



No doubt because so many months have passed since our last issue, we unfortunately have more than the usual number of deaths to report. The oldest of the fraternity to pass was Mike Mungoli of Jamaica, New York, who was born in 1908. Mungoli was the national weightlifting champion in 1937 and 1938, competing both years in the 126 pound class. An excellent "quick lifter" he created such national records as 152 in the right hand snatch and 194.5 in the two hand snatch.

A loss we felt very personally was the death of eighty-five year-old Sam Loprinzi of Portland, Oregon. Sam was the fifth of ten sons born to Charles Loprinzi, who came to the U.S. from Sicily before any of the boys were born and lived to see his strapping sons become ardent weight trainers. They were known as the "strongest family in the world," and in photos from leading popular magazines from the Thirties and Forties they look it. And Sam was the best of a good lot. So good, in fact, that he won the coveted "Most Muscular" title in the 1946 Mr. America contest. In later years he gained greater fame as the owner of one of the finest and best known gyms in the country, which is where we met him and his wonderful wife Helen almost twenty years ago. Then in his sixties, Sam looked like a healthy athlete of forty, and we told him we suspected he must be kin to Dorian Grey. So young and vigorous was Sam's appearance that our visit with him inspired us to write the (poorly titled) book, *Lift Your Way to Youthful Fitness*. After that experience, we became closer friends and when he sold the gym he gave us his beloved, bound set of *Strength & Health*. Not a week goes by that we don't use it and think of Sam, who was profiled by Al Thomas in the August 1991 issue of *IGH*.

Another departed giant is Stan Stanczyk, who died on July 3rd from a stroke at the age of seventy-two. One of history's greatest weightlifters, Flash Stanczyk had lived for many years in South Florida, where he operated a successful bowling alley. Noted for his blinding speed, Stanczyk won his first world title in 1946 in the 148 pound class, his second in 1947 as a 145 pounder, then topped it off in 1948 by winning a gold medal in the Olympics as a 181, making him the first man to win three consecutive world championships in three different weight classes. An incident occurred at the '48 Games which, according to those who knew Stan best, epitomized his character. What happened is that after he had snatched 292 pounds in the competition and received three white lights, he shocked everyone by refusing to take credit for the lift because he had felt his knee touch the platform. The lift would have been a new world record. He went on to win three more world championships, but his string was broken in 1952 when he "only" won the silver medal at the Helsinki Olympics. After his retirement as a competitor, he kept his hand in the game by coaching many young lifters in his area.

#### Dear *IGH*:

American history has it that Paul Revere's ride was to announce that "the British are coming." On October 5, 1996 in the Harbor Room of New York's prestigious Downtown Athletic Club he would have had to declare a warm welcome for Englishmen Malcolm Whyatt, Ian MacQueen, Scotsman Dave Webster and a couple of tables full of Brits and Scots who all lent an air of warm elegance to the fourteenth annual reunion of the Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen's Association. I could sense the presence in the room of the great Oscar Heidenstam looking on approvingly. And if that were not enough to make this year's event extra special, we were honoring a legendary titan of Olympic weightlifting — Norbert Schemansky — as well as another legend in the world of pre-steroid bodybuilding, George Paine.

These annual events serve to bring together those of us who were or who are still active in the Iron Game as well as those outstanding champions who inspired us to put forth our best efforts in an attempt to become the best we could be. Without fear of contradiction, it is safe to say that virtually every man who attends was originally inspired by the immortal John Grimek, either directly or indirectly. John C. Grimek was seated on the dais where a monarch belongs. Also seated on the dais were 1943 Mr. America Jules Bacon, the main man Vic Boff, Johnny Mandel, Rudy Sablo, and the honored guests. In attendance were so many great iron game personalities that it's impossible to mention them all. Among them were Russ Warner, Marvin Eder, huge Mark Henry, Jan and Terry Todd, Mike Greenstein who is the son of the Mighty Atom, 1946 Jr. Mr. America Val Pasqua, Joe Puleo, Bruce Wilhelm, Ike Berger, and Gary Cleveland. Try to imagine a mythical Iron Game event, rich in tradition, which would combine the Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen's Association for an evening with great Britain's Oscar Heidenstam Foundation. Well, this was it.

