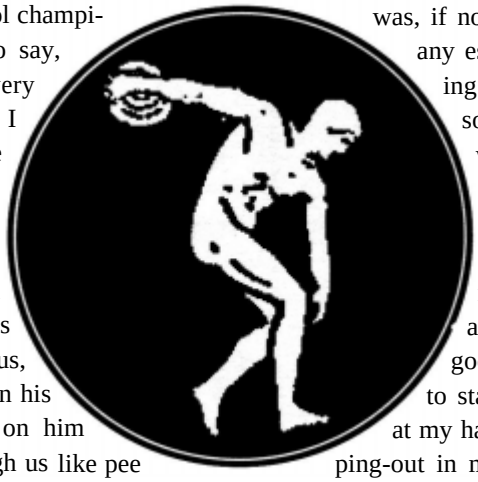
IRON GAME HISTORY

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 2 April 1992

Reflections on Musclebinding

he piece on Alvin Roy brought back many thoughts to me. Around 1943, my family moved from serving a mission church in northeast Baltimore to a big church in a small town in the mountains of central Pennsylvania, Lock Haven. I arrived there just at the time in my life that I was learning about the weights, so needless to say, I was passionate about them, but absolutely nobody else shared that passion. (Later I converted some of my friends, but theirs was not the real thing, just a passing flirtation.) In any case, Lock Haven had a passion for football. It was still reliving the glory of having had, about 20 years earlier, a true national high school championship team in football. So—needless to say, football meant a lot in this little town. Every other sport played third fiddle to it. When I arrived on the scene, the coach, one of the most impressive men I've ever met, had been drafted from Notre Dame, where he had started for two years as a 185-190 pound lineman (tackle)! ! ! He could run backwards faster than any of our backs could run straight ahead. He played with us, scrimmaged with us, sans uniform—just in his shorts. He'd have us line-up two men on him (three, even) and then "submarine" through us like pee through toilet paper. Perhaps the best natural physique I've ever seen. He was from Roy's home state, Louisiana, back in the bayous, (Very dark. Deep-set eyes. Somewhat Negroid face. Magnificent physique:arms, legs, calves the works. Quite a man. Why all this? He was deadset against any sort of what he called, contemptously, "fairy-ish" weightlifting, despite his having matriculated at the same school that boasted Fr. Lange. "How can this be?" (I wondered.) But IT was. He hated lifting.



I played junior high football as a center, since I was so "big" in junior high (for those days); I had to skip my sophomore year because my father wanted me to work, rather than indulge in such "pointless and self-vaunting" activities as football. I wheedled my way back into the football mindset in my junior year and found it hard to make-up for that lost year—in the coach's mind, I had proved myself morally derelict by dropping out (despite the cause). By that time, I was, if not exactly tiny, surely no longer "big," by any estimate: around the high 130's. I was lifting like a s.o.b. to get bigger—all on the sly, so that the coach did not hear about it. I was working extremely hard and, of course, the hardness of the training militated against the very thing that I had in mind: gaining muscle and strength. By my senior year, I had "bulked-up" to 147 and had won myself into (back into) the good graces of the coach, who permitted me to start several games, despite his black anger at my having disgraced his holy program by dropping-out in my sophomore year. This meant much to him and he said, openly, that I would be "punished" for this disloyalty. (By the end of the junior year, I was playing a lot, and started much (most) of the senior year. But not without two public chastisements—and being sent from the field in my senior year with a reminder of my "disloyalty" to the whole team. Very painful stuff.

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But underlying all this was the coach's hatred of lifting. He had gotten the whiff of a rumor that I was lifting weights in my basement, so one day, in my senior year, early in the season, he walked down the street and confronted me, sitting on the front porch of the parsonage with my parson old man. Direct as the coach was, he threw out: "I hear you're lifting weights in your cellar. You know that you're off the team if that's true." I looked him straight in his eyes and said, straight-out, in my most ingenuous, preacher's son, butter wouldn't-melt-in-my-mouth, stalwart, Christian posture: "No sir, coach. I do not lift weights in my cellar. (Weakly) Who told you that? (Very Weakly) I don't even have any weights in my cellar (very, very weakly)." Having discharged his obligation to Heaven and the Holy Father, the coach stalked away into the lowering shades, leaving me to my less that holy (holy-) father. "Alfred, you lied to the coach. You lied to him straight in the face." I assumed the penitent look, forthwith, and beat a hasty retreat from such public exposure of my dear(est) secret pleasure, assuring my holy-man father that, as he well knew, my weights were not in the cellar; they were in the garage. With that I took off, not for the cellar or the garage, but for the safety of the closest mountainside on my trusty bike, where I stayed until well past midnight. (school work, etc., wholly cast-aside for that unhappy day). My old man didn't like lying that paraded as Philadelphia lawyer-ing. But he didn't pursue the matter, as I thought he would.

That's the passion of the anger against weight training—that ***was*** the passion, and it was a passion. Hardly a day passed that the coach didn't inveigh against the use of weights, since I feel (and felt then, vaguely) that he sensed the coming of weight training, in the way that a spring breeze insinuates itself into the raw drafts of March. It was on its way, and he was against it: not just <u>not</u> for it—100 percent against it, as he was against the Masons, rubbers, abortion

(whether or not he may have caused one or two among over-excitable Protestant cheerleaders), and boys who quit football. It is so very hard for folks, today, to believe this—or to remember it, even, having lived through it: it being one of those stupid things that one dismisses from his memory, lest he be sucked into some black hole of ignorance. But it was, sure as hell, there, deeply in the consciousness (almost-conscience) of all the coaching establishment. And the ironic thing is that this coach was (still is, even) one of the most impressive specimens of natural muscle (and great configuration of physique) that I've ever seen, all without ever having touched a weight.

After four years in the Navy and four years in college, I arrived at Penn State in 1956 to begin my Master's study and discovered there the same sort of absolute contempt for, and refusal to consider the values of, weight training. The assistant track coach was a chap named Norm Gordon, who also was an enthusiast, of sorts, of weight training, but he was up against a coaching establishment, in football and track, totally opposed to it, so we suffered together. ("What can be done to turn around this sort of hatred? How can we bring about a conversion experience, a 'redo' of the old Saul on the road to Tarsus, etc.?") The force that directs the universe did it ***all*** for us. The head track coach, "Chick" Werner, went to the Olympics, that year, and saw Bill Nieder, the excellent shotputter who was also one of the early enthusiasts and boosters of (heavy) weight training: the old (or so they said) 135 pound Olympic barbell thrust-straight-out from the shoulders routine, etc., etc. Having talked with Nieder and caught his enthusiasm, "Chick" returned and began to put into gear the first and rudimentary weight training program for his track men. Norm Gordon came to my little room-apartment and, together, we mapped-out the first-ever weight training program used at Penn State. At the very same time, the coach of the (of all things) freshman (!) football program came to me and asked me to set-up for his incoming boys a weight training program for football players. Indeed, this was, by a brief time (a matter of a few weeks), even earlier (in its set-up) than the preceding program, above, except that it was (merely) for the freshmen football players, as opposed to all the track men in the track program, under Werner and Gordon. Prior to this moment, even so prestigious an athletic program as the one at Penn State, both in football and in track (important programs at the school), was totally without any program in weight training. The conversion of "Chick" Werner was one of the most dramatic that I'd ever seen. Bill N. must have been a terrific salesman or at least a magnificent object lesson in the benefits of weight training because, upon Chick's having confronted this youth, he was never the same man when it came to the matter of training with weights: he became, overnight, a supporter, an enthusiast, and his enthusiasm spread to the football program, generally: a real time of ferment at Penn State, and it was fun to be in the midst of it. It's interesting that I was a teaching assistant in the English Department and that there was nobody in the Physical Education Department similarly motivated or set-up at that time. Every single grad assistant whom I met in Phys. Ed., at that time, was contemptuous of the very idea that weight training could possibly be an effective component of any sports training regimen, even one for football or track or wrestling. The same obtained when I taught at Lycoming College and, later on, even at the University of Wisconsin, and, of course, later yet at Kutztown. But Penn State, pre-'56, was as benighted as Lock Haven High School had been in my years there—when it came to the values of the "iron pills." Absolutely incredible.

Al Thomas

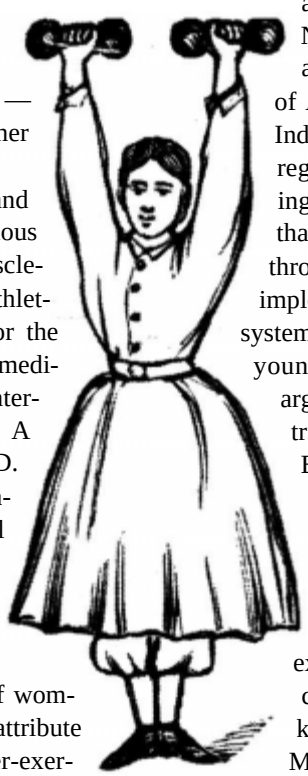
The Origins of Weight Training for Female Athletes in North America

Jan Todd
The University of Texas at Austin

Today, there is virtually no women's sport in which some form of weight training or resistance exercise is not part of the conditioning program used by the athletes of that sport. This is so because resistance exercise is helpful to athletes in many ways; it increases running and jumping ability, creates greater muscular endurance and decreases the likelihood of injury. During the first two-thirds of the twentieth century, however, most athletes, male and female, eschewed weight training because it was considered by coaches and physical educators to be detrimental to athletic performance. Weight training, it was widely and incorrectly believed, would make an athlete slow, stiff and "musclebound" — qualities obviously undesirable in an athlete of either sex.[1]

Women athletes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had, of course, more serious problems to contend with than the myth of muscle-binding. They were hindered in their pursuit of athletic achievement by a general, societal concern for the de-feminizing impact of sports as well as by the medical community's belief that "strenuous" sports interfered with women's reproductive capacities.[2] A 1925 newspaper interview with Dr. Thomas D. Wood, Director of Physical Education at coeducational Columbia University reveals this typical mindset;

"Whether girls are engaged in social diversions or outdoor exercises, the first thought they should have is the preservation of safety, health and well-being. . .the cherishing of that quality of womanliness which is the chief attraction and finest attribute of women." He continued, "They must not over-exercise. . . (and they) should not take part in any game requiring vigorous effort."[3]



This 1862 illustration from Dio Lewis' ***The New Gymnastics for Men, Women & Children*** is one of a series of dumbell exercises he considered appropriate for women.

While Wood's comments were addressed to his interviewer's questions about basketball and track and field, sports in which a growing number of women participated in the 1920s, there is no reason to doubt that he, and the majority of mainstream American "experts" in the first half of the twentieth century, would have believed that using weight training to enhance a woman's athletic performance was not only too strenuous but decidedly unfeminine. In spite of such professional opposition, a few women did flout convention by lifting barbells and dumbells as part of their training to become better athletes. They are the foremothers of our modern weight-trained women athletes and their story begins with that early advocate of exercise for women, Dr. Diocletian Lewis.

In 1862, Dio Lewis published ***The New Gymnastics for Men, Women and Children,*** a textbook of gymnastic exercises and drills which featured the use of lightweight dumbells, Indian Clubs and weighted wands.[4] Lewis' system was deemed particularly suitable for women and was adopted as the physical education program by many Northeastern women's schools over the next several decades. During this period, literally thousands of American women became familiar with dumbells, Indian Clubs and lightweight barbells as part of their regular physical education program.[5] As such training became common, women came to understand that their bodies could be strengthened and improved through regular physical training with these sorts of implements; "gymnastics," according to the Lewis system, was seen as one of the most healthful activities a young woman could pursue.[6] Furthermore, Lewis argued that women were as well-suited to gymnastic training as were men. His biographer, Mary F. Eastman, reports, in fact, that "In every one of the thirteen classes of graduates. . . the best gymnast was a woman. . . In each class there were from two to six women superior to any of the men."[7]

By the time the century ended, the list of sports considered acceptable for women had expanded beyond golf, croquet, lawn tennis and cycling to new, more vigorous sports such as basketball, field hockey, rowing and track and field. Many young women embraced these new sports and seemed to physically benefit by their participation, but most physical educators and physicians continued to warn against the strenuousness of these activities. Physical educators, searching for a way to satisfy conventional medical opinion and still pacify the students who wanted to play these new games, frequently required gymnastic training as a prerequisite to play. Dudley and Kellor's ***Athletic Games in the Education of Women*** notes, for instance, that "Few [women's universities] allow girls to play basketball without heart and lung examinations. Gymnastics are ordinarily required [before play] . . . In one institution a year of gymnas-

tics is required before such games as hockey and basketball can be played at all. In another, they can play all other games but basketball, without having had gymnastics. One college requires that gymnastics be taken for two years before athletics are permitted."[8]

Admittedly, the dumbell and club drills of the *fin de siecle* gymnastic regimens were less rigorous than the systematic weight programs used by today's athletes. However, they are philosophical kin in their shared goals of increasing the strength and fitness of women athletes and in decreasing their chances of being injured. The fact that light dumbell and club drills were so widely accepted in the early twentieth century eased the transition to slightly heavier clubs and dumbells and, later, to modern weight training. "Gymnastics" of course, was often used to refer to heavy as well as light weight lifting. Katie Sandwina, for instance, the most famous of the professional strongwomen who toured North America in the early part of the twentieth century, was at times referred to as a "gymnast" even though her act included no tumbling and did include the lifting of a 600 pound cannon and the bending of iron bars.[9]

