



Dear IGH:

Hope that this letter reaches you both in the very best of health. With everything else that you guys are doing, you still find the time to put out a really great journal. I see that after the Vol. 5#2 copy, I'm due to renew. Enclosed is my payment to continue the Fellowship Subscription.

I would like to mention a few words about Steve Neece, who wrote an article in your May '98 issue. When I had my gym in Manhattan, Steve came in many times over the years. I enjoyed many hours of conversation with him. We had many friends in common. Especially in the wrestling world. Steve himself was a very impressive looking strongman. The photo of him in your issue doesn't do him justice; his outstanding feature was his tremendous width of shoulders, enormous. In all of his talking with me, I found his information to be truthful and himself to be an honorable individual.

As for myself, the last several months have been hectic . . . had to go to New York as my Mother-in-law passed away. Then I elected to have my gall bladder removed. My lower back is shot. As a matter of fact, Kimon Voyages told me in the late fifties that I would be having problems in years to come with the lower back. God bless him he was right. My best friends, Kimon, Ed Jubinville, and Gene Dubuque have left us, however I'm blessed with the close friendship of Vic Boff. He is the most moral and understanding person that I have ever known.

My (first) novel, *The Man from Verona*, has been in the hands of a literary agent for the last two months. I'm starting to re-write *Manhattan Oasis*; it's a problem for me to continue with a narrative. There are so many stories to tell (after almost thirty years on 42nd Street you could understand).

Tom Minichiello
Ft. Meyers, FL

Readers will recall the two fine articles we ran which were taken from Tom's as yet unpublished autobiography, Oasis in Manhattan.

Somehow, we never printed Ken Rosa's report of the 1997 Heidenstam Trust Awards Banquet. We greatly appreciate Ken's willingness to cover both the Heidenstam and the Oldetime Barbell and Strongman Association Dinners in New York City. Watch for the OBSA story in our next issue.

1997 Heidenstam Trust Awards Banquet

I've come to eagerly look forward to my yearly Virgin Atlantic trips to England for the annual Oscar Heidenstam Hall of Fame awards. After a great flight I proceeded to the Heathrow Marriott where the event is always held. At dinnertime, I walked into the line restaurant prepared to devour all the food in sight and to see who else was there. I heard a cheery hello and there were Mr. and Mrs. Reg Ireland. Food was briefly forgotten as we chatted. Marvin Eder soon became the subject of conversation as we all wondered whether or not he would be there this year.

During the early 1950's, Marvin's muscular physique graced the covers and pages of the muscle magazines and his incredible strength had become legendary throughout the world of weights by the time he was 20 years of age. I was fortunate to have been training in the Abe Goldberg gym on Clinton Street in New York City during the time that Marvin also trained there. I actually saw him do a standing Olympic style press with 355 pounds, bench press around 500 pounds, do parallel bar dips for repetitions with 400 pounds of additional weight, and do repetition warm-ups with 120 pound dumbbells only because those were the heaviest dumbbells in the gym. All that at a bodyweight of 190 pounds. While I was talking, I failed to notice that someone had silently walked up and stood next to me. Reg noticed. I turned and, as if by magic, there was Marvin Eder. I was overjoyed to see him and, of course, I made the necessary introductions. Soon we were reminiscing about Goldberg's Gym. During those golden years Goldberg's was always replete with bodybuilders and weightlifters either working out or just there to visit. People like Leroy Colbert, Artie Zeller, Domenic Juliano, the Yogi, John Rutko, Enrico Tomas, Ray Jimenez, Lou Degni, and myself. Now here we were in 1997, in England, and Marvin Eder's relaxed, vigorously youthful enthusiasm indicated that he had marvelously become the twenty-year-old super strong *wunderkind* again. We listened in open-mouthed awe as Marvin revealed that he had envisioned himself eventually achieving a standing press with 500 pounds! I have

seen Marvin's incredibly massive bone structure, therefore, I had no doubt that it indeed would have been possible for that strongest of all bodybuilders if he had not decided to retire at age 22 after his career was destroyed by the same participants in the Hoffman/Weider feud who had cruelly ruined the careers of so many other young bodybuilders of the era. Myself among them. It's sobering to consider the fact that we never did have an opportunity to see Marvin Eder reach his peak. We can only speculate about what fantastic lifts he might have accomplished. All of this was part of our conversation that evening. Suddenly, Marvin asked me to tense my upper arm in a curl position which I did somewhat hesitantly. Marvin had an expression of benevolence on his face as he said "not bad." Now, "feel this," he said as he tensed his own upper arm. If anyone wondered if Marvin Eder was in shape, don't wonder any more. The arm was massive and felt like unyielding steel. Reluctantly, we all eventually parted company and looked forward to the actual main event next evening.

