attentive local press reported only the record in the snatch. Although it seems unlikely, perhaps the Goerner-Moerke contest was not mentioned because it was not an authorized or sanctioned event. We do know that Mörke immigrated to the United States in 1921 and there is no record that he ever mentioned a lost duel, but that could be understandable.

Another factor complicating the question was that, as hinted, the world record snatch of 120 kilograms [264 pounds] on 4 April 1920 was confirmed by many actual and present sources, but not by *Goerner the Mighty*. Why Mueller would not have mentioned in a definitive biography of Goerner a unanimously recognized world record is hard to explain. [Ed. Note: *The only possible explanation could be that if the “duel” Mueller reports actually happened, which seems doubtful, Mueller might not have thought it important to mention the lighter of the two world records.*] It is also interesting to note that in an official exhibition held on 7 June 1914 in Düsseldorf, Goerner actually duelled with Mörke in a kind of one-on-one confrontation. This exhibition, although it was authorized, did not yield official results as it was a special preliminary to the upcoming Baltic Games—in which Goerner placed third. It was also a qualifying event for the national championships, which were later cancelled by the outbreak of the war. Had the normal championship’s point system been used, Goerner would have won that duel with Moerke, even though Mörke had the higher aggregated sum of weights lifted.<sup>51</sup>

### The Sources and the Records of the Two Hands Clean and Jerk

The authoritative German statistician Karl Adolf Scherer’s record list credits Goerner with a world record Two Hands Clean and Jerk of 157 kilograms [355 pounds] done in 1920, which exceeded Mörke’s performance at Stuttgart’s championship of August 18-19.<sup>52</sup> Goerner, then, equalled Gässler’s previously mentioned

Munich performances of 3 January 1912 and 12 April 1912 after August 19 but before December 31.<sup>53</sup> However, a puzzling complexity surrounds Goerner’s records in the Two Hands Clean and Jerk. *Goerner the Mighty* dedicated a section to this lift, setting apart the 160 kilograms [352 pounds] of the presumed duel, then mentioning a more mundane 150 kilograms [330 pounds], an odd 152 kilograms [334 pounds] (1914), and 155 kilograms [341 pounds] (1932), with no mention of any performances between 155 and 160 kilograms [341 and 352 pounds], nor between 160 and 177 kilograms [352 and 391 pounds], supposedly done in 1920.<sup>54</sup> It must be noted that the 160 kilograms [352 pounds] is assumed to be Goerner’s best amateur performance, as the 177 kilograms [391 pounds], if done, was done as a professional. According to *Goerner the Mighty*, the 160 kilograms [352 pounds] was done on April 4 and the 177 [391 pounds] on July 11. In three months then, Goerner’s best clean and jerk jumped a remarkable 17 kilograms [39 pounds] according to this scenario. In contrast, it took 23 years for the official world record in the same lift to progress from 160.5 kilograms [353 pounds] by Charles Rigoulot in 1925 to 177.5 kilograms [391 pounds] by John Davis in 1948.<sup>55</sup> Strangely, *Goerner the Mighty* does not mention Goerner’s other amateur records beyond his performance in the Moerke duel and at the Breslau event. According to *Athletik*, Goerner jerked 155 kilograms [341 pounds]<sup>56</sup> in 1913; and in 1914, 150 kilograms [330 pounds],<sup>57</sup> leading the World in the lift for these years. In the 1919 German championships, Goerner’s best clean and jerk was 140 kilograms [308 pounds], incorrectly considered a world record by Scherer.<sup>58</sup> Even so, it was still the best international performance of the year. The *Kleine Brockhaus* edition for 1922-1925 credited Goerner with a world record of 160 kilograms [352 pounds], done *not* in conjunction with the reputed 125 kilograms [275 pounds] Two Hands Snatch (supposedly done in the “duel”), but rather with Goerner’s 120 kilograms [264 pounds] lift of April 4.<sup>59</sup> Presumably, the compilers of *Kleine Brockhaus* did not take into account the results of the claimed Goerner-Moerke duel. However, a later edition, *Brockhaus—die Große*, 1928-1935—reinstated recognition of the 157.5 kilograms [347 pounds] made by Gässler in Munich on 12 April 1912 as the world record. Why was recognition of Goerner’s record with 160 kilograms [352 pounds] withdrawn?<sup>60</sup> Was this performance unverifiable or done as a professional? In total, the *Kleine Brockhaus* of 1922-



1925 attributed to Goerner four world records, yet three of them (surprisingly) are not mentioned in *Goerner the Mighty*.

