



IRON GAME HISTORY



VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3

JUNE 1990

Looking Back and Moving Forward

Volume #1, Number #3 of *IGH* has appeared in your mail a bit early for two reasons. For one thing, Volume #1, Numbers # 1 and #2 were late and so this brings us, more or less, back on schedule. For another, we're going to be away from the university during most of July and August and we wanted to put #3 to bed and in the mail before we left. We can still be contacted at the same address, however, as all our mail will be forwarded, so please continue to send your suggestions and comments.

As you can see, we returned to the 16 page level, although we will increase the number of pages in the coming months if we continue to receive new subscriptions, particularly Fellowship and Patron subscriptions. We have several longer articles we would like to use and the 16 or 20 page format makes the use of such articles difficult. Our subscription list continues to grow, albeit more slowly. We now have just over 200 subscriptions and quite a few of those are either Fellowship or Patron subscriptions, for which we are very grateful.

We received the good news recently that both *Iron Man* and *Muscle & Fitness* will donate ad space to *IGH* in their magazines, and we have high hopes that this exposure will alert many people we have not reached either through our mailouts, through word of mouth or through the much-appreciated mentions we've received in *Powerlifting Today*, Dennis Reno's *Weightlifter's Newsletter*, and the *Bulletin of the North American Society for Sport History*.

Recently, Leo Murdoch suggested that each reader of *IGH* should be encouraged to either buy a subscription for a friend (as he had done) or to convince a friend to subscribe. So consider yourselves encouraged.

And if any of you are wondering why your subscription checks haven't cleared, it has to do with an internal

decision here at the university about how to place the *IGH* account within the overall structure of the McLean Fellowship. So bear with us; the checks should be deposited soon, probably by the time you receive this issue.

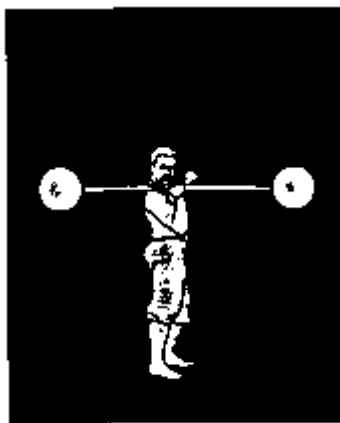
Finally, we would like to urge you to make an effort to attend the annual dinner of the Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen. It will be held on September 22 at the Downtown Athletic Club in New York City. Vic Boff, the founder and president of the Association, assures us that this year's banquet will be more interesting than the previous seven.

Each year, the Association honors several luminaries and this year they shine with particular brightness. There will be four—Rudy Sablo, the longtime A.A.U. official and coach-official in weightlifting; Tommy Kono, eight time world champion in weightlifting; Frank Stranahan, the weight training devotee who used the weights to propel himself to the top of amateur golf during the 1950's; and Reg Park, the former Mr. Universe winner who went on to star in many Hercules films.

In addition, Vic has planned several exhibitions of lifting and posing for the enjoyment of the dinner guests and he has arranged for them to see rare footage of past physical culture greats. Our suggestion is that those who attend, unless they live in the immediate New York City area, should take a room in the

Downtown Athletic Club, train on Saturday morning in the well-equipped health club, spend Saturday afternoon sharing good fellowship with other members in the Hospitality Suite and enjoy a leisurely, informal breakfast with the guests of honor on Sun&y morning.

Anyone interested in reserving a seat at the dinner or a reservation at the Downtown Athletic Club should contact Vic Boff at 2218 86th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11214.



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Co-Editors: Terry and Jan Todd
 Creative Consultant Steve Bittick
 Editorial Board John Balik (Santa Monica, CA),
 Jack Berryman (U. of Washington-Seattle), Vic Boff (New
 York, NY), William H. Goetzmann (U. of Texas-Austin),
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Terry Todd
The University of Texas-Austin

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."

The President's Report

Growing Old Strong

Al Thomas, Kutztown University

This issue, Vic Boff, Founder and President of the Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen, has given his space to one of the most respected writers and thinkers in our field, Al Thomas, so that he could discuss the aim of the Association.

Research validates the contribution of aerobic activities to health and increased longevity. The popular press and professional medical literature abound with stories about older folks who have sustained their health and still others who have restored themselves to health by aerobic activities such as running, biking, swimming, and walking. It's clear that aerobic training has had a good press, even for senior citizens.

On the other hand, anaerobic activities, such as weight training, could hardly have had a worse press through the years, until very recently. Surely, folk wisdom has traditionally argued, tugging against resistance provided by barbells must ruin the hearts and backs and hasten the demise of even the healthiest of youths and must, therefore, be especially ill-advised for old-timers.