March 22, 1997. The sixth annual Oscar Heidenstam Memorial dinner and Hall of Fame Awards proved to be particularly inspiring in an unexpected but very welcome way. The Oscar Heidenstam Foundation was launched to perpetuate the memory of Heidenstam who dedicated his life to others, be they able-bodied or disabled, to guide his fellow human beings toward self improvement. Several different types of awards are given at the Heidenstam banquet. Mark Anson of Orpington in Kent received a special award for overcoming a number of physical disabilities and returning to competitive form. Norman Gough, who has devoted over forty years to teaching and helping young people in the sport of gymnastics, was honored for his work in that area. The two main honorees, however were British bodybuilder John Lees and American great, Larry Scott.

Ian MacQueen made the presentation to Lees, who won the Mr. Universe in 1957 before going on to a career in pro wrestling. Next up, was the evening's main event, the award to Larry Scott, the first Mr. Olympia. Malcolm Whyatt did the introduction: "Today we are here to honor Larry Scott, one of bodybuilding's greatest and most popular stars. Larry is a gentleman and is admired throughout the world as an outstanding example of physical culture. Larry was born in 1938 and raised in Pocatello, Idaho. He was raised in the Mormon faith and taught the values of family life. His introduction to physical culture was

via gymnastics and tumbling. By the age of fifteen, inspired by the physique of Steve Reeves, he had graduated to weight training. In 1958, he moved to California to train at Bert Goodrich's gym. A year later, he returned to Idaho to win the Mr. Idaho title. He returned to California under the guidance of Vince Gironda. He made rapid improvement, which is illustrated in his use of 80 pound dumbbells and a 140-pound barbell for repetition curls on the Preacher Bench and repetitions in lying triceps presses with 250 pounds. In 1960 he won the Mr. California and Mr. Pacific Coast titles. In 1962 Larry became the IFBB Mr. America and in 1964 he won the IFBB Mr. Universe title. In 1965 Larry became the first Mr. Olympia by beating Harold Poole. In 1966 he successfully defended his Mr. Olympia title against such greats as Sergio Oliva, Harold Poole and Chuck Sipes. After he won the title for the second time, Larry announced his retirement from competitive bodybuilding. Logical as ever, he reasoned that it was better to leave while at the pinnacle of his career and to devote more of his time to family and business. During the late 1970s Larry reappeared in bodybuilding circles carrying out exhibitions and guest spot appearances. He appeared at the World Cup in 1977 and was guest poser at the Mr. Atlantic Coast USA contest.

"Although his last Olympia title was won over thirty years ago, Larry still retains the magic of those early years and he remains one of the most popular, admired and respected international bodybuilding personalities. We are delighted that Larry and his beautiful wife, Rachel, were able to join us on this occasion to celebrate his great achievements in the bodybuilding field."

Enthusiastic applause greeted Larry Scott as he rose and took the microphone. "Thank you so much. I'd like to tell you a story. I had only been training for maybe a year and I weighed maybe 150 when my training partner and I heard that Steve Reeves and George Eiferman were coming to Salt Lake City. Going to Salt Lake City was a big step for us. We were just kids. So we drove there and we got to speak with Bob Delmontique. Bob said to us 'would you like to meet Steve and George?' We could only stammer, 'Yeah, yeah,' and try to hide the fact that we were so nervous we could have passed out. Well, Bob took us over and the first thing I said was 'How do you get big?' And so, years after that, to be standing on the same stage with George Eiferman—he had just won the Mr. Universe and I had just won the Mr. America—

was just amazing.

"I remember another time. I had won Mr. California, Mr. America and Mr. Universe and I was training in a Vic Tanny gym in Los Angeles. It was in the middle of the day, nobody else working out, and this guy comes over to me and says, 'Hey ah, you got a pretty good build. You ever think of competing?' I was in the process of doing a set of cable rows and I was putting everything into it so I just grunted, 'yeah.'" The audience is giggling. Larry continued, "So the guy asks me 'Did you ever compete?' I'm still doing my set so I grunt again, 'Yeah.' He says, 'In what?' I grunt 'Mr. California, Mr. America, Mr. Universe.'" All the while Larry is simulating the moves of the cable rowing motion as he tells the story. "The guy says 'how'd you do?' So I put everything into the last rep and grunted, 'I won 'em all.'" The audience roared.

Probably very few of us were aware of what Larry was to now tell us. He became suddenly misty eyed and seemed to choke up a bit as he said, "It was in the early nineties that I lost two sons." I think we were all stunned. We could feel great empathy as Larry related his obviously painful story. His sorrow and his spiritual strength I think left a lasting impression on all present. Larry's twenty-three year old son, Derek, was killed in an accident one morning while riding his motorcycle to school. Larry's son Michael, who was two years younger than Derek, was totally grief stricken about losing a brother he adored and took his own life with a pistol while lying on Derek's grave. Larry spoke about the lessons tragedy and grief can teach us. "I have learned how kind God is. There are two basic things we need to learn. We need to learn how to weep and we need to learn how to give. If we learn those two things it's my belief that God will bless us all. Thank you very much."

Every Oscar Heidenstam Awards dinner is special but Larry Scott was truly extraordinary. Of course, as usual, after all awards and prizes were presented, we gravitated to the grand piano where I played requests and Mac Gatley played harmonica. And for those who didn't know, Dave Webster has a great voice. By the way, Ian MacQueen's flexed upper arm is also like steel and I can't believe he's really the age he told me-seventy-six. It appears as though true lifetime physical culturists may have found the fountain of youth.