The historians Bürger and Weidt in the book *Kraftproben* (1985) attributed to Goerner a 165 kilograms [363 pounds] Two Hands Clean and Jerk—performed in 1919 but not officially recognized because he was affiliated with *Arbeiter Athletenbund Deutschlands*.<sup>61</sup> Once again, this performance was not mentioned in *Goerner the Mighty*. Being ignored by Scherer increased the difficulty of the search, but Goerner himself inadvertently refuted *Goerner the Mighty*. In a letter he sent to Leo Gaudreau, whose excerpts Gaudreau reported in his book, *Anvils, Cannons and Horseshoes*, Goerner said that his best in the Clean and Jerk was 168 kilograms [370 pounds].<sup>62</sup>

In sum, we can document four performances that were not mentioned in *Goerner the Mighty*—even though each one was considered a world record. This fact seems particularly odd because no official documentation could be found corroborating many of the major “records” that Mueller claimed for Goerner in the biography.

### The Deadlift Records

For the English-speaking world, Goerner’s records in the deadlift place him firmly within early powerlifting (the strength sport consisting of the deadlift, bench press and squat). Since 1901, the German federation has recognized records in the deadlift and, in 1913, the *Deutsche Athletik Verband* credited Goerner with a world record one-hand deadlift of 251 kilograms [552 pounds] and with 275 kilograms [606 pounds] and then 277 kilograms [610 pounds] in the two-hands version.<sup>63</sup> *Goerner the Mighty* attributed Goerner with a world record Two-Hands Deadlift with 360 kilograms [793 pounds] done in Leipzig on 29 October 1920 (not exceeded until 1969). Mueller also credited Goerner with the still-unexceeded right hand record with 330 kilograms [727 pounds], supposedly performed in Leipzig on 8 October 1920.<sup>64</sup>

However, the historical section of the German Powerlifting Federation’s website ignores Goerner.<sup>65</sup> The authoritative *Encyclopedia of Sports Games and Pastimes* of 1935 reported Goerner’s records of 296.5 kilograms [653 pounds] with two hands and 273.75 kilograms [603 pounds] with one hand, both executed in the summer of 1927 in England, in the English style—namely with heels touching, and duly checked.<sup>66</sup> [Ed. Note: *It should be remembered that the rules under which this lift*

*was made only required the lifter to raise the bar to knee height.*] The journal *Health and Strength* assured the preservation of the memory of these English-style deadlifts, while “normal” encyclopedias or historical books ignored them until the 1970s or 1980s. In addition to the aforementioned two performances, and the one executed in the supposed Goerner-Moerke contest, *Goerner the Mighty* mentioned two other important deadlifts for 1919-1920—a one hand lift with 301 kilograms [663 pounds] on 29 October 1920, the same day as his two-handed 360 kilograms [793 pounds] was supposedly done. He is also said to have lifted with one hand 333 kilograms [734 pounds] in the form of a block of stone fitted with a handle—a feat of strength not properly considered a deadlift—on 20 July 1920 in Dresden.<sup>67</sup> These claims, again, could not be verified in authoritative German sources.

Lothar Groth’s book *Die Starken Männer* includes a picture of Goerner in an advertisement for a Greco-Roman wrestling championships held in Dresden from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> of September 1920. In this reproduction, Goerner is shown lifting with one hand a stone block not of 333 kilograms [734 pounds], as Mueller indicated, but one said to be 330 kilograms [727 pounds] which equalled 660 German pfunds, the standard measure of weight at that time in Germany. This is also the same poundage claimed as Goerner’s world record for a standard, one hand deadlift with a barbell.<sup>68</sup> The *Dresdener Anzeiger* of 27 July 1920 also reported that Goerner elevated a stone block of 330 kilograms [727 pounds] but no height is given for the lift.<sup>69</sup> So, did Goerner lift in October—using a barbell—exactly what he had elevated with a stone block in July? Dale Harder argued in our online forum that this hypothesis was plausible, but it would seem to be a remarkable coincidence that the block and the barbell weighed exactly the same. In any case, the data concerning the 333 kilograms [734 pounds], claimed by Mueller, become increasingly suspicious. Or perhaps Goerner lifted one stone block weighing 333 kilograms [734 pounds] and another weighing 330 kilograms [727 pounds]? What is important is that the Leipzig and Dresden daily newspapers did not register accounts that would support the results provided by Mueller.

