



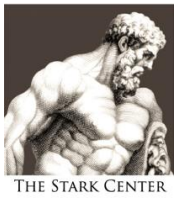
THE STARK CENTER

The H.J. Lucher Stark Center for Physical Culture and Sports
The University of Texas at Austin

Harry Johnson Jr. Collection
1927-2011, undated

Abstract

Harry Lionel Johnson Jr. was a famous strongman and bodybuilder who was named Mr. America in 1959 and Masters Mr. America in 1966. Materials include personal and business papers, photographs, books, and magazines.



SUMMARY INFORMATION

Size of Collection:	3 boxes [2.5 cubic feet]
Creator:	Fair, John D.
Acquisition Info:	Gift of John D. Fair, January 2016.
Accruals:	No accruals are expected.
Language(s):	English.
Processed By:	Geoff Schmalz, November 2024. Revised and encoded, Caroline De La Cerda, December 2024.
Conservation Notes:	No conservation treatment was performed.

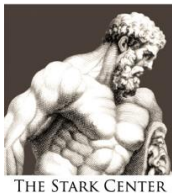
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INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Preferred Citation

Harry Johnson Jr. Collection, The H.J. Lutcher Stark Center for Physical Culture and Sports, The University of Texas at Austin.

Separated Material

No materials have been separated from the collection.

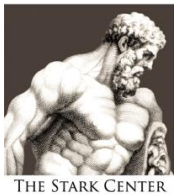
Publication Note

Materials may be referenced in *Mr. America: The Tragic History of a Bodybuilding Icon*, part of the Terry and Jan Todd Series on Physical Culture and Sports, written by John D. Fair (2015).

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Harry Lionel Johnson Junior was born on November 26, 1923, in Atlanta, Georgia. He grew up in Atlanta and attended the city's Tech High School. While at Tech High, Johnson participated on the school's boxing, wrestling, and football teams and coached the weightlifting team while still a student. He created his own diet and exercise regimen as a teenager. He graduated from high school in 1945 at 21 years old, after serving in World War II, and became interested in strongman feats and bodybuilding.

After high school he began working as a Tool Dispatcher for the Lockheed (now the Lockheed-Martin) Aircraft Corporation and wrote articles for two of the most popular bodybuilding magazines at the time, Peary Rader's *Iron Man* and Bob Hoffman's *Strength and Health*.



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Johnson won the title of Mr. America in 1959, and he was featured in the stage show of famous actress Mae West. He was also on the cover of many health and fitness magazines. After Lockheed, Johnson ran a gymnasium for many years and won the title of Masters Mr. America in 1966. In 1975, his image was featured on the cover of the Led Zeppelin album *Physical Graffiti*. Johnson passed away on April 30, 2020, in Dawsonville, Georgia, at the age of 96.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection includes books, clippings, magazines, newsletters, photographs, and training courses collected by John D. Fair while corresponding with Harry Johnson Jr. There are over 350 photographs and over 80 magazines. Materials concern Johnson's time in high school, his business, family life, bodybuilding exercises and competitions, including the Mr. America contest, and weightlifting.

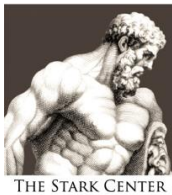
COLLECTION INVENTORY

Series 1: Business associates, 1960-1965

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
Atlanta Barbell Company, 1964	1	1
Diversified Products Corporations, 1962-1965	1	2
Sears, Roebuck and Company, 1962	1	3
Strength and Health Publishing Company letters, 1960	1	4
Various business people, 1955-1959	1	5
Business catalogs, 1960	1	6

Series 2: Business clippings, 1959-1962

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
Rich Man's World, 1954	1	7



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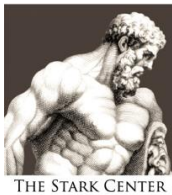
The Ruritans, 1960	1	8
Sears, Roebuck and Company, 1962	1	9
Various business clippings, 1959	1	10

Series 3: Personal, 1945-2008

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
Association of Oldetime Barbell and Strongmen (AOBS) 25 th Annual Reunion/Dinner Program, 2008	1	11
<i>BOD Magazine</i> calendar, 1998	1	12
Tech High School <i>Tehisean</i> yearbook, 1945	1	13
Special package re: wife Joyce Johnson, 1959	1	14
Personal correspondence, 1958-1965	1	15
Riverside Military Academy, 1964	1	16
Funeral notice for William Donald Johnson (brother), 1999	1	17
Note with phone numbers, undated	1	18
John D. Fair materials, 2000-2001	1	19

Series 4: Personal photographs, 1927-2011, undated

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
Personal photographs labeled by Anna Stallings, 1927-2011	1	20
Personal photographs, 1989	1	21