Vic Boff let me in on his intention to surprise Malcolm Whyatt by making him an unexpected honoree. Unaccustomed as I am to devious behavior, I nevertheless agreed to be an accomplice by taking the microphone and telling everyone about my United Kingdom adventures, my interaction with Oscar Heidenstam and what a great guy Malcolm Whyatt is. The mike was then turned over to Vic Boff who read the inscription on the plaque: "To Malcolm Whyatt guest of honor, founding secretary Oscar Heidenstam Foundation, Publisher *Health and Strength* Journal, with our deepest appreciation to you and the directors and trustees of the Oscar Heidenstam Foundation for your monumental work and accomplishments to promote and preserve the true ideals of physical culture and the Iron Game worldwide. With the revival of *Health and Strength* publication the connecting of the past with the present and future will be assured. With friendship and good will we confer the highest achievement award on this Saturday, October 5, 1996 from the members of the Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen's Association at our 14th annual reunion." There was a warm ovation for Malcolm and judging from the expression on his face it was obvious that he really meant it when he said "I had no idea. . . I'm at a loss for words."

Malcolm quickly recovered and remembered that he himself was there to make a presentation to Vic Boff. "Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honor for me to be here this evening." Malcolm

then read the inscription on what he was about to bestow. "Presented to Vic Boff, President of the Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen Association U.S.A. by the Oscar Heidenstam Foundation England, in recognition of his superlative contributions to the international fellowship of physical culture, 5th October, 1996." There was another burst of warm applause and a cluster of photographers converged around the platform and did their stuff.

As I looked at the distinguished people seated on the dais and I greeted George Paine I felt very pleased that he was finally being honored. In the twinkling of an eye my memory wafted me back to 1951 when I was still a member of Boy's Division in the Bronx Union YMCA. I was a big kid already training in the weight room three days a week under the tutelage of Charlie Smith. Even though I was in the boy's division I trained with the men. There were lots of big, strong men training there. Some of them had huge arms and chests. One day a notice was posted about an upcoming physique contest for the Mr. YMCA title. Men from any of the New York City YMCA's could compete. The contest was to be held in the Bronx Union YMCA. All the big guys in the weight room were entered in the contest. When contest night came I was there to behold all the big guys waging war with their muscles. Well, that night there were several big strong guys entered but there was really only one man in the contest. He could have just stood there. He needn't have even posed. But he did pose. He also entered the subdivisions and won every one he entered with nobody else deserving to even be in the same contest with him. He actually refused to enter a couple of the subdivisions so that somebody else could win something. Otherwise it would have been a complete and absolute destruction of all competitors other than the obvious winner. In fact, it actually was total destruction tempered with admirable compassion by a man none of us had ever seen before. He was the most incredibly muscular man any of us had ever seen and his name was George Paine. That event, obviously, has remained indelibly ingrained in my memory. George Paine was to set the standard in muscularity for the next couple of decades.

My reflections only lasted a couple of seconds. Then we were back in the present and Dr. Al Thomas was called upon to make the presentation speech to George. Al told us, "I met George Paine in 1948. He was a man I greatly admired. He can talk about everything else in the world but he won't talk about himself, which is admirable." Al continued, "for sociological and historical reasons known to each one of us, the highest title in bodybuilding could not come to George Paine. The reasons for this had to do with sociological matters and matters of history but not with matters of physique. But the measure of the man, the measure of his character, the measure of his maturity, is that you do not waste energy, moral energy, that it would require to go back over these certain things of the past. That was then and this is now. And physique had nothing to do with the disappointment that was an aspect of then. He won America's most muscular man in 1953 and 1954, NABBA Mr. Universe class winner 1966, multiple class awards winner in 1951, 1965 and 1975. He could have gone on forever I would guess. Jr. Mr. America in 1951, he was the most muscular man in that contest. He was Mr. Eastern America in 1951, WBBG Mr. America 1973, WBBG over 40 Mr. America in 1977, Mr. Apollon, Mr. Gotham, Mr. North

America George told me that he won some of those titles two, three, or four times but that it's not important to remember all the dates because everybody knows about it. Amazing. George Paine should have been many things because of reasons beyond body. He was a hell of a man. He had big muscles and he had a big, muscular spirit." Al Thomas is a very passionate speaker and tremendous, long, enthusiastic applause came in response to what he said to us.