Because Goerner entered a major European wrestling contest in July of 1920, he “de facto” lost his amateur status. *Deutsche Athletik Verband* debated this question in its meeting of 19 August 1920 and in October the official journal of the federation duly reported the disqualification.<sup>70</sup> This means that Goerner was consid-





This grainy photo, taken on 8 June 1913, caught Goerner just as he is finishing a Right Hand Swing with two kettlebells. The total weight was reported as 170 German *Pfunds* or 187.39 American pounds. It was taken on the “sporting beach” at a large, open air swimming pool known as the Germania-Bath in Leipzig. On the “beach” adjoining the pool were an assortment of barbells, dumbbells, kettlebells, and block weights alongside parallel bars, chinning bars and other kinds of training apparatus. During the summer, Goerner reportedly trained on the beach at the Germania Bath twice a week.

ered a professional from 20 August 1920, not from 1 January 1921—as Mueller asserted. Therefore, it is arguable that every performance made from July to December of 1920 would have been regarded by *Deutsche Athletik Verband* as professional and not amateur marks. We are reminded of the fact that Mueller, in his series of articles in the journal *Athletik*, alluded to the large sum paid to Goerner for his 177 kilograms [391 pounds] in the Two Hands Clean and Jerk on July 11.

In conclusion, it is clear that Goerner’s two deadlift records were accomplished as a professional, which would have increased the likelihood that the performances were buried by lack of official sanction. Since no professional federation actually existed at that time, these lifts would have been unofficial. Although it listed many records for one hand lifts, the *Kleine Brockhaus* of 1922-1925 only recognized Goerner’s record with two hands. It did not mention a record with one hand, either by Goerner or by anyone else. Did the compilers of the *Kleine Brockhaus* know that Goerner elevated a stone block and not a Berg barbell? The successive edition of *Brockhaus* (1928-1935) also did not report any records of a one-hand Deadlift. However, an

article from 1950 in *Athletik*—published before Mueller’s series of articles—attributed to Goerner a 310 kilograms [683 pounds] Deadlift with two hands, but this reference also remained unconfirmed.<sup>71</sup> In the hope that these data could be derived from a contemporary source, we turned to *Die Stärksten (The Strongest)*, an interesting, miscellaneous booklet by Josef Haupt (1928). Unfortunately, no footnotes support the booklet and the data remain vague, without a precise indication of venue, day, month, and year. For the one-hand record, Haupt referred, incredibly, to a lift of 330 kilograms [727 pounds]—making Goerner’s one-hand record better than his two-hands record! Haupt, however, indicated 1905 as the year in which the 727 lift was made, so this source proved unreliable.<sup>72</sup>

### Goerner: A Puzzling Figure

How did Goerner join and relate to the Workers’ federation, and what does this relationship say about his character? Careful study of the original documents reveals that Goerner may have been somewhat introverted, and perhaps somewhat isolated and lonely because of his decision to turn professional. [Goerner’s wife, Elsie,

Braunschweig, July 10, 1956  
 Maschplatz 15

Dear friend Dase: Deeply sorrowful I report you the passing-away of my long-yearred closest friend and trainingsmate Hermann Görner on June 29, 1956 (20 min. past ten o'clock on forenoon) in the hospital Neustadt/Rbz. in the age of 65 following colics of gall and liver-shrinking. His funeral was on July 2, on the church-yard of Hunstorf, Bez. Hannover. On July 2, I let take a photo of Hermann in the mortuary. I saw Hermann at last on Dec. 23, 1955 in his home at Klein-Heidorn # 70 and he want visit me in Braun-schweig in July 1956. The cause of Hermanns long-yearred illness was an operation of deep lying varicos veins in left calf, 1942 at Königshütte in Oberschlesien und since that time his calf was heavy swollen and by bad blood-circulation his heart was weakly in last years. By the swollen leg long walks were impossible for him and following more sitting than walking, his gall and liver did suffer. - On June 30, Hermann should be discharged from the hospital, but on June 27, he get a heavy relapse. During his hospital-stay since May 27 Hermanns bodyweight shrinked from 135 kilos to 105 kilos. Hermann has no relationship and he wishes that I inherited all his sporting-files etc., and he wanted a worthy tomb-stone.