One of the people largely responsible for the widespread acceptance of weight training for women in the early twentieth century was Bernarr Macfadden, publisher of ***Physical Culture*** magazine. In both ***Physical Culture*** and his short-lived magazine, ***Women's Physical Development,*** Macfadden urged women to use dumbells, cables and other forms of resistive exercise to improve themselves physically. He was a firm believer in the benefits of exercise for women and he devoted considerable space in his magazines to the personal testimonials of "physical culture girls" such as Dorothy Alden Becker, who was said to have escaped "death's door" through right living, fresh air and plenty of exercise.[10]

Becker's letter to Macfadden, printed in the "Forum for Physical Culture Girls," reports that she was given up to die by her physicians when her parents decided to take her to Santa Cruz, California, for a nature cure. After she learned to swim, she was placed under the instruction of a diving coach. Becker wrote,

> *The first command my instructor gave was that I would have to develop the muscles of my back if I wished to become a proficient diver. From this time on, I took up all branches of gymnasium exercises, such as tumbling, bar and ring work, dumbells, Indian Clubs and later boxing. This ensured symmetrical development so that today there is not a single muscle in my body which is knotty or unbecoming [to] the feminine figure."* [11]

Becker's letter is significant as it is one of the earliest known references of a woman using resistance exercise to deliberately enhance sport performance. She goes on to note that the exercises enabled her to master ". . .83 different dives, to swim 50 yards in 32 seconds," and to ride a surfboard for more than 75 yards while standing on her head.[12]

Macfadden further promoted the relationship between resistive training and athletics through the sponsorship of several "Physical Culture Extravaganzas" during the first decade of the twentieth century. His first women's physique contest was simply that, a physique competition, but the winner of the second women's competition, held in 1905, was selected on the basis of points scored in athletic contests as well as on the development and symmetry of her physique. The athletic contests consisted of several foot races and a weightlifting competition. The 1905 show had nation-wide impact as it was held in Madison Square Garden, attracted over 15,000 spectators and was covered by most of the New York papers.[13]

By 1910, however, Macfadden's ***Physical Culture*** contained almost no dumbell prescriptions for women, although it continued to argue in favor of women's athletics. For the next two decades, ***Physical Culture,*** and a number of influential physical educators, advocated "classical" or Grecian dance *a la* Isadora Duncan and Ruth St. Denis as the most beneficial form of exercise for women.[14] Only ***The National Police Gazette*** continued to publicize weightlifting women, though most of those featured in the ***Gazette*** were professional strongwomen, not sportswomen. One notable exception was Caroline Bauman, a student of "Professor Atilla" (Louis Durlacher).[15] Bauman appeared several times in the ***Gazette*** and later taught boxing to society women as a means of figure improvement[16]

Other health and fitness magazines, such as ***Strength*** (1912-1932), published by Alan Calvert, followed Macfadden's lead in ignoring weight training for women during the second decade of the century. But in the mid-twenties, ***Strength,*** then the most influential weightlifting magazine in North America, began actively promoting the idea of women and strength. A 1923 editorial by Carl Easton Williams, for instance, raised concerns about the national fitness level of post-World War I America and entreated readers, " . . .our first requirement, if we are to raise the level of our national vigor, is to idealize and glorify strength. . . . We want to see the lives of all our boys and girls, all of our young men and young women, colored with this point of view. We want them to be saturated with this notion of strength as being the basis of a scheme of living."[17] A second article in that same issue, "Is Strength Masculine and Weakness Feminine?", argued against the "clinging vine" definition of femininity, "When men were athletic and women were strictly non-athletic it was natural that the latter came to be looked upon as weak sisters, for they were. Today, however, women are playing golf and

tennis, swimming, driving cars, even aeroplanes, and doing so many other things that men are doing that many of our old-fashioned notions about them are going by the board."[18] Three years later, ***Strength*** again endorsed athletic women in the article, "Are Girl Athletes Masculine?", which was subtitled: "The Female Athlete Personifies the Highest Type of Womanhood and is Proven Decidedly Feminine." [19]

Strength's enthusiasm for the athletic woman of the 1920s was part of a wider, societal acceptance of a new, fit and slender physical ideal for women. Silent film stars such as Annette Kellerman, a former champion swimmer and diver, helped to dispel the myth that women athletes were large and masculine. Kellerman, famous for her facial beauty and her figure, was often referred to as "the perfect woman" by the press; and in 1918 she authored ***Physical Beauty: How to Keep It,*** one of the first celebrity exercise books for women. The exercise routine Kellerman recommended involved swimming and barbell training.[20] As historian Lois Banner has pointed out, the most prominent women in the 1920s aside from film stars, were athletes—Helen Wills, Gertrude Ederle, Suzanne Lenglen, and Sonja Heine, to name just a few—and their popularity encouraged other women to view athletics in a more favorable light.[21] Many women began serious training during this decade as opportunities for participation in the Olympic Games and in other contests continued to increase.[22]

In 1927, ***Strength*** published its clearest statement on the question of women and resistance training, in an article entitled, "Cash In On Trained Muscles." The article, written by Charles MacMahon, a frequent contributor to the magazine, begins, "Many young men and women who are athletically inclined, do not appreciate the value of proper physical training for the purpose of making themselves better athletes." MacMahon explains, "Proper physical training methods can strengthen your wrist and arm so that a tennis racket, baseball, baseball bat, cricket bat or any other sport apparatus, will be light for you to handle, thereby allowing you to handle them easily and accurately." He concludes, "In these days of commercial sport, a fellow, or even a young woman, can make his or her favorite sport a profession, provided they are clever enough at it." [23]

The number of women-and men-involved in athletics continued to increase during the 1920s yet there is little evidence that many of them took MacMahon's suggestions to heart. Women's Athletic clubs, modelled after those of men, were organized in a few cities in the United States, and in some of these, dumbells, medicine balls and barbells were part of the club's equipment. A 1922 photograph in ***The National Police Gazette,*** for instance, shows a Brooklyn women's athletic club. In the center of the **photo** is Ethelda Bleibtrey, "international swimming champion," surrounded by her male coach and 10 other women who display a variety of resistance apparati.[24]

Two figures emerged in the early 1930s however, who substantially changed the course of weight training for women athletes. The first was Ivy Russell (b. 1907 in Surrey, England), a remarkably strong and unusually muscular young woman who gave numerous posing and weightlifting exhibitions during the 1930s in Great Britain. She was introduced to weightlifting at age 14 by A. E. Streeter, who was retired from the British Army's physical training staff. Following his retirement, Streeter had developed a reputation, in the London suburb where he made his home, as a disciple of the curative power of exercise; and before long he was treating invalids and giving advice to the parents of sickly children. Russell apparently came to him in the early stages of tuberculosis and, according to ***Health and Strength,*** it was not long before she was surpassing her teacher in health and strength. [25] In 1925, at age 18 and weighing only 125 pounds, Russell did a clean and jerk of 176 pounds; in 1930, at a bodyweight of 134 pounds, she did a 193 pound clean and jerk and also completed a 410 l/2 pound deadlift. On another occasion she did 14 repetitions with 180 pounds in the deep kneebend.[26]

As reports of Russell's herculean strength and amazing muscularity spread throughout the physical culture community, other British women became interested in amateur competition. In a long letter to the editor published in May of 1932 in ***Health and Strength*** magazine, Russell urged B.A.W.L.A. to admit lady lifters and to sanction women's competitions. This letter is believed to be the first attempt by any woman to fight for equal athletic opportunities for women in amateur weightlifting.[27] Russell was eventually successful in her campaign for equality and she defeated Tillie Tinmouth in B.A.W.L.A's first sanctioned women's competition for the "Nine Stone Ladies Champion of Great Britain" title.[28]

Russell is important here, however, not because of her strength but because she was considered an exceptional all-round athlete. Wire service reports described her as being a champion fencer, sprinter and wrestler.[29] Although weightlifting enthusiasts were captivated by Russell's strength, which was, in fact, prodigious, it was her physique and her athleticism which captivated the media and, in turn, the public. Russell's relatively small size and extreme muscularity were antithetical to most people's conception of a "strongwoman." It has to be kept in mind that prior to the 1930s the world's most prominent female strength athletes were the professionals Minerva and Sandwina, both of whom weighed over 200 pounds during their athletic primes and carried considerable bodyfat on their large frames.[30] Russell, however, was only of average size and she displayed a degree of muscularity that would be envied by many of our modern women bodybuilders. Despite her leanness, however, Russell was still relatively large-breasted, an important factor in defining women's beauty throughout the twentieth century.[31] For a variety of reasons, therefore, Russell was a new archetype for women weightlifters. She appeared on the

Ivy Russell's unusual muscularity is displayed to advantage in this 1932 photograph from Kobel wire service.

cover of ***The National Police Gazette*** in 1934, posed with a discus; and in 1937 a ***Pearson's Weekly*** columnist wrote, "Miss Russell's biceps are exactly the same size as those of Max Schmeling, the German heavyweight who beat Joe Louis; her calf is half an inch bigger than Schmeling's; her thigh is the same measurement as that of Tommy Farr and one inch bigger than that of Joe Louis." [32]

Whether Russell was pleased to be compared to Schmeling and Louis is unknown, as Russell has refused all modern attempts at interviews. [33] A 1934 article on Russell mentions, however, that "the way was not easy" for her, as "criticism was plentifully regular" among her non-lifting peers.[34] Despite the criticism, Russell continued to train through the end of the 1930s and her achievements served to convince many other women, both in Great Britain and the United States, that strength and womanhood were not incompatible and that weightlifting was comp-atible with athletics.

The second, and ultimately more influential person in the story of how women athletes came to train with weights, was Bob Hoffman of York, Pennsylvania, who began publishing ***Strength & Health*** magazine in 1932. Hoffman, born in Georgia in 1898, was an active athlete throughout his adolescence and early adulthood; according to his own immodest accounts, he was a successful competitor in such sports as canoeing, running, and boxing. He began to train with weights in 1923 and discovered, as he continued to compete in various sports, that as he got stronger from his weight training his athletic skills increased. This discovery changed Hoffman's life.[35] He began putting together a team of weightlifters to compete in the American Continental Weightlifting Association's sanctioned meets and, in 1932, having decided to dedicate his life to lifting, he purchased the Milo Barbell Company, then the foremost manufacturer of weightlifting equipment in the United States.[36] This proved to be a successful venture for Hoffman as York Barbell set the standard for the industry for the next four decades and his magazine, ***Strength & Health,*** outsold all other magazines in the field until the 1970s.[37]

Strength & Health was more than simply the voice of the competitive weightlifting community; it was also an innovator in its advocacy of new ideas and methods in exercise and nutrition. From its very first issue—and in virtually every issue that followed-Hoffman hammered home the connection between weight training and success in athletics.[38] Furthermore, he and his York barbell men gave dozens of exhibitions in which flexibility, jumping ability and speed—as well as strength—were demonstrated. For Hoffman, success in sports was a patriotic duty—an affirmation of manliness and American vigor reminiscent of the Muscular Christianity philosophy of the mid-nineteenth century. Like those earlier perfectionists, Hoffman argued that women, no less than men, should see to the training of their bodies; and because of the

prominence enjoyed by ***Strength & Health,*** Hoffman's advocacy of weight training for women did not go unnoticed.[39] In the beginning, Hoffman featured his wife and several of his mistresses, all large, robust women who took up weight training under Bob's influence. It is possible, in fact, to actually follow Hoffman's marital and extra-marital arrangements via the pages of ***Strength & Health*** over the first two decades of the magazine's publication.[40]

Rosetta Hoffman, the only woman Hoffman actually married,[41] appeared in ***Strength & Health*** for the first time in January of 1934. Two photographs appeared of Rosetta in that issue, and in one she is holding what is reportedly 100 pounds over her head with one hand. The caption beneath her photograph reads in part, "Here is the true glorified version of beautiful womanhood. . . Like her famous husband, she is an ardent exercise advocate and loves the weights. . . Her flashing smile and sparkling eyes and beautiful body is [sic] a fitting example for the women of America to follow."[42]

The two photographs and the 100 pound weight brought comments from the readers of ***Strength & Health,*** and in March of 1934, Harry Good authored the magazine's first women's article: "Strength, Health and Beauty for the Ladies." This article opened with Good's observation that since the Rosetta pictures had appeared, "there has been continual discussion, questioning and writing as to whether women should use barbells or lift weights." Good, of course, favored women's training, arguing that such exercise will only make them "happier, healthier, and better mothers," a refrain familiar long before 1934. More important was the fact that Good suggested that the models to whom women should look regarding the effects of weight training were not the professional strongwomen who were "large boned and would have been even bigger. . . if they had not lifted weights," but the "countless lady acrobats, aerialists, tumblers and adagio dancers who became more beautiful. . . more shapely. . . by the [resistance] work they do."[43]

This January 1934 photograph of Rosetta Hoffman caused controversy in the early days of ***Strength & Health*** magazine. The barbell was made to look much heavier than it was.