I have known George Paine for decades now and he has always been one of those almost larger than life figures. This was the first time I had ever seen him so obviously moved. This recognition was long overdue and I am grateful to have been present when justice was finally done. We live in an unjust world. It is most gratifying when finally a genuine attempt is made to help right some atrocious wrongs. George deserved to have won the coveted Mr. America title. We all knew why he was not permitted to. This evening was a laudable effort to make up for that long ago outrage. Jim Saunders' fabulous painting of George Paine doing the archer's pose, invented by him, was then presented along with his plaque from the association. George then said, "I am tonight a little bit stunned by my receiving this presentation. All throughout my bodybuilding career it has been my fondest wish to do the best I could, in the gym and on the stage. I've been doing bodybuilding for the past fifty years and this is the first time that I've been honored the way I have tonight. I certainly appreciate the committee and the Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen and Vic Boff for making this possible for me tonight. I thank everybody for coming and God Bless You." George's voice cracked once from the emotion of the occasion. He certainly deserved the thunderous standing ovation which he received. As the Mighty Stefan, our MC, then said, it appeared as though the majority of us were indeed misty-eyed at that point.

During virtually all of the decades of my own bodybuilding career, the name Norbert Schemansky was always prominent in the publications which covered weightlifting. I grew up just expecting to always see Schemansky there in *Strength & Health* along with Grimek and John Davis. Even though my interest was bodybuilding, Davis and Schemansky were also Iron Game heroes of mine and they were giants in the world of weights. I was, therefore, thrilled to now have the opportunity to meet the great Norbert Schemansky this evening. Arthur Dreschler spoke to us about the legend named Norbert Schemansky and it soon became obvious why the term legend is appropriately applied.

"I have the honor of presenting a distillation of one of the most extraordinary careers not just in the history of weightlifting but in the history of sport — the career of Norbert Schemansky. Norb's career spans three decades. He did it within the entire golden age of United States weightlifting from the early 1940s through the late 1960s. It was truly a unique career both in terms of the level of accomplishments and the longevity that it embodied. And, as if that was not enough, it was a career that includes one of the most amazing triumphs of the human spirit over adversity from his early teens forward. He's one of six athletes to win medals in four Olympic Games. He made the 1948 Olympics at twenty-four years of age and was able to remain on top when he was forty years old competing in the 1964 Olympic Games to win the bronze medal. He's listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the 'most successful USA

Olympic weightlifter.' He's even been billed as the 'world's strongest man.'

"Norbert Schemansky was introduced to the sport of Weightlifting by his brother who was Jr. National heavyweight champion in 1940. By 1941 he had raised his clean and jerk to 235 pounds. In 1942, at age seventeen, he took fourth place in the national championships in weightlifting in the heavyweight class which in those days was anything above 181 3/4 pounds. Norb weighed 182. He drank some water to get up to that weight. From mid 1943 to the end of 1945 he served Uncle Sam in World War II and when he returned he began serious training in 1946. In 1947 he placed second in the National Championships. He made the American World Championship where he took second with 259, 286 and 353. He continued to improve during 1948 and took second again at the Nationals and won the silver medal at the Olympic Games, taking second to that great champion, John Davis. He continued to train hard through 1949. It paid off because he won the Nationals that year, the first of nine national championships that he won. Since they took only one lifter to the World Championships, they selected John Davis over Norb. Nineteen-fifty was a tough year for him. He took second in the Nationals. They only took one lifer in each weight class to the World Championships so Norb stayed home again. In 1951, they added the 198 pound class to weightlifting and so for the first time Norb was able to compete against men his own size. So he went to 198 pounds and won the National Championships. He made his first world record with a 295 pound snatch. It was the first of twenty-six world records that he made during his career. The next day he cleaned and jerked 370 to a world record and established himself as the premier 198 pounder in the world.