Because I live in straight circumstances (being a refugee far from my Leipzig home and friends) and was cheated by Dawn and Valentine for the selling-percentages of my book: "Goerner the Mighty", I would be very grateful, what Goerner's American friends and admirers would kindly send a small money-order on my adress: Edgar Müller, Maschplatz 15

Edgar Mueller frequently communicated with David Willoughby and sent him this postcard, dated 10 July 1956 following Goerner's death. On the back of the card, where the message concludes, Mueller explains that he is asking Willoughby and other American friends to send money so he can have a suitable tombstone set on the grave of "our unforgettable and incomparable friend Herman Görner." In a second letter to Willoughby, dated 19 January 1957, Mueller thanked Willoughby for his donation to Goerner's tombstone fund and reported that he'd received altogether about 200 German Marks. He told Willoughby that he planned to have the tombstone erected in the Spring of 1957 and noted that the stone was made possible by "serious kindful contributors" such as Willoughby, Tromp Van Diggelen and Ray Van Cleef.

—Collection of David P. Willoughby, The Todd-McLean Physical Culture Collection.

who died in 1949, appeared with him in his professional acts at times and would have provided him with companionship during his years as a professional. However, by turning pro Goerner distanced himself from the lifters and officials associated with amateur weightlifting, and entered what one might describe as a sort of "sporting ghetto," which is what professional weightlifting in Europe was at that time.<sup>73</sup> In October 1913, *Athletik* noted his affiliation to *Essener Athleten Club vom 1888*, and this information is in accordance with Mueller's assertion in *Iron Man* that Goerner transferred to Essen to work for the famous steel and armament factory run by the Krupp family. We must also remember that Mueller affirmed that Goerner's membership in the *Arbeiter Athletenbund Deutschlands* blocked the probable recognition of at least one world record, but in September 1919,

at the Ulmer National Event, Goerner lifted as a member of the *Friedrichshafen Kraftsport Verein* team.<sup>74</sup> We cannot exclude the possibility that "Atlas" re-affiliated with DAV on 1 April 1920. In any event, Goerner's commitment to the Workers' cause appears to have been tepid. Goerner achieved the world record in the Two Hands Snatch on 4 April 1920 at the "Atlas" club. Even so, only four months after this performance, the champion became a professional.

The primary focus of this inquiry was limited to 1920. However, a preliminary examination of the archives of Goerner's friend Tromp Van Diggelen in the Cape Town Library and of past issues of *Cape Argus* and the *Cape Times* suggests that Goerner's record of 135 kilograms [297 pounds] in the Two Hands Snatch as a professional, reportedly made in Kalk Bay, near Cape

Town, on 4 September 1926 also left no trace in local papers.<sup>75</sup> Despite the attempt of *Goerner the Mighty* to do so, it is not appropriate to compare such an unofficial performance—assuming that it actually happened—with other achievements made in competitions with the support of juries and documentary evidence.

The important *Encyclopaedia Beckmann's Lexikon*, issued in 1933 in Vienna and Leipzig—two centers of Workers' sport—carried the first published reports of Workers' sport records. It would seem that all of the records Mueller claims for Goerner should have been included there, but they were not.<sup>76</sup> By that time, Goerner was a professional strongman in vaudeville shows, theaters, and clubs of Leipzig and beyond. Did the Workers' establishment punish him with oblivion for his earlier abandonment of the amateur ranks? Also, and strangely, the Nazi regime did not exalt Goerner as an Aryan idol. Why would they have missed the opportunity of publicizing the fact that the “Strongest Man of All Times” was a German. On the contrary, the Nazi government interned Goerner in a *lager* (prison camp) during World War II, where he shared the deprivation of several former Worker mates.