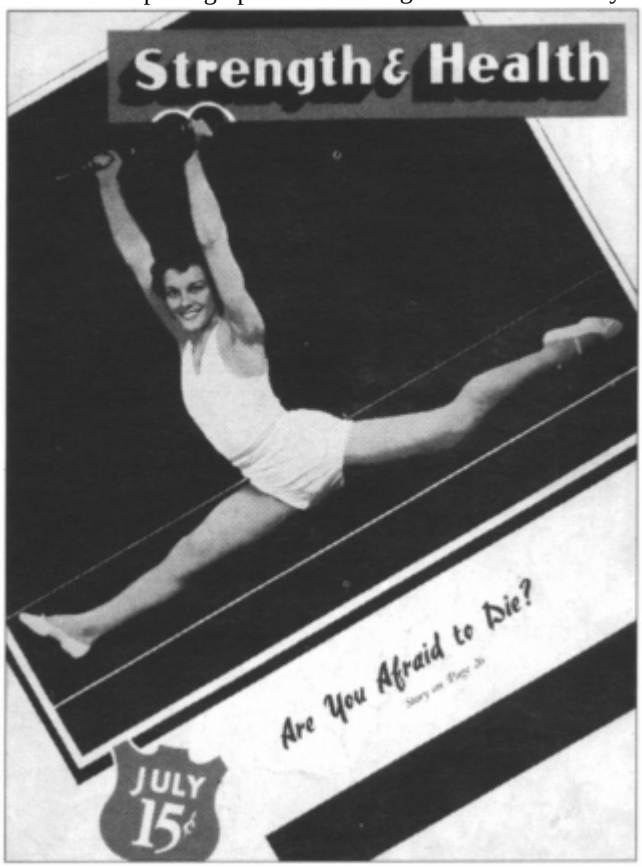
Thanks to her husband's editorial decisions, Rosetta became a minor phenomenon in ***Strength & Health.*** In December of 1934, she authored her first column on diet and exercise, "Beauty Building for Women," appeared on the cover; and was featured in an advertisement for the "Miracle Rejuvenator," sold under her name.[44] On page seven of that issue she is shown modelling a rowing machine and, some pages later, she is shown lifting weights. A caption below these photographs lists her as weighing 136 pounds at a height of 5'3".[45] For the next several years, articles carrying Rosetta's by-line appeared with regularity in ***Strength & Health.*** [46] Interspersed with recipes and beauty tips was advice on the best ways to use dumbells, several mentions of that amazing "English miss," Ivy Russell,[47] and an occasional plug for the benefits weights can have for women athletes. In a January 1937 column, for instance, Rosetta reported that, "Training with weights makes it possible for me to enjoy other games and sports . . . I am sure too, that you who read this will obtain as much benefit as I from moderate training with weights." Though Rosetta described her training as "moderate," in the next paragraph she explained that, "The secret of barbell training is to use comparatively heavy weights for a few repetitions. This is not tiresome. Rather it builds strength in muscles and ligaments, builds energy, internal strength and vital power." [48]

In 1936, ***Strength & Health*** devoted a great deal of space to the Olympic Games, and both Bob and Rosetta's articles were supportive of the serious way in which the Germans approached athletics—particularly the rigorous training methods used by German women. The American Eleanor Holm's famous tippling, for instance, is juxtaposed in one article by Bob Hoffman with the comment that, "The German girls are big and strong and take their training and athletics so much more seriously than do our girls."[49]

Hoffman attended the Berlin games as coach of the US weightlifting team and Rosetta accompanied him. Though she had no formal role, she apparently used her days aboard the ocean liner Manhattan to get acquainted with many of the American women athletes. This was time well spent, as her column featured several of these women following her return. Baltimore gymnast Connie Carrucio, who was the high point scorer for the United States in the team gymnastic competition, was the first woman to appear in a feature article in ***Strength & Health.***[50] There was no mention of any weight training in this

article, but Caruccio appeared on the cover of the July 1937 issue, with dumbells in hand, and inside the issue it was stated that she had begun doing resistance training. In 1944, Caruccio was again mentioned in ***Strength & Health,*** and this time it was reported that she pressed 100 pounds overhead at a bodyweight of 124.[51] Whether Caruccio continued her weight training throughout this period is not known, but she did make the 1948 Olympic team and score well, despite her advanced age.[52] Another woman Olympian featured by Rosetta's column was the sprinter Betty Robinson, who came back and made the Olympic team after a severe plane wreck.[53]

Throughout 1937 and 1938, ***Strength & Health*** argued with increasing frequency for heavy training by female athletes.[54] A September 1938 article entitled, "What is Musclebound?" is typical of the magazine's post-Berlin Olympic's enthusiasm and is illustrated with a photograph of Ginger Lawler, an adagio dancer and tumbler who was also a serious barbell trainer. [55] Hoffman's repeated and calculated use of photographs of attractive gymnasts, acrobats and adagio dancers who were also barbell trainers did much to dispel the old prejudices about weights making women large, mannish and inflexible. This was especially true during the 1940s and early 1950s, the era of the "Muscle Beach girls" when women such as Pudgy Stockton were featured not only in ***Strength & Health*** but in many pictorial magazines as well.



Olympic gymnast Connie Caruccio appeared on the cover of the July 1937 issue of **Strength & Health.**

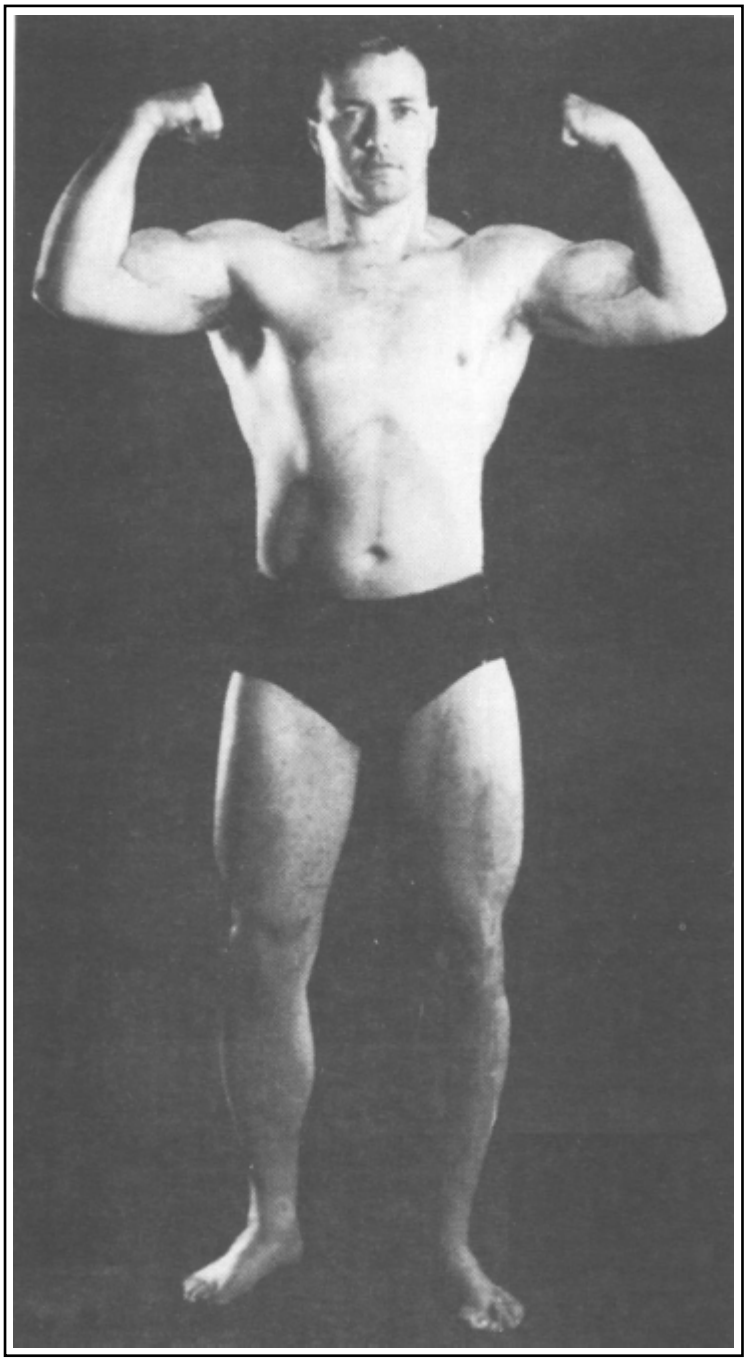
The September 1938 issue marked Rosetta's last appearance in ***Strength & Health,*** as the Hoffman marriage collapsed. For the next several months no articles featuring women appeared in ***Strength & Health,*** but the April 1939 issue featured Hoffman's new girlfriend, Gracie Bard, on the cover. Over the next several years Hoffman contributed quite a few articles to the magazine using Bard's by-line and photographs of weight-trained women were increasingly featured. Bard's own lifting feats were spotlighted in the magazine in the May 1940 issue, in which readers were told that she could jerk 75 pounds overhead with one hand.[56]

Bard's name first appeared as a regular contributor to ***Strength & Health*** in January of 1941. It lasted less than a year, but it did much to heighten the weights/athletics connection. The photography accompanying Bard's first article featured Doris Hillgardner, a weight trainer, swimmer and diver who won the 1940 West Indian diving championship and who testified to the beneficial effect weight training had on her athletics. [57] The article also featured a photograph of Muriel Fornell, of Brooklyn, whom the caption claimed had recently cleaned and jerked 120 pounds at a bodyweight of 117.[58]

In the December 1941 issue of ***Strength & Health,*** Bard was replaced by one of Hoffman's new amors, the *zaftig* Dorcas Lehman. According to the article, under Hoffman's name, Lehman had weighed over 200 pounds before she began barbell training and following the rules of healthful living. According to the article, the weights worked wonderfully for Lehman; she dropped to 149 pounds at a height of 5'7" and gained tremendously in strength. She also entered into a long-term relationship with Hoffman.[59] In the January 1942 issue, Hoffman describes Lehman as possibly the strongest "girl" in America, and credits her with a full squat of 200 pounds, a deadlift of 300 and a leg press of 566 pounds.[60] The December 1941 issue of the magazine is important for another reason; it carries notice of the recent achievement in the clean and press of Alda Ketterman of Dover, Pennsylvania. Although Bob retained a relationship with Lehman, Ketterman was to outlast the other athletic women in his life, become his common-law wife and live with him until his death in 1986. (Hoffman's considerable estate was left to Ketterman and his business partners.)[61]

The main reason that neither Ketterman nor Lehman were featured in ***Strength & Health*** to the extent that Rosetta had earlier been featured was that a young Santa Monican beauty, Abbye "Pudgy" Eville Stockton [whose story appeared in ***Iron Game History*** 2(l)] carried women's weight training to an entirely new level on her square shoulders. Two small photos of Eville appeared in the September 1940 issue of ***Strength & Health*** with a caption that read: "This small lady has strength equal to a much heavier man, yet retains a small, symmetrical and most attractive physique. . . Further proof that heavy exercise, weightlifting, hand balancing and acrobatics will produce the ideal development for the ladies too."[62]

Stockton, who was born in 1917, began training at age 20 under the direction of Les Stockton, who introduced her to barbells and dumbells, and took her with him to the beach in Santa Monica where, on weekends, physical culturists from around Southern California gathered to work on their lifting and acrobatics. Pudgy and Les were soon married, and following Les' service in World War II they opened a health studio in Los Angeles.[63]



As Muscle Beach became a physical culture mecca in the early 1940s, Pudgy Stockton's unusual combination of strength, athletic ability and shapeliness made her a great favorite with photographers for both weightlifting and regular magazines. Two newsreels of that era featured her, vitamin and camera companies used photos of her to sell their products, and by the end of the 1940s Pudgy's figure had graced 42 magazine covers from around the world. This exposure gave her a national reputation and, in 1944, she began writing a regular column for ***Strength & Health,*** called "Barbelles." Stockton's ***S&H*** columns were extremely important to the development of women's weight training. [64]

From the first, her column featured strong, attractive women who were also good athletes. Pudgy featured her friends from Muscle Beach — women like Edna Rivers, Evalynne Smith and Relna Brewer Macrae—all of whom were also seen in such pictorial magazines as ***Pic, Laff*** and ***Hit.***[65] Relna Macrae, for example, was accomplished in adagio dance, jiu jitsu, handbalancing, aerial work and wrestling and she could supposedly tear a Los Angeles phone book apart with her hands.