Ken "Leo" Rosa
Bronx, NY



Dear IGH:

It certainly was good to see you at the get together in New York last fall. I brought my eleven-year-old son, Johnathan, in an attempt to educate the next generation about the roots of the sport. He met Chuck Sipes six years ago when Chuck was living nearby, so some seeds were planted then which the annual get together really sprouted. He was absolutely fascinated by the show, and now trains every morning before school and is already asking me about next fall's show. It is so rewarding to see him smitten by the same iron bug that bit me!

I have a question for your consideration concerning weight and strength training for the older generation. It stems from the two very basic facts that I learned about training, *not* from the magazines or courses but only after training for an extended period with Chuck. They were that the real keys to progress in strength and growth were 1) *regularity* and *consistency* in training: real, productive success did not arise from irregular bursts, but only ongoing vigilance in the gym in terms of years and decades and not the weeks and months that the ads claim and 2) *intensity*: you had to train hard and continuously push for progress; more weight, more reps etc. Truly comprehending intensity only came from watching Chuck work the bench press and then do burns at the end of each set to fully appreciate what intensity was all about. It was sage advice for me 27 years ago but I'm not so sure it is good for me today.

For a variety of reasons. I was out of the weight room for many years and now I want to get back into it but it's not going well. If I attempt to train hard, I am constantly suffering setbacks of injuries, which take *forever* to heal and I am really susceptible to colds and the flu following a hard workout. I wonder how much research has been done on this issue. Specifically, I remember reading in an old *Strength & Health* about a champion who had quit training for many years and then attempted a comeback and had a heart attack. I wonder how much more blockage he had in his arteries at his older age than he did when he was younger? Also, I heard that when you lift heavy weights such as a partial squat on the power rack, your blood pressure goes through the roof. Is that in fact

true? The point of this is that when I go into the gym today, I typically leave feeling somewhat discouraged because I didn't really push like I used to or like I would like to do today. The weights are way, way below my previous best and when I do use lighter weights and then do more sets and reps to compensate, I typically get sick. It is as if my resistance goes right down the drain with any semblance of intensity. Am I just a wimp here or is this typical for someone in his fifties?

Tufts University has been doing a lot of research on weight training for senior citizens but I always sense that they are using extremely light weights compared to what I am talking about here. I spoke with Bill Pearl about ten years ago on this issue and he said he was still using heavy poundages in his fifties but I doubt if he had ever taken an extended layoff. His body has constantly been accustomed to the intensity. Likewise with Chuck; he trained hard and had discussed making a comeback for his fiftieth birthday before encountering all his personal problems. My point is that a select group apparently can continue to train *hard* throughout their life without suffering setbacks. What about the rest of us? I maintain close contact with my three gym mates from college and they all express the same lament: hard training results in too many injuries that take forever to heal. Are we destined to the aerobic machines for our hearts and a circuit on the Nautilus machines or is there any way to recapture the thrill of maxing out ten reps in a heavy squat?

As always, I realize how busy both your schedules are, so if you can squeeze in a reply, I would be grateful. Keep up the GREAT work.

Norm Komich
Beverly, MA

The question about how "heavy" to train as middle age comes and old age follows is as old as the Game itself. Many people have answered the question in many ways, and the only truth we see is that there is no single truth for everyone. Each time you go to the gym it's a bit like Russian Roulette in that by exerting yourself particularly with weights that are heavy for you, you expose yourself to injury. On the other hand, by not exerting yourself you expose yourself to a loss of strength and muscle mass—a loss of what can only be called youthfulness. It seems to us that being able to really push hard, day after day,

against your (obviously declining) limits in the gym as the years pass is largely a matter of genetics and luck. But beyond being able to push so hard there is the question of wanting to push so hard. Some aging iron gamers love to train, or at least enjoy training, but the hunger that drove them to record poundages in their youth has fled with their thick hair and wrinkle-free skin. The secret, if there is one, is to face squarely the realities of aging and then, without being excessively bullheaded, to find a way to train—a routine—you can follow over the long haul. Perhaps you are one of those people who want to and can fight your way forward as a master's lifter or bodybuilder, or perhaps you are one who is satisfied to train as Sig Klein did in his later years—with consistency but without maximum exertion. But train you must. As for the matter of training and blood pressure, it is true that the highest blood pressures ever recorded were taken from powerlifters in the midst of a limit squat or deadlift. It does not follow, however, that such temporarily elevated blood pressures lead to an increase of the lifters' resting blood pressures.



Dear IGH:

As you may know, *Health & Strength* ceased publication in 1997. I am pleased to inform you that it will be re-launched in January 1999 as a quarterly magazine. I would be very grateful if you could pass on the information about the re-launch to your readers. Please ask them to write me at: R.E. Edwards, *Health & Strength*, Austwick-N. Yorks—Via Lancaster, LA2 8BH, England. My e-mail is: roys-