Apparently, Goerner followed an individualistic path in the post-World War Two years. He lived alone, in straightened circumstances, and did not attend the convivial meetings of Old Timers associations, which in Germany and Austria so vividly maintained the memories of past sporting glory. Did Goerner really suffer a crossed and double-crossed, bourgeois and worker, historical removal? Or, when Mueller described himself as a direct witness to Goerner's amateur achievements in 1920, did he ignore what the *Deutsche Athletik Verband* journal wrote about his friend? When Mueller repeatedly pointed out the official character of Goerner's feats, was he ignoring what the German official references reported and relying, instead, on a decidedly selective and perhaps faulty memory?

### ***Goerner Was A Great, Not The Greatest***

Thanks to his records in the Right, Left and Two Hands Deadlift—either in his amateur period or during his professional season in 1927 on English soil—and to his provable records in the Two Hands Snatch and the Two Hands Clean and Jerk, Goerner deserves serious recognition, especially since he earned first place in the World Ranking in the Two Hands Clean and Jerk for three seasons (1913, 1914 and 1919—and probably in 1920, too). Our research—and opinion—places him definitely as an iron game great but not, at the time

*Goerner the Mighty* was written, as *The Greatest*, or *Der Stärkste Mann der Welt*. Much mystery still surrounds his true status, and possibly he was marginalized and his real greatness disguised because of his affiliation to Workers' clubs and because of his later professionalism. In any case, perhaps this initial search will help to bridge a gap in German historical sport literature, and we invite all interested students to go over our work and to study Goerner's career as an “odd lift” specialist and professional strongman for the period 1931-1934.

*[Ed Note: We applaud the authors' open-spirited invitation to other researchers to examine the primary and secondary sources in order to more clearly determine Hermann Goerner's true stature as a weightlifter/strongman. One thing is probably certain. Had World War I not thrown Goerner's life into turmoil and resulted in injuries that plagued him for the rest of his life, he would have been even more powerful than he was.]*

### **Notes:**

1. David P. Willoughby, *The Super Athletes* (South Brunswick: A.S. Barnes, 1970), 92-96; David P. Webster, *The Iron Game* (Irvine: International Weightlifting Federation, 1976), 56-57; Leo Gaudreau, *Anvils, Horseshoes and Cannons*, vol. 2 (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Publishing, 1978), 108-112. For cyber sources see: <http://www.americanpowerliftrevolution.net/HermannGoernerPage.html>; <http://www.usawa.com/99goerner.html>; and [http://www.geocities.com/dino\\_rack\\_training/](http://www.geocities.com/dino_rack_training/).
2. Deutsche Athletik Verband, *1891-1931. 40 Jahre Deutscher Kraftsport. Jahrbuch des DAVS vom 1891* (Stuttgart: Verlag Athletik, 1931), 98 & 100; Ernst August Kampmann, *Aus der Geschichte des Deutschen Kraftsports* (Kassel: Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Alten Athleten Deutschlands, 1950), 88.
3. Günter Hofmann, ed. *Leipzig sportlich* (Leipzig: BlickPunkt, 2002), 215.
4. See: <http://www.strongman-kelheim.de/weboli/historisches.htm>; and <http://www.kraftsportmuseum.de/>.
5. For instance, a series of articles in the “fifth page” by *Nord Deutsche Zeitung*, 23, 24, 25, 27 and 28 January 1951.
6. *Athletik* (26 February 1931): 2.
7. *Athletik* (11 May 1920): 177. This data is confirmed by Karl Adolf Scherer who compiled a statistical annex for Walter Umminger, ed. *Die Chronik des Sports* (Munich: Chronik Verlag, 1992). Goerner's records are listed on page 924. See also: Karl Adolf Scherer, *Chronik Handbuch. Sportgeschichte in Zahlen* (Munich: Chronik Verlag, 1997), 160 & 162.
8. Edgar Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty* (Leeds, England: Vulcan Publishing, 1951).
9. Edgar Mueller, “Titanen der Kraft,” *Athletik* 7 (18 February 1951): 6; Edgar Mueller, “Titanen der Kraft,” *Athletik* 8 (25 February 1951): 7; Edgar Mueller, “Titanen der Kraft,” *Athletik* 10 (4 March 1951): 7; Edgar Mueller, “Titanen der Kraft,” *Athletik* 13 (25 March 1951): 6.
10. Kampmann, *Aus der Geschichte des Deutschen Kraftsports*, 1950.
11. *Ibid.*, 88.
12. Mueller, *Athletik* 7 (1951): 6; and Mueller, *Athletik* 13 (1951): 6.
13. George Jowett, *Health & Strength* (September 1926): 34-39, also available online at: [www.sandwoplus.co.uk/Competition/Goerner/strength09](http://www.sandwoplus.co.uk/Competition/Goerner/strength09).
14. Edgar Mueller, “The True Story of Gerner's (sic) Record Deadlifts,” *Iron*