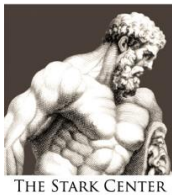


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Assorted snapshots, 1959-1963	1	22
Physique photographs, undated	1	23
Odd photographs, 1959	1	24
Various personal photographs, 1959-2006	1	25
Photographs and letter re: Johnson and Paula Cobb, 1997	1	26
Photographs sent back from John D. Fair to Johnson, 1956-2001	1	27
Photographs of Johnson and wife, 2000	1	28
Photographs of Johnson and wife at the fire station, 2001	1	29
Photographs of Charles Estes and Randy Watson, 1963	1	30
Physique photograph of Johnson, undated	1	31
Assorted photographs and clippings, 1957-2005	1	32

Series 5: Harry and Joyce Johnson clippings, 1942-2003, undated

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
Bodybuilding magazine clippings, 1960	1	33
Personal clippings, 1942-2008	1	34
Joyce personal clippings, undated	1	35
Publicity clippings, 1954-1974	1	36



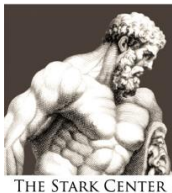
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Series 6: Miscellaneous, 1964-2007, undated

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
Association of Oldetime Barbell and Strongmen (AOBS) newsletters, 2000-2005	1	37
Tech High <i>Rainbow</i> , 2000-2007	1	38
AOBS Program and tickets for the 17 th Annual Reunion/Dinner, October 23, 1999	1	39
Programs for Mr. Southern USA Contest and Miss Southern USA Beauty Pageant, June 13, 1964	1	40
Barbell courses created by Harry Johnson, undated	1	41
Assorted photographic negatives, undated	1	42

Series 7: Magazines, 1946-2000, undated

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
<i>Georgia Trend</i> , 1999-2000	1	43 thru 44
<i>Iron Man</i> , 1959-1964	1	45 thru 49
<i>Iron Man</i> , 1965-1969	2	1 thru 5
<i>Lockheed Georgia Quarterly</i> , 1964	2	6
<i>Muscle Builder</i> , 1955-1957, undated	2	7 thru 10
<i>Muscle Power</i> , 1955	2	11
<i>Muscular Development</i> , 1964-1967	2	12 thru 15
<i>Southern Boating</i> , 2000	2	16

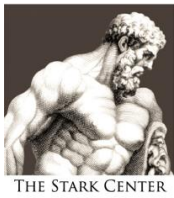


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<i>Strength and Health</i> , 1946-1959	2	17 thru 26
<i>Strength and Health</i> , 1960-1967	3	1 thru 4

Series 8: Bodybuilding and weightlifting materials, 1960-1966, undated

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
Check from M.M. Cohen to Ralph Brunt, April 16, 1960	3	5
Program for the AAU Southeastern Region II Power Lift Championships, College Park, GA, July 30, 1966	3	6
Brochure for Moore's Squat Bar Machine by the Atlanta Barbell Company, undated	3	7
Brochure for Moore's Squat Thrust Machine by the Atlanta Barbell Company, undated	3	8
Poster for Mr. Southern USA Contest presented by Tom's Health Studio, Dalton, GA, June 13, 1964	3	9
Poster for Moore's Squat Bar by the Atlanta Barbell Company, undated	3	10
Table of principal voluntary muscles and exercises which develop them, undated	3	11
Charts of principal voluntary muscles on Farnese Hercules, undated	3	12 thru 14



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Series 9: Books, 1938-1982

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
<i>How to be Strong, Healthy and Happy</i> (4 th Edition), Bob Hoffman, 1938	3	15
<i>The High Protein Way to Better Nutrition</i> (6 th Edition), Bob Hoffman, 1953	3	16
<i>Weight Training</i> (4 th Edition), Philip J. Rasch, 1982	3	17

Series 10: Newspapers, 1999-2002

Folder Title	Box Number	Folder Number
<i>Barrow Eagle</i> , 1999	3	18
<i>Gwinnett Daily Post</i> , 2001-2002	3	19 thru 23

SUBJECT HEADINGS

Organizations

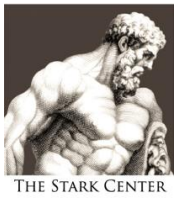
Association of Oldetime Barbell and Strongmen

Atlanta Barbell Company

Lockheed-Georgia Company

Sears, Roebuck and Company

Strength and Health Publishing Company



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People

Anderson, Paul, 1932-1994

Estes, Charles

Fair, John D.

Hoffman, Bob, 1897-1985

Johnson, Joyce

Johnson, Jr., Harry L.

Watson, Randy

Subjects

Barbell

Boats and boating

Bodybuilding

Exercise

Health

Powerlifting

Squat

Strength training

Weightlifting