"He went on in November of that year to win the World Championships. He cleaned and jerked four hundred pounds later in the year to become the second man in history to make that weight. [Ed. Note: The third man, actually, Charles Rigulot having lifted the weight in the Twenties as a professional.] In 1952 he won the Olympic Games setting world records in the snatch, clean and jerk and total. A little later in the year he raised his clean and jerk record to 408 pounds to beat John Davis' world record. In January 1953, Norb raised his clean and jerk to 412.5 pounds and defeated John Davis. John had been undefeated since 1938. In 1953 he won the National Championships. But he began to have back problems and was unable to lift in the World Championships that year. However he came back strongly in 1954 and won the World Championship as a super-heavyweight. He had quite a record spree in 1954, making a 418 3/4 clean and jerk, a world record snatch of 330 and a world record total of 1074. Four days after that he lifted the Apollon Wheels, which had been lifted by only two other men prior to that [Ed note: Rigulot and Davis both lifted the Wheels, and Apollon himself is believed by many to have done so over one hundred years ago. Read David Chapman's translation of Professor Desbonnet's book chapter on Apollon and decide for yourself.] Norb lifted it quite easily. The Wheels weighed 166 kilos, about 366 pounds. Three days later he clean and jerked 424 pounds for another new world record.

"So, there he stood in 1954, truly the world's strongest man and at a relatively light bodyweight. He weighed about 230 pounds

at that time. The world was at his feet and it looked like Norbert Schemansky would dominate that weight class for years to come. Unfortunately, in 1955 he began to have really serious problems with his back. It became so crippling that he could not compete and in 1956, when everyone else was getting ready for the Olympic Games, he was having back surgery. By March 1957, however, he was back in shape and won the new 225 pound weight class at the Nationals. But his back began giving him trouble again and in November 1957 he had his second back surgery. Although the doctors advised him to retire from weightlifting, saying that he wouldn't be able to even walk properly let alone lift weights, he began to train again very carefully and in March 1958 he was back up to an 880 pound total. In 1959 he battled back to third place in the National Championships. He was now thirty-five years old. . . . By 1960 he took second place at the Nationals totaling 1075 which was a personal record and then went on to take third in the Olympics. In 1961 he made 380, 320 and 405 for an 1105 total. Then he made a 343 pound world record snatch. Here's Norb at thirty-seven years old following two back surgeries and he's once again a world record holder.

"In 1962, he made lifts of 390, 350 and 410 for an 1160 pound total. At the World Championships, his 1184 pound total beat Paul Anderson's total which had been set in 1956. . . . In February 1964 Norbert lifted 400, 355 and 445 for a 1200 pound total. He was the first American ever to do that although it was never officially recognized because he was an extra lifter. By now, Schemansky had a really Herculean physique at 265 pound bodyweight. On October 18, 1964 he became the oldest man in the history of weightlifting to win a medal at the Olympic Games. He was over forty. He had now won four Olympic medals and at that time no one had ever won four medals in an individual Olympic sport. He won the Senior Nationals in 1965, took third in 1966, and in 1968 suffered a knee injury which kept him from making the 1968 Olympic team. In his mid-fifties, he was still capable of doing a three hundred pound snatch and a four hundred pound clean and jerk. But age eventually takes its toll. Now his fellow lifters refer to him as the professor. If anybody knows the joy of victory and the agony of defeat, it's Norbert Schemansky."

There was tremendous applause as the legend stood up and was handed the microphone. Elegantly dressed and still charismatic, his statements were short and to the point. He simply said "I thank you very much. I'd like to thank Vic Boff. I'd like to thank all of you for attending and most of all I'd like to thank all of you for just remembering." What an impact he made.

Later, in the lobby of the Downtown Athletic Club, I extended my hand to Schemansky and complimented him on his statement of thanks earlier in the evening. I have shaken hands with Rocky Marciano and Sonny Liston among others. When Schemansky grabbed my hand, it disappeared in a hand so massive that I could sense the unlimited vise-like power. This was my last impression of the evening as I departed — in awe — of the Legend named Schemansky.