Other "Barbelle" columns which helped the cause of weight training for athletics featured competitive athletes such as Walt Disney studio artist Pat King, who began weight training to gain weight and increase her endurance. In 1945, King, who trained with bodybuilder Gene Jantzen (and later married him), was performing barbell pullovers, overhead presses, barbell rowing motions and bench presses. These exercises enabled her, according to Stockton, to run a mile in six minutes and 50 seconds, five miles in 47 minutes, to swim a mile in 38 minutes and to perform 900 squats (deep kneebends) in 53 minutes. [66]

A 1946 Stockton column featured Maria Blumer Hoesley of Monroe, Wisconsin, whose father, a physical culturist, had encouraged her to become involved in gymnastics. In 1942, while still a teenager, Hoesley placed first at the National Swiss-American gymnastic meet, and she also won a number of titles in *Turnverein* (German gymnastic society) competitions. Stockton wrote, "Marie attributes her needed additional strength and endurance to the barbells..."[67] Alyce Yarick, the wife of gym owner Ed Yarick and a competitive track and field athlete, who trained with barbells in the late 1940s was also featured by Pudgy in ***Strength & Health.*** An Oakland, California resident, Yarick won numerous prizes in local track and field competitions.[68] Edith Roeder, a competitor in track and field as well as basketball, was another barbell devotee. A former beauty contest winner, Roeder worked hard at the Olympic lifts, and in 1955 she cleaned and jerked 170 pounds in a special exhibition held at the Junior National Weight-lifting Championships. She is also credited with a one hand clean and jerk of 100 pounds. [69]

Though a number of sportswomen did take up barbell

training in the 1940s they were all individual athletes, generally women introduced to. weight training by boyfriends or husbands, and none of those featured by Stockton in **Strength & *Health*** were competitors at the national or Olympic level. But things changed dramatically in the early 1950s as preparations for the Helsinki Olympics—the first Olympic Games to feature Soviet state-produced athletes—got underway. There was considerable speculation throughout the United States about what to expect from the Soviet Union at Helsinki. At the 1948 Olympics the USSR had sent no athletes, only observers, whose job it was to come up with a plan to create a new international sporting power.[70] Hoffman, and most other Olympic coaches, watched these developments with considerable anxiety. Hoffman, of course, continued to maintain in his editorials that American athletes—male and female—needed weight training to hold off this new communist threat. Finally, one man, Walter Schlueter, chosen as the U.S. women's swimming coach for the 1952 Olympic Games, decided to try what Hoffman had been preaching for so long.

Thus it was that in late 1951, a women's athletic team, the Town Club Swimming Team from Chicago, was placed on a weight training program. Schleuter began the program on September 29, 1951 and the routine used by his 25 women swimmers—including several from previous Pan American and national teams—was composed of basic barbell exercises such as squats, curls, military presses, bench presses and pullovers. At the end of their three month training program, Schleuter reported that the women had more stamina and greater speed. He was pleased and started them on a new cycle of weight training.[71] Schleuter's training program marked the first time in the United States that any women's *team* was put on a progressive resistance program to enhance their athletic performance.

By 1959, when Hoffman published ***Better Athletes Through Weight Training,*** a few of America's top male athletes had been converted to barbell training. Olympic decathlete Bob Richards, shotputter Parry O'Brian and runner Mal Whitfield were early converts, as were hammer thrower Harold Connolly, discus ace Al Oerter, and even amateur golf champion Frank Stranahan. By the decade's end, their stories had appeared in ***Strength & Health,*** as had the word, following the Helsinki and Melbourne Olympic Games, that one major difference between American and Communist teams was the amount and intensity of the weight training done by the Soviet male ***and*** female athletes. It was a message which did not go unheeded for long.[72]

Though it was widely believed that Soviet women athletes used weight training before the Helsinki Games, the conversion of western women still came slowly. But at least two women heard the warnings and headed to the gym prior to the Melbourne Games of 1956. Canadian thrower Jackie MacDonald began barbell training in an attempt to make her nation's Olympic team,[73] and a young, New York school girl, Cynthia Wyatt, asked her brother to help her "get strong." In some ways, Wyatt's may be the most important link in the long chain of women lifters; she was America's first internationally successful, weight-trained female athlete.

In a 1988 interview, Cindy Wyatt, who married powerlifting champion Don Reinhoudt and is now the mother of two children, asserted that had it not been for her weight training, she would never have been able to compete as successfully as she did in track and field. As she explained:" I was always the smallest competitor, by far, at the national meets. For a number of years, Earlene Brown was number one, and I was number two in the United States. But Earlene outweighed me by nearly a hundred pounds. Internationally, I was up against Galena Zabyna and Tamara Press from the Soviet Union. They had the advantage of being not only a lot taller and heavier than I was, but they weight trained, too."[74]

Still, at 5'6' and 165 pounds, Cindy did well. When she was 12, she had been introduced to the weights by her older brother, Pat, who taught her to throw the shot and discus. There was, of course, no track and field program in her school in those pre-Title IX days, but Wyatt loved the events and the barbell work and, in 1958, she attended her first national level competition. Although she was only 14, she won both the shot and discus in the junior division and finished sixth overall in the women's open division. Wyatt went on to win the indoor nationals as an adult in 1963 and 1965, and she made every Pan American and other international team between 1960 and 1966—except for the two Olympic teams. She was even given one of the first "sports scholarships" for women when Dr. Michael You, of Honolulu, picked up her academic expenses and those of four other track and field athletes so that the women could represent the University of Hawaii in the early 1960s.[75] It was in Hawaii, under the tutelage of World and Olympic weightlifting champion Tommy Kono, that Wyatt's strength truly blossomed. In an exhibition in 1962, she jerked 230 pounds, and she was the subject of a feature story in ***Strength & Health.***[76]

As Wyatt's reputation as a thrower grew, and word of her weight training spread, she soon found other women athletes coming to her for advice. She recalled years later that: "It was funny. In the late 1950s everyone knew that the women from the communist countries were lifting weights for the shot and discus, but no one except me seemed to care. But if some of the other American women had been training in those days I would never have made as many travel squads as I did. I'm really too small to be a thrower. I was just lots stronger than the bigger girls."[77]

Though Wyatt, who now works as a psychiatric counselor near Brockton, New York, unarguably did much to advance the acceptance of weight training for women athletes, there is one other ***Strength & Health*** story which needs to be told—that of gym owner Jerri Lee. Lee held the women's record, and her husband, Bob, held the men's

record for the Mt. Whitney Marathon—a 26 mile course straight to the mountain's 14,496 foot summit. The Lees had done the Whitney marathon several times and had used a combination of running and weight training in their training, But in 1959, as an experiment, they decided to find out how well they would do in the Mt. Whitney run if they did all their training in the gym, with weights. So, they set out on a barbell regimen that only the most persevering of athletes could have endured. By the end of their training they were doing 20 sets of 100 repetitions (with weight) in the quarter squat, set after set of 50 repetitions in the leg curl and leg extension, sets of 500 in the leg raise and much other "high rep" work. Their bodies apparently thrived on the program, and on the appointed day—without any climbing or running— both set new records in the marathon: Bob's at 4:56: 33 and Jerri's at 7:56:58.[78]

Throughout the 1960s, women athletes in a growing number of sports, inspired by stories like Cindy Wyatt's and Jerri Lee's in ***Strength & Health,*** turned to weights for additional strength and endurance. Britain's Stella Jacobs pioneered the way for women long jumpers; Audrey McElmury led in women's cycling; and Canadian Nancy Greene won the World Cup downhill ski championships in 1967 after a training program which included sets of 40 repetitions in the squat with 170 pounds.[79] By the 1968 Olympic Games, weight training had become commonplace among women throwers at the international levels of the sport; and by the 1972 Games, many track athletes, swimmers, cyclists and skiers followed suit.

North American women athletes came slowly to the use of weight training for athletic enhancement because of a variety of societal taboos surrounding women, strength, and femininity. Also, for the first two-thirds of this century, almost all coaches and physical educators believed that weight training was detrimental to athletic performance. Despite these barriers, however, Bob Hoffman's ***Strength & Health*** continued trumpeting the truth and weight training gradually found converts in women across the United States. Inspired by the magazine and then featured in it as an inspiration to others, women like Russell, Stockton, Wyatt and Lee became the torchlights Hoffman used to illuminate the prejudices which for so long had denied women full access to an important aspect of success in athletics—the physical power produced by systematic weight training.

[1] See Terry Todd, "Al Roy: Mythbreaker" ***Iron Game History*** 2(1): 12-16, for a more complete discussion of the phenomenon of "musclebound" and its relationship to athletics.

[2]Patricia Vertinsky's ***The Eternally Wounded Woman: Women, Doctors and Exercise in the Late Nineteenth Century*** (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1990) offers the most complete discussion of the medical community's attitudes toward exercise and womanhood. See also Helen Lenskyj's ***Out of Bounds: Women, Sport and Sexuality*** (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986).

[3]May Wilkinson Mount, "Girl Athletes Risk Their Lives in Too-Strenuous Sports." ***Pittsburg Post Gazette.*** 1925. Newspaper clipping in Coulter Collection, Women's Exercise File # 2. The Todd-McLean Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

[4]Dio Lewis, M.D., ***The New Gymnastics for Men, Women and Children*** (Boston: Ticknor and Fields), 9.

[5] Lewis' system was also perpetuated through the 421 graduates of his Normal Institute for Physical Education [1861-1868]. Nearly half of these newly trained physical educators were female, according to Lewis' biographer, Mary F. Eastman. (Mary F. Eastman, ***Biography of Dio Lewis, A.M., M.D.*** (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1891), 81-83.

[6]It should be noted that Lewis' system called for rhythmic drills set to music in co-educational settings. He was not an advocate of heavy weightlifting. and had, in fact, a rival in the Boston area in Dr. George Barker Windship, famous for his advocacy of the "health lift," in which the object was to lift heavy weights for short distances by the use of a platform-type "lifting machine." Women did train in Windship's gym, and at least one parlor version of a lifting machine was advertised during the late nineteenth century featuring a woman in the advertisement. It is impossible to tell, however, how widespread the use of the health lift may have been among women. Windship's story is told in "Autobiographical Sketches of a Strength Seeker, ***The Atlantic Monthly*** 9(January 1862): 102-115 and in Joan Paul, "The Health Reformers: George Barker Windship and Boston's Strength Seekers," ***Journal of Sport History*** 10(Winter 1983): 41-57. A reproduction of a health lift machine appears in Harvey Green's ***Fit For America*** (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 199.

[7]Eastman, ***Biography,*** 98.

[8]Gertrude Dudley and Frances A. Kellor, ***Athletic Games in the Education of*** Women (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1909). 100.

[9]See, for instance, "A Remarkable Mother: A Professional Gymnast Who Does Not Scorn the Duties of Motherhood." Clipping from ***Physical Culture*** contained in "Strongwomen" scrapbook, Coulter Collection, The Todd-McLean Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

[10] Marion Malcolm, "A Forum for Physical Culture Girls," ***Physical Culture*** (1911?): 93. Clipping from Coulter Collection, Women's Exercise File #3, The Todd-McLean Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] For information on Macfadden and these early physique competitions. see: Jan Todd, "Bernarr Macfadden: Reformer of Feminine Form, ***"Iron Game History*** 1(March 1991): 3-8.

[14] Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Ted Shawn (who married St. Denis in 1914) were all influenced by Francois Delsarte's system of "Applied Aesthetics." These three adapted Delsarte's belief in the ability of the body to express emotion through movement to a new dance form which came to be characterized by loose clothing, "natural" movements, mythic themes and which was the precursor of Modern Dance. In addition to performance dance, however, "harmonic gymnastics" and other systems of physical culture based on dance movement also appeared and grew popular. Macfadden's ***Physical Culture*** was filled with literally hundreds of photos of Grecian-robed women and girls gamboling in sylvan settings, often portraying certain "attitudes" which were part of Delsarte's theories. For more information see: Ted Shawn, ***Every Little Movement*** (Pittsfield, Massachusetts: Eagle Printing and Binding Company, 1954) as well as Steele Mackaye, ***Harmonic Gymnastics and Pantomimic Expression,*** ed. Marion Lowell, (Boston: published by Marion Lowell. 1895). and Eleanor Georgen, ***The DelSarte System of Physical Culture*** (New York: The Butterick Publishing Company, 1893).

[15]"Professor" Atilla opened a gym on Times Square in New York City in the early 1890s after touring successfully in Europe. Atilla is most often remembered for his partnership with Eugen Sandow but he also served as the personal trainer to several members of European royalty and, after he opened his New York gym, to many American celebrities. Atilla's scrapbooks and medals are now on deposit at the Todd-McLean Collection at the University of Texas in Austin.

[16] Clipping, Caroline Bauman file, Coulter Collection, The Todd-McLean Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

[17]Carl Easton Williams, "Strength Has a New Meaning," ***Strength*** 8(December 1923): 53.

[18]Gertrude Artelt, "Is Strength Masculine and Weakness Feminine?" ***Strength*** 8(December 1923): 54.

[19]Hamilton Dana, "Are Girls Athlete's Masculine?" ***Strength*** 11(November 1926): 31-33, 80-82.

[20]Annette Kellerman, ***Physical Beauty: How to Keep It*** (New York: George H. Doran, 1918).

[21]Lois Banner, ***American Beauty*** (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), 276

[22] In 1900, women were allowed to participate in only two of the twelve Olympic events-lawn tennis and golf. They were allowed to compete in swimming and archery in 1908, to fence in 1924 and to participate in track and field events for the first time in 1928. David Wallechinsky, ***The Complete Book of the Olympic Games*** (New York: Penguin, 1984).

[23]Charles Macmahon, "Cash In on Trained Muscles," ***Strength*** 12(June 1927): 25-27.

[24]Photographic clipping, from The National Police Gazette, hand-dated, March 11, 1922. Women's exercise file #3, Coulter Collection, Todd-McLean Collection. The University of Texas at Austin.

[25] "Great Oaks From Little Acorns Grow," ***Health & Strength*** 53(May 28, 227.

