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*This issue, because of the fact that it falls hard on the heels of John Carl Grimek's 80th birthday, we decided to feature him even though JCG would normally be considered too much of an on-going supernova to be an appropriate subject for the series. But since so many people continue to ask how and what he's doing, particularly where exercise is concerned, we called him last week and had a long chat.*

I first met John 30 years ago, when he was almost the same age I am now and I'll never forget how wonderfully alive he looked, how thickly graceful. I've seen him hundreds of times since, and even worked beside him on a daily basis for over a year and he was always a marvel to me. The last time I saw him was less than a year ago and he seems as changeless as Mount Rushmore. And when I asked him to describe for the readers of *IGH* what he does these days to maintain his strength and health, he said he was training just as regularly as he always did, but with a lot less intensity. Let's let him tell it in his own words.

"Angela got an exercise bike about 15 years ago, but didn't really use it, and when I tried it 10 or 12 years ago it was too boring. I couldn't stand to do it. But about three years ago, I brought it into the room where I've got a tv set and so now I just sit there and pedal away while I'm watching a program. I usually ride in the evenings and I do about 45 minutes to an hour almost every night.

"As for the weights, I still do full squats to warm up, but I don't usually use any weights. I do use weights on my partial squats, but only 300 pounds since that's all I have down in the basement where I train. I have to laugh about it sometimes. I started training down in my basement in Perth Amboy when I was 16 and here I am 64 years later back down in my basement again. I should be using 450 or 500 pounds in my partial squats, but I figure, 'What the hell, 300's enough to get a little work and to keep my legs straight and strong.' I know I could get a more complete workout in a commercial gym but I don't want to have to stop every set or two to answer somebody's question and so I make do with what I have.

"I still do a lot of breathing exercises—pullovers with a barbell and lat circles on a bench with dumbbells. And I like to do cable rowing and upright rowing. And lately I've been

*Where Are They Now?*

# John Grimek

doing wrist roll-ups and my forearms started to get bigger all of a sudden. I still do several sets of each exercise but I never have any sort of set program. I just do whatever occurs to me that day. I know George Hackenschmidt told me he trained that way and that's how I've trained for a long time now. My workouts take an hour or so, but sometimes I lose track of time and I'm down there for two hours. And sometimes I go down there and my shoulder may be hurting me and I'll just say the hell with it and come back upstairs. I've found that it's easier for me to stay regular if I do a little bit at least every other day. If I wait longer between workouts it gets harder to walk down those cellar steps.

"I also get a lot of exercise these days on the weekends when Angela and I go dancing. We usually go Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights and we like to dance the polkas and the other faster dances. It's usually one o'clock or so before we get home and I don't sit out very many dances. You know, Hoffman used to love to dance and he always talked about what good exercise it was and I know he's right. It sure beats riding that damn bicycle, even with the tv on.



*John Grimek at 24 with his friend Ted Elder in Perth Amboy, New Jersey*

"One change I've made is that I don't eat as much as I used to. I usually have a light breakfast, with some bran cereal or oatmeal, along with a cup of coffee and a glass of fruit juice. And then I'll eat one more meal during the day—one big meal—along with a snack. Sometimes I'll eat the big meal at 2:00 or 3:00 in the afternoon and then have my snack in the late evening—maybe some fruit or yogurt or ice cream or a cheese sandwich—and sometimes I'll have a snack at noon and then have the big meal in the evening. It depends on how I'm feeling and what Angela and I have planned for that day.

"I don't seem to crave beef as much as I used to and I concentrate on fruits and vegetables. But there's a buffet place here in town and they serve this great chicken and I'll usually eat three big breasts when we go there. But my weight stays between 195 and 205 and I can tell if I overdo it at the table or in the basement with the weights because my coat gets a little too tight around the shoulders and so I cut back."