**Ken "Leo" Rosa**  
**The Bronx, New York**

**Ed Note: The 1997 Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen Dinner is scheduled for Saturday, September 27th, at the Downtown Athletic Club, 19 West Street, New York City. For tickets and hotel information, contact Vic Boff at 4959 Viceroy Street, Suite 203, Cape Coral, Florida, 33904. Telephone: 941-549-8407.**



**Dear IGH:**

It was with great pleasure that I saw the letter of Carl Linich on page twenty-two of the September 1996 edition of *Iron Game History* complete with a picture of Andy Jackson taken in 1995.

While in college, I had the good fortune to meet an experienced weightlifter who had attended Notre Dame – Daniel Cullinane. Dan had a very complete gym and seemed to many of us the most knowledgeable person around in weightlifting. It was he who introduced me to *Iron Man* magazine. He pointed out that I spent a lot of time lifting but managed to read virtually nothing about how to do it. Many times when we were working out (and Dan handled some very heavy poundages in his basement gym) he would often exclaim, “Don’t you read anything about what you’re doing?”

Dan had lifted with Father Lange at Notre Dame and he knew that I could use more weights. It was my dream to own an Olympic bar. One Saturday we drove from our respective homes in Bergen County to Springfield, New Jersey, and the home of Andy Jackson. I was amazed at the equipment in his basement and purchased two long dumbbell bars for some heavy dumbbell lifting. I particularly admired the “Jackson sets.”

Dan Cullinane knew that I was very taken with Mr. Jackson and his many stories about the Iron Game. Dan knew Andy Jackson and was able to tell me a few stories about him.

Because Dan owned three or four good Olympic sets, he offered to sell me his Jackson set. I was twenty-one years old at the time and jumped at the chance to buy it. I used that set in college, through law school, and have continued to use it to this day. The bar still has great “whip” for quick lifts (which I am no longer attempting). At age fifty-three, I regard the Jackson set as a family heirloom. My three sons have used it (two who did so as part of their running program for their respective schools, Cornell and Dartmouth). It is my hope that my sons will be able to pass on the Jackson set to any children that they may have.

Although I live and work in New Jersey, I do not have Mr. Jackson’s home address. Therefore, it is my hope that someone in your organization might be able to pass this letter on to him or, at least, to Carl Linich, so that Mr. Jackson will know that the Hammill family has gained a great deal from his traditions and the effort he put into the Iron Game, particularly the Jackson set which we still own and use.

**James F. Hammill**  
Moorestown, NJ

**Dear IGH:**

Loved the Oscar Heidenstam dinner report and Minichiello’s meanderings. Many memories brought back . . . delightful.

Incidentally, Hackenschmidt did not invent the Hack lift (let alone the Hack machine). He performed it, though, and got his name tagged on to it because of this. Rather like Larry Scott’s name got attached to the preacher curl (which he did not invent) or Arnold’s name was used in the Arnold press (which he did not invent) or the entire series of bodybuilding techniques claimed as Weider principles . . . which he did not invent.

How do I know about Hackenschmidt? I asked him about it well over forty years ago and he denied it passionately. He had no interest in claiming the honor.

**Bob Kennedy,**  
*Muscle Mag International*  
Mississauga, Ontario



**Dear IGH:**

Enjoyed the September issue of *IGH*, especially the reminiscing by Tom Minichiello. I only met Tom one time, but it was an important occasion. He came with Ben Weider when they met with representatives of the AAU physique committee (Bob Crist, Ralph Countryman and me) in Chicago to discuss affiliation of the AAU with the IFBB. That particular meeting was a little strained because Bob Crist was not in favor, but it was short and the rest is history. So, it was enjoyable to read both excerpts from Minichiello’s book. He had an honored place in the history of physique competitors. I wish him the very best.

Wanted to also let you know that Ripped Enterprises is online at: <http://www.cbass.com>. Carol is the web mistress, and she worked long and hard on our site. It includes some of my best photos — age fifteen to fifty-five — training history, diet and exercise philosophy, frequently asked questions and, of course, information on our seven books. Carol adamantly denies it, but it’s a good piece of work. We plan to make frequent updates and improvements, so we’d welcome comments from all concerned.

Have been training hard —especially enjoying the power snatch and clean —have gained strength and size and I’m looking forward to having some photos taken on the eve of my sixtieth birthday. I’m also thinking about a new book about my recent progress and other developments. Keep up the great work.

**Clarence Bass**  
Albuquerque, NM