[26]David P. Willioughby, ***The Super Athletes*** (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1972), 575-576.

[27]Russell, Ivy, "Give Us a Chance, Mr. Lowery!" ***Health & Strength*** 53(May 28, 1932): 631.

[28]H. Harvey Day "Women With The Strength of Strong Men," ***Strength and Health*** 53(April 23, 1932): 487 and Lowry, W.J., "What I Thought of the Lady Lifters," ***Health and Strength*** 53(April 30, 1932): 518.

[29]According to Dr. Al Thomas, women's bodybuilding historian, the set of four photographs of Ivy Russell circulated by Kobel Feature Photos of Frankfort, Indiana, were taken by Scottish photographer Ron Rennie. The four photos show Russell as a fencer, sprinter, lifting a barbell over her head and posed as "The Thinker." The caption sent by Kobel to ***Strength & Health*** identifies her as Britain's "champion all-round woman athlete." Photography tiles, Coulter Collection, Todd-McLean Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

[30]See Jan Todd, "The Mystery of Minerva," ***Iron Game History*** 1(April 1990): 14-17.

[31] The public's fascination with the bosom as a symbol of femininity has influenced the history of women's weight training and bodybuilding. Fears that women would injure their breasts in too-vigorous sports such as basketball and field hockey gave way in strength training to a fear that women would "lose" their breasts by becoming too muscular. Modern women's bodybuilding has been especially caught up in the bosom debate, as most women who possess the muscularity and definition necesssary for bodybuilding competition no longer possess the necessary fat levels to also have "acceptably" large breasts. This has led some modern bodybuilders to surgically augment their breasts with implants, a procedure many consider unethical or, at least, ironic.

[32]***Pearson's Weekly,*** October 9, 1937. cited in Al Thomas, ***The Female Physique Athlete: A History to Date*** (Abs-solutely Publishing Co., 1983). 90. Russell appeared on the cover of ***The National Police Gazette*** 142(September 1, 1934).

[33]Weightlifting historian David Webster of Irvine, Scotland, Dr. Al Thomas and the author have all failed to get Ms. Russell to talk about her lifting career.

[34]"Great oaks," ***Health & Strength.*** 227.

[35]Bob Hoffman, ***Better Athletes Through Weight Training*** (York. Pennsylvania: Strength & Health Publishing Company, 1959). 13.

[36]The American Continental Weightlifting Association was formed in 1917 by David P. Willoughby, Ottley Coulter and George Jowett. The ACWLA kept the first amateur records in competitive weightlifting, sanctioned contests and was brought into the fold of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) in 1926. See David P. Webster, The Iron Game (Irvine, Scotland: John Geddes Publishing, 1976).

[37] Through Strength & Health ceased publication in 1985, its influence on the American weightlifting community ended nearly a decade earlier when bodybuilding impressario Joe Weider made dramatic changes in the format of his muscle publications. most notably the use of elaborate color photography. ***Strength & Health,*** still run by Hoffman, then in his 70's and in poor health, was not up to the competition and lost ground to Weider's publications during the last decade of the magazine's existence. Though layout and color photography played a large role in the shift, ***Strength & Health's*** loss of subscribers also resulted from Hoffman's continued devotion to Olympic weightlifting, a sport in which America had not excelled since the 1950s.

[38]Bob Hoffman, How to Improve Your Sport." ***Strength & Health*** 1(December, 1932): 6-8.

[39]The National Strength and Conditioning Association honored Hoffman for his efforts on behalf of weight training and athletics at their 1987 National Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. For information on the Muscular Christianity movement see Green, ***Fit for*** America, 181-215. Hoffman's patriotism ran so deep that in later years he founded a "Save the United States" movement and hired a Washington lobbyist to get his ideas on exercise and nutrition before Congress.

[40]Information confirming Hoffman's relationship was obtained through personal interviews in June of 1987 with Alda Ketterman Hoffman, of Dover. Pennsylvania, and with John Grimek, former editor of ***Strength & Health*** magazine who began working for Hoffman in the 1930s. Grimek also makes his home in York, Pennsylvania.

[41]Though never formally married, Alda Ketterman Hoffman lived as common-law wife with Bob Hoffman for more than 30 years and inherited the major portion of his assets at the time of his death Hoffman has no known children.

[42] ***Strength & Health*** 2(January 1934):, 11.

[43]Harry Good, "Strength, Health and Beauty for the Ladies," ***Strength & Health.*** 2(March 1934): 8.

[44] Rosetta Hoffman's "Miracle Rejuvenator." was a cable device which allowed for different resistance settings. The advertising copy describes Rosetta as "The Perfect Woman." The ad reads, "Let Rosetta help you become everything a woman should be. Radiantly alive, well, strong, beautifully built, admired by everyone." Orders were sent to York under Rosetta's name. The ad appears on page 6 of the December 1934 issue.

[45] ***Strength & Health*** 3(December 1934): 29.

[46] Professor John Fair of Auburn University at Montgomery recently interviewed Rosetta Hoffman for his history of Bob Hoffman and the York Barbell Club. While Professor Fair reports that he had been led to believe from several sources that Hoffman himself had penned these articles, in the interview, Rosetta claimed to have been the sole author. Fair does corroborates the fact that during the magazine's many years of publication, Bob Hoffman used a variety of pseudonyms. Terry Todd, who served as managing editor of ***Strength & Health*** in the mid-1960s, was told by Bob Hoffman that he had written the articles bearing Rosetta's name.

[47] References to Russell appear in Rosetta's column in ***Strength & Health*** 3(November 1935): 24 and in 4(January 1936): 37.

[48]Rosetta Hoffman, "Physical Training Builds Health, Strength and Beauty for the Ladies," ***Strength & Health*** 4(January 1936):12, 36-38.

[49]Bob Hoffman, "What Happened at the Olympics?" ***Strength & Health*** 4(October 1936):13.

[50]No individual medals for women were given in gymnastics at the 1936 Olympic Games as women's gymnastics was at that time only a team competition. According to Rosetta, Caruccio was the best gymnast there, however, and learned her gymnastics at a *Turnverein* in Alleghany, New York. Rosetta Hoffman, "'Connie' Caruccio: the World's Premier Lady Gymnast," ***Strength & Health*** 4(November 1936): 20, 47-50.

[51]Pudgy Stockton, "Barbells," ***Strength & Health*** 13(August 1944): 11.

[52]Wallechinsky, ***Olympic Games,*** 322.

[53]Rosetta Hoffman, "Betty Robinson: Sprinting Champion," ***Strength & Health*** 5(December 1936): 19, 40-41.

[54]Grimek interview.

[55]Robert L. Jones. "What is Musclebound?" ***Strength & Health*** 6(September 1938): 22-23, 41.

8(May 1940): 23.

[57]Grace Bard, "The Smart Woman Plans Her Meals," ***Strength & Health*** 9(January 1941): 28.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Bob Hoffman, "A Challenger for the Title," ***Strength & Health*** 9(December 1941): 30-31, 36-38.

[60] "Letters From Our Readers," ***Strength & Health*** 9(January 1942): 8

[61]Grimek interview and Bob Hoffman's will, Hoffman file, Todd Papers, Todd-McLean Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

[62] Photo caption, ***Strength & Health*** 18(September 1940): 23.

[63]Vic Tanny, "West Coast Venus," ***Strength & Health*** 9(November 1941): 30-33.

[64]According to Dr. Al Thomas, the two newsreels were made by Universal International in the late 1940s and lasted approximately 10 minutes each. Clips of "Whatta Build," seen by the author, showed Stockton doing a variety of acrobatic stunts with her husband, Les, including holding him over her head in a "hand-to-hand." Todd-McLean film collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

[65]Rivers, featured in"Biceps on the Beach," ***Hit*** (April 1947). could hold a "flag" (body extended horizontally in space while supported only by the hands gripping a pole), was a competitive swimmer and first rate tumbler. Evalynne Smith was Los Angeles al-city diving champion in 1937, 1938 and 1939, and was city 100 meter swimming champion for 1937 and 1938. She began weight training to rehabilitate a childhood leg injury. See: Vic Tanny, "Evalynne Smith: The Blond Bomber", ***Strength & Health*** 10(November 1942): 22-23. and Pudgy Stockton. "Barbelles" ***Strength & Health*** 12(June 1944): 20.

[66]Pudgy Stockton, "Barbelles," ***Strength & Health*** 13(May 1945): 20-21.

[67]Pudgy Stockton, "Barbelles," ***Strength & Health*** 14(May 1946): 21.

[68]Pudgy Stockton, "Barbells," ***Strength & Health*** 18(0ctober 1950): 14.

[69]L. Arnold Pike, "Roeder tops women lifters," ***Strength & Health*** 18(March,1950): 19, 32. Roeder is mentioned again in Pudgy Stockton "Barbells," ***Strength & Health*** 18(May/June 1950): 24-25, 46. Roeder was also featured in a 1950 Fox-Movietone newsreel of the first AAU national weightlifting meet for women.

[70]Marshall Smith, "How Reds 'Mobilized' to Win Olympic 'War', ***"Life*** (July 28, 1952): 16-17. Clipping, Coulter Collection Women's Files, The Todd-McLean Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

[71]Harry McLaughlin, "Barbells Aid Olympic Swimming Aspirants," ***Strength & Health*** 20(May 1952): 26-27, 42.

[72] Information on the use of weights by the Soviets in preparation for the Helsinki Olympics and biographical information on weight trained athletes from the 1950s is contained in Hoffman's ***Better Athletes Through Weight Training.***

[73]Jim Murray, "Canadian Barbelle Glamazon Seeks Olympic Victory," ***Strength & Health*** 23(July 1955): 12-13, 44.

[74]Telephone interview, Cynthia Wyatt Reinhoudt, May 1988.

[75]Ibid. See also, Cynthia Wyatt as told to Tommy Kono, "Cindy Wyatt Wants To Be a Champion," ***Strength & Health*** 30(November, 1962): 28-29, 56, 57, 58.

[76] Kono, "Cynthia Wyatt," ***Strength & Health,*** 28-29.

[77] Wyatt interview.

[78]Bob and Jerri Lee," Weight Training for a Mountain Marathon." ***Strength & Health*** 28(August 1960): 24-25, 45-48.

[79]Zenta Thomas, "Britain's Weight-trained Lady Jumper." ***Strength & Health*** 32(February 1964): 50-52. Dan Levin, "What Makes Audrey Pedal? Tiga muk!" ***Sports Illustrated,*** (November 24, 1969): 68-69. "Bunny from B.C." ***Time.*** (January 20, 1967). Clippings, Willoughby Women's File, Todd-McLean Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.)

The Roark Report

Requiescat in Pace

Alyce Yarick, Bert Goodrich and Bill

Three years ago, Alyce Yarick's husband, Ed, died, and on December 4, 1991, Alyce passed away. Born Alyce Stagg on April 18, 1921, she wrote for ***Muscle Power, Your Physique,*** and ***Strength & Health.*** Ed had owned a gym in Oakland, California since 1939, and after he married Alyce, they remained together in the gym business, though they changed locations, until 1978.

Alyce, as Alyce Yarick, began writing a women's column for the ***Reg Park Journal*** in January 1954, and a women's column for ***Iron Man*** that same month; the former column ran until September 1955, the latter until March 1958. In 1946 Alyce was reported to have squatted 100 reps with 100 pounds, a report which caused much skepticism, but seven years later, on April 11, 1953 (about a month before her son Bart was conceived), at one of the famous Yarick strength shows, she surprised the audience and silenced the critics by placing her heels on a two-by-four, placing a barbell of 105 pounds on her upper back and, as husband Ed counted, knocking out 105 repetitions!

Iron Man, in a September, 1954 story, showed Alyce demonstrating the exercises she used during her pregnancy; the story includes seven photos of her using some hefty weights. Alyce (and Pudgy Stockton) had been warned that lifting weights could thwart pregnancy, but Pudgy and Alyce paid no heed; each had healthy offspring. (Alyce's son Bart was born February 1, 1954.)

According to Bart, Alyce ceased lifting weights in the mid-1960s, but she would walk for exercise, in later years accompanied by her pet dogs, along the canal banks of Modesto, California. She was suspicious of some of the performances of more recent barbelles, and she did not believe that the current crop of female bodybuilders could have attained the degree of muscularity often seen on the dais these days without the help of chemicals. This made her sad. When Alyce Yarick died, we lost a great "natural" strength athlete and pioneer.

Bert Goodrich was born on December 26, 1906, and he died December 6, 1991. Bert is best known in bodybuilding history as the first man to win the title, Mr. America. The stimulus for his entry into bodybuilding competition can be traced to Al Urban, who on Saturday, evening, April 22, 1939, was present at a bent press competition which was staged by Sieg Klein. Urban, a noted photographer of bodies, noticed how well-developed Bert Goodrich was, and urged him to enter the Bronx Young Men's Hebrew Association Best Built Man contest, which was to take place the following evening.

Bert agreed, but when the contest was about to begin, Al noticed that Bert was not prepared. Bert explained that he had changed his mind and would not be competing, but Al again talked Bert into competing, borrowed some posing trunks for him and in the dressing room quickly showed him some poses. **[Ed. note: We got word a few days ago that Al Urban died; details will appear in next *IGH.]*** The Y.M.H.A. contest drew 55 competitors. Bert won Class C, which was 5'11" and taller, and he won the overall title. Quite a night for a man who had originally only intended to put on a display of handbalancing. So, in 1939, Bert was the best built man in New York City. He now had seven weeks to train for the Mr. America contest...