*Man* (December 1949); also available at: <http://www.sandowplus.co.uk/Competition/Goerner/ironman12-49/true.htm>.

15. The Iron History Forum is managed by Joe Roark and Bill Piche. Some of the participants in the Forum actively took part in the debate, providing information from their collections and scanning some of their material. Registration is needed for viewing the forum. See the sub-forum "Musty Muscle" for the discussion thread entitled "Goerner's birthday" at <http://www.ironhistory.com>.

16. It's interesting to compare Webster's *The Sons of Samson*, vol. 1 (Irvine: by the author, 1993), 31, which fails to mention Goerner's greatest feats to Webster's, *The Iron Game*, 57, which does. [Ed. Note: In a conversation with David Webster, he said that he omitted several questionable lifts from *Sons of Samson* as a result of learning (from a German publication) that Arthur Saxon's famous record in the bent press (370 pounds) was not completed, i.e., Saxon lifted the weight to arm's length but never stood up with it, as the rules require.]

17. John Dawe to Joe Roark, personal communication. Irving Clark, in the introduction to *Goerner the Mighty* reports that Mueller was a "walking encyclopedia on Continental strong men and their feats...Mention a feat and he can state the date, the time and who was present..." *Goerner the Mighty*, 11.

18. John Dawe to Joe Roark, personal communication. [Ed. Note: In a conversation predating Dawe's communication with Joe Roark, Dawe told Terry Todd that he had not merely translated *Goerner the Mighty* but had actually written portions of it.]

19. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 11.

20. For instance, an important article by German master Theodor Siebert, mentioned in *Goerner the Mighty*, p. 126 is lost as well as a Siebert's manuscript covering the all-time strongest men, as mentioned by Bernd Wedemeyer, in *Der Athelntevater Theodor Siebert (1866-1961). Eine Biographie zwischen Körperkultur, Lebensreform and Esoterik* (Göttingen: Norbert Klatt Verlag, 1999), 245.

21. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 69-70, 72.

22. *Ibid.*, 32.

23. David P. Webster, *The Development of Clean and Jerk*, 3-4; see also Gherardo Bonini, "The Two-Hands Jerk: Clean or Continental? The Obizzi Formula," *MILQ: The Journal of Serious Strength Athletes* 13 (June 2005): 103-104.

24. Felix Markones, *Österreichs Schwerathletik* (Vienna: 1920), 102.

25. Gottfried Schodl, *The Lost Past. Concealed or Forgotten?* (Budapest: International Weightlifting Federation, 1992), 238.

26. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 53.

27. *Ibid.*, 29.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Health and Strength*, (March 1952): 19, 42, 44, 46.

30. Gaudreau, *Anvils*, 11.

31. Mueller, *Athletik* 8 (1951): 7.

32. Mueller, "True Story."

33. Mueller, *Athletik* 8 (1951): 7.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Athletik* (16 September 1919): 101.

36. Mueller, *Athletik* 8 (1951): 7. Neither the book, *150 Jahre Allgemeiner Turn-verein zu Leipzig 1845*, published by the Leipzig Sportsmuseum, or the archives of the same institution contain any mention of Goerner. Also, no data on Goerner was found in the material consulted at the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung where the Arbeiter Athletenbund Deutschlands records are kept.