On Saturday, June 10, 1939, in Amsterdam, New York, Bert was ready, having decided after the New York show to "increase the extent of his exercising so that he would attain the maximum state of physical perfection possible..." During his standard three minute posing routine (one minute each for front, back, and optional poses), Bert showed enough muscle and proportion to impress the judges and win the title, Mr. America. Bob Hoffman, in a report on the show, referred to Bert as, "easily the class of this division," meaning the 5'11" category. In the years that followed, Bert demonstrated that he was classy in many aspects of life.

Bert was a movie stuntman, and it was his body doing the jumping, swinging on "jungle vines", falling, crashing and suffering, when the audience collectively assumed that the star of whichever movie they were watching was in fact performing all those acrobatics. Through the years, Bert was a stuntman for Joe Bonomo (himself a famous stuntman earlier in his career), Buster Crabbe, Charles Starret, Victor McLaglen, Ken Maynard, John Wayne, Red Grange, George Brent, Jack Mulhall, and many others.

During 1938, Bert was a senior at Arizona State Teacher's College, and during some of that year he lifted weights in the Los Angles gym of David Willoughby. Bert wrote a letter-to-the-editor in ***Strength*** & ***Health*** magazine in February 1940 informing us that he was appearing at the Chicago Theater with Dick Powell and doing five shows per day (performing the act he had perfected: handbalancing with a partner). ***Your Physique,*** in November, 1946, profiled Goodrich at his health studio at 6624 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, California. He had built the gym business and later owned six more gyms, which he sold in 1956 to American Health & Silhouette.

Bert's gym experience, plus his three years as head of the Naval Air Station in San Diego's gym during World War II, helped get him the position of Director of Physical Training for the North American Aviation Company in Canoga Park, California. Earlier, in 1948, Bert and Vic Tanny had joined talents to begin the Mr. and Miss USA Physique and Beauty contest. He also helped Mae West gather musclemen for her nightclub shows; and he arranged for Steve Reeves and Richard Dubois to be cast for the film *Athena*, for MGM.

Bert is survived by his wife Norma, his daughter Lucinda, his son Bert Jr. and two grandchildren.

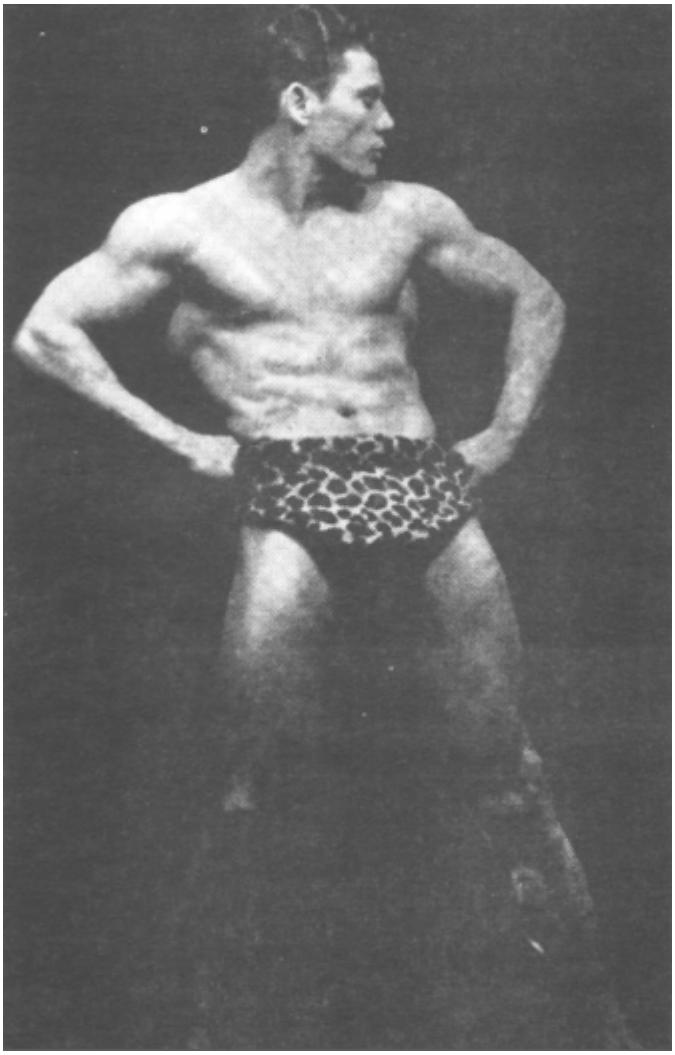


Photo by Al Urban

[Editor's note: In March, 1992, we learned that Bill Reynolds, a longtime writer and editor for Joe Weider's magazines and the current editor of *Flex*, had been found dead in his apartment, less than a week after he covered the Arnold Classic in Dayton, Ohio. Bill has been a friend for many years and he helped us in many ways with *Iron Game History*. He usually called or wrote after receiving his copy, and he gave us a boost by mentioning the journal in *Flex* and by sending us $100 of his own money and becoming a Patron. A somewhat melancholy man, Bill was only 46, and even though he didn't take care of himself as well as he might've, we were shocked and saddened to learn that his prolific life had ended. Joe Roark shared some of Bill's letters with us, and we thought that by sharing them with you, Bill's essential nature and some of his contributions to the game would be better understood.]

June 8, 1984

Dear Joe,

Thanks for your letter and the information on Tom Platz's articles. Incidently, the book we have just finished will be called ***Pro-Style Bodybuilding*** by Tom Platz, with Bill Reynolds. It will be published by Sterling, which published both of Bob Kennedy's books. I think they said it would be out next February. Takes quite a bit of time to get them out in book form, versus a magazine (that still take us three months, though). Counting all of the ***M&F*** anthologies, which I personally edited, I now have 28 books out. The 29th will be ***Flex Appeal by Rachel*** with Rachel McLish in two or three weeks.

Getting back to my pen names, I've come up with four more. I used the name Gordon Coleman on at least an interview of Arnold Schwarzenegger in one of Bob Kennedy's annuals. Gordy Coleman was a first baseman for the Cincinnati Reds back in the early 1960s, and he was my favorite player. I used Juha Kekkonen on one or two articles with Andreas Cahling in them. Kekkonen had been the prime minister of Finland for 30 years, and Juha Vatainen had been European Champion in the 10,000 meter run one year, so I blended those two names together to form one with a Scandanavian flavor.

Then there was Sergei Shtangov, which I used on a Laura Combes arm training article in ***Iron Man.*** The Shtangov is kind of interesting, because the word "shtangov" means barbell in Russian. So, Shtangov would mean "Mr. Barbell." However, I doubt that more than a handful of people could pick up on the joke there, only the ones really fluent in Russian. And, I've used Arturo Valenzuela on one or two (or at least on photos — and will on an article on George Pessell — Mr. LA, that I'm getting together). The is the first Hispanic first name I could come up with that sounded good with the Valenzuela.

July 8, 1985

Dear Joe,

For the record, I was born on September 3, 1945, which means that I'm hitting the big 4-0 in less than two months. I was born at the Bremerton, Washington Naval Hospital one day after the armistice was signed with the Japanese in Tokyo Bay.

You can see that you'll get faked out a lot when it comes to cataloguing some of the bylines. One of these days when I don't have anything better to do. I'll haul out all of my old mags and give you a complete list!

July 16, 1985

Dear Joe,

Just have time for a quick answer to your questions of July 11. My first day on the job here was April, 1978, although I had written a couple of articles for Joe earlier (I think one was a profile of Kal Szkalak and the other a flash report of the 1976 Mr. America competition). Then for the next couple of years he wanted me to work for him, but I was committed to finish my Ph.D. at U.C. Berkeley, so I didn't come to work for him until about two years after he started courting me.

I don't know much about Joe's old mags from the 1950s except that he said they all folded when his distributor went south with his money. Also they still have a lot of the paintings that were used for covers of the men's adventure magazine(s) hanging on the walls here.

I saw Leo Robert up in Montreal at the women's Olympia last year (also Tony Lanza and Ed Theriault). Leo looked positively great and said he was in good shape. You could see the abs still really deep through his shirt when he pressed down on the cloth. Didn't ask him about his sister, however.

February 17, 1986

Dear Joe,

I'll be in Columbus. Just ask around for me. Right now it looks like I'll be busy at the first of the year—Arnold's show, the California Pro Grand Prix a couple weeks later, the European Championships in Warsaw, Poland at the end of April, then the Women's Pro World Championships.

Read your newsletter with some amusement as to arm measurements. I used to make my pilgrimage down to the old Gold's Gym each summer during the early 1970s and Arnold had by far the largest arm I ever saw, although Robby Robinson at his best undoubtedly had a proportionately larger arm measurement. Oliva's arms always impressed me when they were hanging at his sides or held straight overhead or straight out to the sides, but when he flexed them they were much less impressive. Frank Zane's arms were what I'd call deceptively good. They were never that large (probably in the 17-inch range), but in certain positions, such as arms overhead and slightly bent, I've never seen a more impressive arm than his. And the proportions, shape, etc. were terrific. To conclude, I think personally that the worst arm development I've ever seen on a top guy was Franco Columbu's. Even when he won the Olympia a second time in 1981, (and did at least 50% of his routine with flexed arm poses), he still had a long gap between the elbow and the start of his biceps, and the peak was nothing very impressive. And even though I've seen him bench close to 500 in a *bodybuilding* workout (weighing, I'd think, about 185-190), his triceps weren't even that impressive. Only his forearms reached what I'd call "average" development for a superstar. Anyway, it's impossible to publish this type of stuff, because everyone is so sensitive about what you say about them. But it's still fun to talk about it, and that's to this day the kind of thing that most interests me in the sport—guys like John Balik and me (we used to compete against each other) sitting around and discussing very dispassionately the relative merits of every guy in an Olympia or World Championships or Nationals.

June 12, 1987

Dear Joe,

Thanks for sending me your June-July issue. I enjoyed reading it. I actually thought I had put out exactly 100 issues of ***M&F,*** but won't quibble with the 95 figure.

You're quite right that I had grown more than casually disenchanted with the direction ***M&F*** had been taking, because I'm a hardcore bodybuilder through and through. So at the beginning of March Joe offered me a chance to edit ***Flex*** as soon as he was sure Rick Wayne had given up on it. In the meantime, he offered me my then current salary to write 5-6 articles per month for ***M&F.***

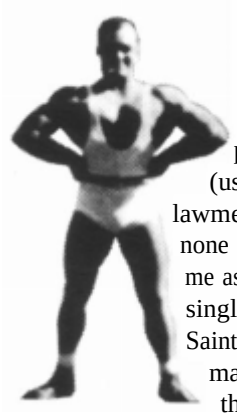
Ricky had left at the beginning of March (with Mae Mollica) to resume publicaion of his ***Caribbean Star*** weekly newspaper in St. Lucia, but he had left the door open to come back in three months if the newspaper wasn't working out. Well it was, and at the beginning of June when I returned from the Pro World Championships in Germany, I began putting together my first issue of ***Flex,*** October. I'll be listed from there on out as Editor-In-Chief, and as you might imagine, I'm planning to make beaucoup changes.

To this day, I feel that the best muscle magazine of all time was the old ***Muscle Builder*** & Power from the middle 1970s. I'm after that sort of feel, except that I intend to use a large number of people—amateurs and pros both—rather than the

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Police Chief Joe Peters: Lawman as Strongman

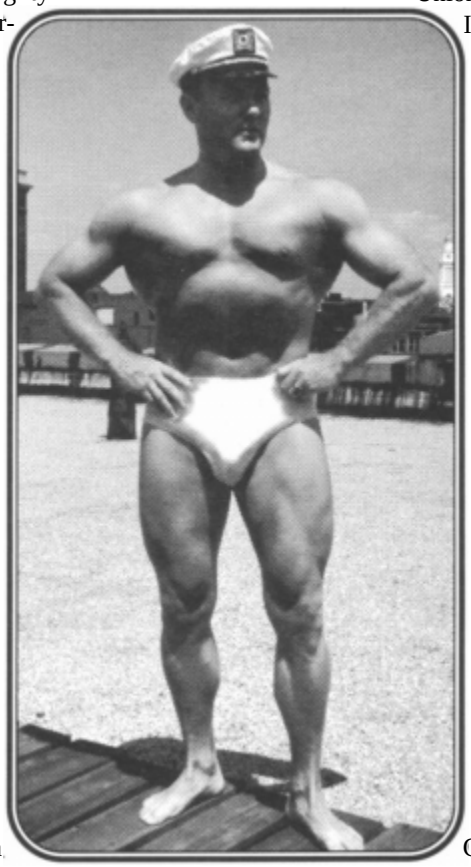
by Al Thomas, Ph. D. *Kutztown University*



As a boy who dreamed of kicking some retributive sand into malefactors' faces along the beaches of my personal underworld, I used to thrill when (using only their might and main) real, live lawmen brought down evil-doers. For instance, none of Louis Cyr's great strength feats moved me as much as the legendary stories as to how he single-handedly cleaned up Montreal's tough Sainte-Cunigonde District during his service as a magistrate in that city's police department. I thought it was grand when he collared one bad egg and then grabbed another in his mighty paw, using the two combined heads as battering rams against their whole thuggish rout of trouble-making accomplices. **[Ed. Note: These stories about Cyr apparently were fabricated by George F. Jowett. See *IGH*, Volume One, Number Two]**

Moving from legend to reality, the same boy would have resonated to the following (July, 1943) ***True Detective Magazine*** story about a (far from humdrum) reality that is, even today, almost as exciting as the aforementioned account from the canon of Cyrian legend-myth: "A riot call had come into the Schenectady, New York, Police Headquarters. A score of men in a tough section of the city were reported to be battling one another with an assortment of murderous weapons such as tire irons, crowbars, and Stillson wrenches. It began to look as though property along the entire block might be wrecked.

"A matter of minutes later, a single police prowl car arrived at the scene. Out of it stepped a brawny, broad-shouldered, though mild-looking young patrolman. His blue eyes surveyed the action calmly through rimless glasses. Even before he had spoken a word, the bloody and embattled rioters, to a man, threw down their weapons and meekly surrendered. 'Aw, they were tired, anyway,' modestly admitted the young patrolman. But that's not how his fellow officers, nor any other resident of Schenectady, would explain the phenomenon. In their estimation, the rioters were scared silly, for the young patrolman was Joe Peters, Jr., strongest cop on the force—or anywhere in the world for that matter. Capable of Gargantuan and almost unbelievable feats of strength, Patrolman Peters, at twenty-six, has the reputation of being a 'one man gang'. . . . There was the time a 215-pound buddy of his was badly burned in a machine shop accident. Rescuers who brought him home couldn't get him up a long, narrow flight of stairs, and put in a call for Joe Peters. Joe picked the injured man up in his arms like a baby and walked upstairs with him."[1]



Page 18 The photo at the top of the page shows Joe Peters at 22. The photo above was taken 30 years later.

Clearly, Joseph A. Peters, Jr., was quite a man, and today, half a century later at seventy-five, he still is. The son of a Schenectady (N.Y.) Chief of Police—Joe, junior, our subject, also went on to become that city's Chief of Police, retiring after a distinguished career of 42 years in law enforcement. Chief Peters (Joe to the weightlifting fraternity) is a graduate of the FBI National Police Academy in Washington, D.C. and Quantico, Virginia, and attended the National Resources Conference at Union College for the academic year 1953-1954. In 1959, he was appointed a fingerprint consultant by Paul D.McCann, Director of the New York State Department of Correction, and in 1964, attended the National Institute on Police and Community Relations at Michigan State University, along with countless seminars and workshops on police organization and management. In addition, he contributed articles to various publications, including national and international health magazines, and he wrote a groundbreaking study on the value of physical fitness for police in ***The FBI Enforcement Bulletin*** (Vol. 33, No. 9, Sept., 1964). He has lectured at many police conferences under the auspices of the FBI and also at Police Training Schools throughout the Northeast. In addition to his law enforcement service, Joe has been extraordinarily active in all manner of community service, the listing of his chairmanships of various agencies and funds being enough to cover half a page in his biography. He was also Chairman of the Adirondack District of the A.A.U. in Weightlifting for 25 years and staged the Eastern States Weightlifting Championships and Mr. Atlantic Coast Physique Contest for 22 years. Granted all his muscle and strength—your typical "muscle-head" or lifter, Joe Peters is not.

Under the tutelage of his weightlifting father, Joe started-in with the York Barbell courses of training in February of 1934. Accompanied by his father he took his first trip to York "to see the Champions" in 1937: "My most memorable moment in the game was when I first traveled down to York in the spring of 1937 and met Bob Hoffman and all the York national champions."[2] This visit is nostalgically recounted by Harry Paschall in the May, 1957, ***Strength & Health:*** "Ever wonder what happens to

Strength and Health Boys Club members when they grow up? . . . Captain Joe Peters was one of the original ***Strength and Health*** boys 25 years ago; he became one of the strongest and best-built men in the country during the late 1930s and early 1940s, and today his own boy [Joseph A. Peters, III] is a Boys Club member and Captain Joe is still a perfect physical specimen and this month's Cover Man."[3] It is clear that the first Chief Peters trained-up his son well, whose Iron Game heroes were those of just about any boy who entered the Game in the early 30s: John Grimek, Eugene Sandow, and George Hackenschmidt.

Joe and his wife of 51 years, Bernice, have five children and twelve grandchildren. "I am currently using the 'Rotation for Recuperation' system of training. I repeat the Monday workout on Friday and the Wednesday workout the following Monday. This type of training program keeps me from over-training and from becoming bored, yet it keeps me strong and healthy and is a big help in slowing down the aging process. I also follow a good mixed diet, plus supplements." When asked about the modern game, Joe replied, "The reasons for the decline in American lifting are many, but the first and foremost reason is that we need another leader like Bob Hoffman. My opinion of the modern bodybuilding scene is that it is false because of the part played by steroids in the development achieved by the current bodybuilders."[4]

Joe's competitive bodybuilding career dates back to 1938, when he took best chest honors at the Eastern States Championships; he won the same sub-division at the first Mr. America Contest, in 1939, in which he was also a finalist (the contest being won by Bert Goodrich). As strong as he was muscular, Joe set the national record in the "two arm hold-out in front, raised from below," in 1939, with 93 l/2 pounds, the previous record being 80 pounds; he has done 105, unofficially. In 1945, he pressed 260 pounds, equaling the New York State record of Frank Lisarelli. He did a straight-arm stiff-arm pullover with 110 pounds for ten reps and did three reps in the two-arm barbell curl with 185 pounds. In 1944, he cleaned and pressed two 102-pound dumbells together overhead for five reps, and five years later, he did a one-arm military press of 131 pounds, after only five weeks of training in this lift.[5]

Joe also had an impressive 15-year career as a performing strongman. As part of his exhibition, he bent a 6 l/2 inch spike in half. Tore a New York City phone book and a deck of cards in half. Cleaned and pressed a 180-pound man overhead. Juggled a 150-pound New York Olympic barbell, and after catching the barbell at arm's length overhead with the right hand, he did a "lie down and get up," holding the barbell at arm's length on a straight arm. ("I performed this as follows: With two hands I would flip snatch the bar to arms' length, then drop it to the crook of the arms. Then from the crook of the arms, I would throw the barbell overhead and catch it in the right hand on a stiff arm. While holding the bar at arm's length in the right hand, I would then do a 'lie down' to a flat-on-my-back position and then get up while holding this weight on a stiff arm,")[6]

Either in stories or photos, or both, Joe has appeared in ***Strength & Health, Physical Culture, Your Physique,*** and ***Muscle Power*** magazines. He appeared in ***Strength & Health:*** December, 1934. February, 1939. January, 1945. February, 1946, (a cover). April, 1948. June and July, 1948. May, 1957 (a cover). February, 1964. March, 1972. He also had a photo (1940) and a cover (1946) in ***Physical Culture.*** In 1947, he had Lon portraits in both ***Muscle Power*** and ***Your Physique.*** Textual commentary **about** Joe, as well as photo coverage, appears in Bob Hoffman's books ***The Big Chest Book*** and ***Broad Shoulders.*** Joe has worked as an artist's model for several outstanding artists, having posed for Matt Smith and Walter L. Greene, among others, and has also posed for sculpture and art classes at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs (N.Y.)[7]

The claim was often made for Joe that he had America's (some said the world's) greatest differential between the girths of his chest and waist. (His normal chest was said to be 53 inches; expanded, 55 inches. His waist was 31 l/2". Such claims, of course, are impossible to authenticate, but it would have seemed outrageous to me a boy—back when I first saw the "big Captain" in the mid-40's—and hardly less so to me now, as an "older gent", to have entertained any serious dispute as to the validity of this claim. This guy had, and still has, one huge chest; forget arguments about inches. As a young teenager, I remember arriving at a York function after a long hitch-hike and seeing my first Iron Game celebrity of the day, the big Captain: a barrel of a man in a snap-brimmed Dick Tracy hat, looking as big to my young boy's eyes as anybody five-ten had ever managed to look.

Embodied as it was that morning in Joe Peters, the LAW—abstract and shadowy as it so often seems—seemed about as abstract and shadowy as an oak tree, and I couldn't help thinking that, with policemen like this around, it must have been a heck of a lot easier (and in their very best self-interest) for "Schenectadians" to be law-abiding than it was for most of us miscreants, who didn't have such formidable reminders of the inadvisability of naughtiness, much less honest-to-goodness felonies.

As the passing decades have demonstrated, Joe Peters has proved himself as big and strong in the worlds of family and law enforcement and community service as he ever was in hoisting barbells and bending spikes. Our Game hasn't had a better friend or model for its youth than the Big Chief from Schenectady.

[1]"One Man Gang", ***True Detective*** (July, 1943): 12.

[2]Letter by Joe Peters to Al Thomas. n.d.

[3]Harry Paschall, "Captain Joseph A. Peters, Jr., ***Strength and Health*** (May. 1957): 12-13.

[4]Letter by Joe Peters to Al Thomas, n.d.

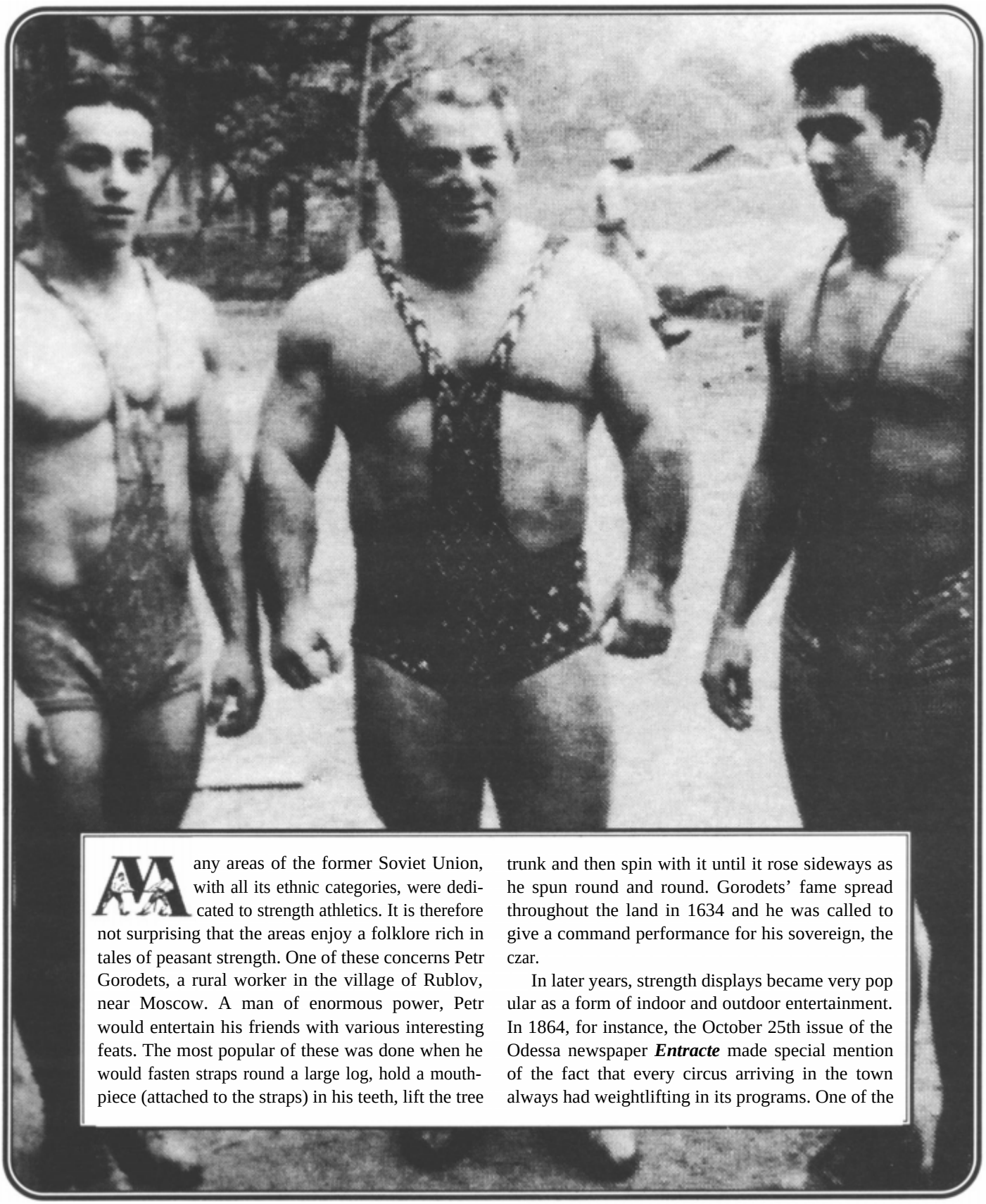
[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

European Corner: Grigori Novak

by David Webster



Many areas of the former Soviet Union, with all its ethnic categories, were dedicated to strength athletics. It is therefore not surprising that the areas enjoy a folklore rich in tales of peasant strength. One of these concerns Petr Gorodets, a rural worker in the village of Rublov, near Moscow. A man of enormous power, Petr would entertain his friends with various interesting feats. The most popular of these was done when he would fasten straps round a large log, hold a mouthpiece (attached to the straps) in his teeth, lift the tree trunk and then spin with it until it rose sideways as he spun round and round. Gorodets' fame spread throughout the land in 1634 and he was called to give a command performance for his sovereign, the czar.