37. The Atlas Club supplied us with copies of page 54-55 of the *Atlas Jahrbuch* (yearbook) for 1912 containing a biographical sketch of Goerner and his records up to 1913.

38. See note 36.

39. We examined the most reputable books containing updated and credible German sport records: *Deutsche Sport Taschenbuch 1921*; Hyppolit von

Norman, *Deutsches Sport Lexikon* (Berlin: Schwabachersche Verlagshaus, 1928); Otto Vierath, *Moderner Sport: Eine Umschau über die Zweige des Sports und die sportlichen Wettkämpfe* (Berlin: Oestergard Verlag, 1930); and *Beckmann's Lexikon* (Vienna/Leipzig: 1933).

40. Albert Stolz, ed. *Kraftsport Illustrierte Jahrbuch* (Munich: Stolz Verlag, 1908), 93.

41. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 66.

42. In fact, the author of *Athletik* covering the World Championships did not hide the disappointment at Goerner's performance since in other exhibitions he had reportedly lifted more than 150 kilos on three occasions that year. See "Weltmeisterschaft in Breslau," *Athletik*, 22 (7 August 1913): 512.

43. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 46, 48.

44. *Athletik* (2 October 1913): 652.

45. *Athletik* (5 October 1920): 328

46. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 32.

47. E-mail from Mustafa Haikal (Secretariat Zoo Leipzig) to Gherardo Bonini, 29 November 2004.

48. Johannes Gebbing, *50 Jahre Leipziger Zoo* (Leipzig: Leipziger Zoo, 1928).

49. There is no mention of Goerner in *Der Leipziger* during 1919 and 1920, even though this weekly paper carried sport news in every issue.

50. *Leipziger Tageblatt und Handelsblatt für Sachsen*, 6 April 1920, page 4. This data contradicts Markones, *Österreichs Schwerathletik*, 101, that places the record on 10 May 1920.

51. *Athletik* (June 1914): 408-409.

52. Scherer in Walter Umminger, ed. *Die Chronik des Sports* (Munich: Chronik Verlag, 1992).

53. *Athletik* (16 January 1913): 41.

54. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 48-50, 52-53

55. See the official list of recognized records in Schodl, *Lost Past*, 236-239.

56. Performed on 11 December, see *Athletik* (18 December 1913): 821.

57. Performed during duel of 7 June 1914, see *Athletik* (18 June 1914): 408.

58. Scherer does not consider the records prior to World War I to be official records. This is a different policy than that of the IWF, which, as discussed earlier, reinstated Gässler's record.

59. Weltrekord in *Kleine Brockhaus*, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1922-1925), 621.

60. *Grosse Brockhaus*, vol. 20 (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1932-1935), 215. The staff of Brockhaus kindly checked in their archives but the preparatory documents of the above mentioned editions were lost.

61. Hilmar Burger & Wilhelm Weidt, *Kraftproben. Stärke Manner einst und jetzt* (Berlin: Sportverlag, 1985), 16.

62. Gaudreau, *Anvils*, 109-110.

63. *Athletik* (27 February 1913): 140; and *Athletik* (23 October 1913): 694.

64. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 69-70, 72.

65. See <http://www.bvdk.de/kdk.pdf>.

66. *Cassell's Encyclopedia of Sports, Games and Pastimes* (London: Amalgamated Press, 1935), 705.

67. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 70.

68. Lothar Groth, *Die Starken Manner. Eine Geschichte der Kraftakrobatik* (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1987), 127.

69. *Dresdener Anzeiger*, 27 July 1920. We would also like to thank the Dresden Library for their assistance with our research.

70. *Athletik* (26 October 1920): 429.

71. Paul Welnowski, "Giganten der Kraft," *Athletik*, new series, 3 (1 March 1950): 6.

72. Josef Haupt, *Die Stärksten* (Munich: Munichverlag, 1928): 38, 42.

73. Elsie Goerner died in 1949. Mueller, *Goerner the Mighty*, 20.

74. *Athletik*, new series, 1 (2 December 1919) 23, page 198.

75. The search was executed by Prof. Jennie Underwood of Cape Town.

76. *Beckmann's Lexikon* (Vienna/Leipzig: 1933), 27-28 of appendix.