In later years, strength displays became very pop ular as a form of indoor and outdoor entertainment. In 1864, for instance, the October 25th issue of the Odessa newspaper ***Entracte*** made special mention of the fact that every circus arriving in the town always had weightlifting in its programs. One of the

most popular performers in the 1880s was a very tall, handsome and superbly built 320 pound strongman, Pavel Stupin. He appeared in authentic peasant costume and carried a horse on his shoulders, juggled with weights and broke chains. In another part of the program he wrestled a bear, as animals were prominent at that time amongst itinerant entertainers. After an excellent display of raw strength, Stupin brought his act to a finale with spectacular acrobatics, showing that even huge strongmen can be very agile. (Two of the biggest modern strength athletes—Tom McGhee at 6'5", 287 pounds and Paul Ferency at 6'6" and 300 pounds—can do back somersaults). The last notice of Pavel Stupin was in 1912 when he was a poor old man in Odessa and a charity show was held for his benefit.

The USSR's successes in weightlifting, wrestling, gymnastics, shot, hammer and discus, shows clearly that their constituent republics had a tremendous depth of talent in strength athletics. The Soviet Union had several competitors recognized as the world's strongest men of their time: Vlasov, Zhabotinski, Alexeev and Pisarenko. These men were all Olympic specialists outside the world of professional entertainment, although some Olympians have made the transition to the circus ring and variety stage with a good degree of success. None made the transition so effectively as the subject of this issue's article—Grigori Novak.

Without question, the most famous of all the Soviet champion weightlifters to turn professional was the short, chunky Novak. A true son of the soil, he was born in Kiev on March 5, 1919. Although he was only a mere 5'3" tall when fully grown, he was hailed as the Ukrainian Hercules.

At the age of 16 he was a talented gymnast and was employed as a circus acrobat when a man named Konkin, a weightlifting coach, saw the young man and was so impressed with what he saw that he visited Novak in his dressing room to attempt to persuade the young acrobat to try weightlifting. The resulting trial was so encouraging that Grigori was keen to begin competition immediately. There was, however, a rule requiring a minimum age of 18, so the very enthusiastic, and very impatient, lad lied about his age in order to gain competitive experience. Young Novak won event after event and it took him just three years to gain his first national record, but his excellent progress was halted by World War II. For a short while, Grigori had been a meat salesman, but in 1941 when the Germans invaded he was drafted into the Red Army and became a Physical Training Instructor, training mountain troops; he served three and a half years on the appalling Russian Front.

Novak resumed intensive training immediately after the war and shot to fame in 1945 when he beat the record total held by Louis Hostin of France. A year later he was the outstanding lifter of the World Championships in Paris, where he won the world title at light- heavyweight, pressing 308 pounds, snatching 286 pounds and clean and jerking 341 pounds. In this very first international appearance he started higher in the press than the world record held by Khadr El Touni of Egypt, setting the weightlifting world alight with this unprecedented lifting at light-heavy. The young Ukrainian's stocky appearance and dour personality seemed very much in keeping with the then current image of Soviet lifters, and he spearheaded the Russian onslaught upon strength sports world wide. For several years records in abundance fell before this fiery athlete, particularly in the press.

During his amateur career Novak broke 111 Soviet records and 62 world records, making him the first great star of post war years. I remember well that at that time of his career he was something of a rebel in the well-disciplined Soviet team, and on visiting the USSR some years later and asking about Grigori I was told that he was a little too fond of celebrating with vodka. In any case, he married and settled down in 1947 and continued his winning ways in the sport until in 1952. But just before the Helsinki Olympics, he suffered a bad thigh injury and developed forearm and elbow problems which required surgery. He still elected to lift in the Olympic Games, and with only one press, one snatch and one clean and jerk he won the silver medal. His injuries were so serious, however, that they ended his amateur career.

In 1953 he re-appeared as a professional circus strongman, a new way for him to capitalize on his remarkable physique and fiery temperament. Weighing over 180 pounds, yet barely over five feet in height, Novak looked very impressive, with massive legs, prominent deltoids and even chiseled abdominals. As a competitor he had had jet-black hair, often awry, but now he was graying and very well groomed. Audiences expected him to lift barbells and he did, supporting these and also human weights at the same time. The feat which the Russian lifters liked best, and related to me with great gusto, involved Novak lifting huge spherical weights overhead, replacing them gently on the floor, and then opening the globes to allow countless little dogs to jump out and scamper, barking, from the ring.

To enhance his already popular act, Grigori introduced his sons into the business, and soon Arkady and Roman accompanied him in all his presentations. The act was further developed to include Novak's daughters-in-law, and some spectacular weight juggling and balancing were featured.

In one feat Novak supported a platform and two cyclists plus one of his sons who lifted huge globe weights which also held the two pretty girls. General audiences were also very appreciative of a feat in which Novak lay on his back, lifted one heavy barbell on his feet and another in his hands and then, having milked the applause for this, called Roman and Arcady to come forward and hand-balance on top of the two barbells. The Novaks had a very varied act with lifting, balancing and weight juggling, but it was also a thrilling performance because of the danger element in building up human columns and tableaux.

The great Grigori Novak's weight increased with his age and he approached 200 pounds in bodyweight, which was too much for his height. In his prime, however, he was the best in the world for his weight, and he had a good run for many years as a professional strongman, although he died rather prematurely on the tenth of July, 1980.

Dear IGH,

Thank you so much for the *wonderful* article about Peary in ***Iron Game History*** and for the extra copies you sent.

We would also like to thank all those who wrote such kind and thoughtful sympathy cards and letters and made the calls we received after Peary's death They all mean a great deal to us.

Mabel Rader & Family
Alliance, Nebraska

Dear IGH,

Today I received my first issue of your journal. To say I was overwhelmed would be an understatement; it's a marvellous publication. The articles were all very, very interesting, just the kind of material I had hoped it would be!

The story on Peary Rader was very touching; he was a great man, and has had an influence on my thinking and, of course, training. Being a collector in the physical culture field, I'm absolutely thrilled.

Through this publication I can, in some way, feel that I'm a part of a fraternity of real barbell men and women sharing this interest.

Once again, my best compliments to you all!!

Ulf Salvin
Kristianstad, Sweden

P.S. I may have some information for Mr. Roark regarding his backlift article, I will go through my files...

Dear IGH,

Your readers may be interested to hear that on March 21st, the anniversary of his passing, the late lamented Oscar Heidenstam Memorial Trust First Annual Dinner and Hall of Fame Awards took place. A sellout event..Guests were welcomed with a drink to begin a meeting of old and new friends. The dinner began, punctuated by speeches praising the guests of honour, Celeste Dandeker and Tracey Moore from the U.K. (Ballet), but the top spot went to Angela and John C. Grimek.

John spoke as only the muscle monarch can, giving first-hand accounts of legendary muscle matches including earlier Mr. America events and the historic 1948 Mr. Universe competition. He later gave me personally a rare insight and odyssey through the golden ages of strength from Bernarr Macfadden, Liederman, Jowett, Atlas and Klein to today's "stars" of muscle and screen...all of whom, I believe, are in Grimek's debt for his fine example of devotion and determination in bodybuilding and strength.

Guests were many, including friends from the U.S.A. such as Russ Warner and Dr. Ken Rosa. Also present were Dave Prowse of Darth Vader fame, and former British weightlifting Olympic coach Al Murray.

It was a fine tribute to the iron game.

David F. Gentle
Hants, England

Dear IGH,

Just a note to commend you on your moving eulogy on Peary Rader. It far surpassed that found in any other publication. It is indicative of just how much of Peary's legacy lies with you and ***Iron Game History.*** Others will attempt to write about him but then hypocritically go right on about their business of putting the making of money as their number one priority; and they will attempt to do this with commercialism and even misrepresentation rather than the one thing that Peary represented and that is the TRUTH. He and ***Iron Man*** were a single oasis in a desert of market share competition.

He truly was unique in his love of the sport and the personal sacrifices he and Mabel made in their efforts to improve all three aspects of the iron game: bodybuilding, Olympic lifting and powerlifting.

Congratulations on both your efforts to keep what Peary represented alive and flourishing. It has certainly been a pleasure for me to support your efforts in publishing ***Iron Game History.*** I firmly believe you remain a last ditch effort to save and recognize the "roots" of the Iron Game. I also firmly believe that these roots deserve a lot more attention than they are getting. Consequently, I would like to ask both your opinions on several points.

I don't want to bore you with personal bio but I believe my credibility will perhaps be enhanced if you're aware of my background. I grew up with the Iron Game beginning in 1958 as a 14 year old who devoured every health, fitness and weightlifting magazine I could get my hands on. In college, I befriended and trained with Olympic hopeful, Barry Whitcomb. As a result of his urging, and after graduating from college, I took a delay in entering the Air Force to move to York to train. Ironically, in that summer of 1966, John Terlazzo told me to go the York "Y" to train. After riding on Barry's coattails for a few Saturday workouts at the famed York Barbell Club, I entered the Air Force where I took full advantage of my ability to travel and I visited Mabel and Peary Rader at their Black Hills Ave. home in Alliance; I trained at Bill Pearl's Pasadena Health Club (still "the" ulti-

mate model for a health club), the Duncan "Y" in Chicago, Timmy Leong's in Honolulu, Vince Gironda's in North Hollywood, Joe Gold's original gym on Pacific Highway in Venice, and I viewed the 1968 Olympic trials at York where Barry introduced me to George Pickett. As a result of movies taken from the second row at the first two Mr. Olympias I met Larry Scott in Utah and befriended Chuck Sipes in California. I viewed the Women's World Powerlifting Championships at the University of Lowell in Massachusetts where I saw Jan set that 535 pound record squat. Lastly, I viewed the 1980 Mr. Olympia in Sydney where Arnold came out of the woodwork.

The knowledge gleaned from those personal contacts over the years far outweighed anything I read or have read in the publications; and it is that disparity that continues through to today that prompts me to write to ask your opinions on what direction the Iron Game is presently headed. When I read about a "strength coach" for a professional team, I wonder how familiar he is with a power rack, partial movements and the Overload Theory behind the power rack.

When I attend an exercise equipment trade show and ask what research has been performed to justify the claims they make, the response is summed up by the following response to the question "What is your background and how did you design the CAM on your machines that you claim is the best in the industry?": "I am a former CPA who liked to work out and I bought the company. I plotted the isometric strength level at seven points through the range of motion on twelve men I worked out with." I question the validity of drawing such conclusions from such a limited sampling. The list goes on and on but I hope I've made my point that the entire fitness industry is inundated with commercialism and hype while experiencing a severe dearth of legitimate, tried and proven exercise research.

I honestly believe there is more well-founded advice in Bob Hoffman's original York Barbell Course than in 90% of what's published today. I have visited Dr. Kenneth Cooper at his Aerobics Research Center in Dallas and I see him as one of the few "gurus" speaking from a position of knowledge because what he professes is tried and proven. Clarence Bass, whom I visited in his home in Albuquerque, is another source I consider legitimate because he has likewise personally tried and proven anything he advocates. Cooper uses a sampling, of course, while Bass uses only himself, yet both of these resources are "legit".

I'm not sure how much of what I'm relating to you is germane to what you're endeavoring to accomplish with the Todd-McLean Collection but I would be most interested in hearing any comments you have regarding the commercialization of the present Iron Game and the apparent lack of awareness of the true roots to training. The general public appears to be in a continual search for a "new" program or device that will give them "instant" success with little or no effort. Change for the sake of change rather than change for a better system seems to be the primary motivation.

J. Norman Komich
Beverly, Mass

We both admit to experiencing a mixture of sadness and amusement when we attend sporting goods trade shows or drop in on a health club where we're not known. The information and advice we overhear or solicit is often so strikingly incorrect that we have a hard time not grabbing the speaker by the lapels and giving him, or her, a good shake followed by a lecture. But we almost always just nod and move on, having come to the realization that we should use what energy we have to spread what we've learned about physical culture through the pages of ***Iron Game History.*** *We would add, however, that although much of what passes for research these days is either done for commercial reasons or conducted by people with so little practical background that they don't know which questions to ask or how to correctly interpret their own results, there is probably more solid scientific work being done in the field of strength training these days than ever before. Publications such as the* ***National Strength and Conditioning Association Journal*** *contain lots of information which either confirms something experienced iron gamers already knew or answers long-debated questions. The advantage those of us have who've been around awhile is that we have the background to separate the good from the bad. To condemn everything new and cling stubbornly to everything old seems to us a mistake, as no one has a corner on the absolute truth where exercise is concerned. Nor should we forget that the pages of some of the most popular magazines from the past contained commercially biased and incorrect information which would rival anything seen today. The problem is that there's so very much more of it today because of the explosive growth of the fitness industry. We agree with your general conclusions and concerns, but perhaps we'll have to content ourselves with the knowledge that our age and experience allow us to be discerning about what we see and hear and, by sharing what we've learned, to help those who'll listen.*