Folk "wisdom," however, isn't always so wise, as was demonstrated in a recent study at the University of Rochester Medical Center. Much to the clinicians' surprise, forty "moderately to severely" depressed folks were as "significantly improved" by weight training as by that media-blessed standby, jogging. This, of course, comes as no surprise to weight training senior citizens who know that nothing, not even aerobics, provides the "natural high" and mood elevation provided by plain old-fashioned pumping iron.

Objectively examined apart from the age-old prejudice against "weightlifting," weight trainers in their sixties, seventies, and eighties give clear evidence of profound physical benefit. Though old lifters are, admittedly, likely to supplement their lifting with some aerobics, lifting remains the exercise closest to their hearts. And lifting, rather than aerobics, seems to be the main contributor to their vigorous and healthy old age.

Current research suggests that senior citizens whose lean bodyweight exceeds the norm for their age and bodytype enjoy better health and less susceptibility to illness and unsteadiness than their contemporaries. The old truism trotted out to defend aerobics for oldsters—the idea that one can never be too lean—may prove, like so many other "truisims," to be simply untrue. The sort of body mass compatible with vigorous, graded weight training may be the very best insulation between the older athlete and atrophy and, more importantly, between him and decrepitude or serious illness. This suggests

an important research consideration for exercise-oriented gerontologists of the future, a consideration long-deferred because of the scientific community's unscientific endorsement of the folk prejudice concerning the "dangers of weight training."

The Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen comprises men who have trained with weights for more than half a century, some of whom have been among the world's exemplars in the sport, men who at ages near and beyond the promised "three score and ten" still lift weights, not just diligently, but mightily, sustaining high levels of good health in the process.

Because abundant health, no less than strength and muscle, has been and remains the motivation for our having been drawn into the iron game and having remained barbell enthusiasts, we feel strongly that the implicit endorsement of anabolic steroids by many athletes today is anathema to everything that made the game so appealing to us "way back when"—as well as to everything we envision as the fulfillment of its birthright, the beauty and dignity of which we defended back when it required courage to be weightmen, and which we continue to defend now and will defend until our last breath.

The training philosophy of our Association's "main man", its "Chief Executive Officer-Emeritus," John Grimek, who turned 80 this past June—expresses for us the best in natural bodybuilding and strength training, as well as the strength-generalist's cultivation of versatility, a quality that we miss in today's athletes. It's clear that the Grimek physique was architected the old-fashioned way: through hard work and imagination. It's the product of the old "thousand-and-one exercises," not to mention lots of weightlifting, strongmen feats, odd lifting, adagio, muscle control, handbalancing, leaping, weight throwing—you name it; Grimek's done it. It's the kind of physique that looks as though it can do anything because it has, indeed, done everything.

This focus upon Grimek is simply upon him as a sort of "Representative Man" of an era and mind-set that we admire and hope to see perpetuated in the generation now coming onto the platform and dais. In this Age of the Specialist, he remains unabashedly a remarkable anachronism: strengthdom's man for all seasons. He was and remains a powerful and full-functioning hand in an age when most men seem satisfied to be fingers or even, simply, a finger: this one a weightlifter, that one a bodybuilder, the other a powerlifter — or, not infrequently, "a great bencher."

Our Association's purpose, however, is not ideological, but rather to celebrate the joy of the body and strength, in

age no less than in youth, because the human body is meant not just to survive, but to prevail. In our view, the body is an artifact which in its own way is almost as responsive in age as it was in youth to massive renovation in both strength and mass.

our purpose is to demonstrate that, like youth, strength is often wasted on the young. In the hierarchy of things to be cherished, the forever-trained human body remains, even in its twilight, a revelation, not just of what's human but of what's divine.

Our purpose is to demonstrate that, although the body is poignantly vulnerable, its ever-training tenant confers a blessing upon everyone with his "fierce tears." Indeed, the old-timer takes just as fierce pleasure in his training as the youngster. If anything, the joy of his training is enhanced by his deeply felt sense of his humanness and his awareness that man's transcendence of mortality is, needless to say, limited, but that this very limitation makes his seized pleasure all the sweeter.

Our purpose is to remember, to pay our debts of gratitude to the iron we all love so deeply, to iron's bittersweet game, and to iron's evergreen heroes. Champions of strength who range, as heroes should, freely—beyond the withering grasp of Death—in the ever-young and deepest of the heart's several chambers.

No less than all this, our purpose is also as a reminder of the halcyon days of our youth, whose memories resonate in physical and psychic systems that were then, and remain still, our healthiest.

Our purpose, finally, is to demonstrate that one need not rust with age, that losses which are truly experienced can be made into acquisitions, and that although much is stolen by time, much remains: that remnant being the noblest of our human components. In the words given by Tennyson to Ulysses:

*How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.
Though much is taken, much abides; and though
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are—
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.*

Books and Magazines

Terry Todd
The University of Texas

Inch, Thomas. *The Art and Science of Lifting*, (London: Thomas Inch, Ltd., no date) 100 pp.

Inch explains in this book the different lifts that were listed as official by the newly organized British Weight Lifters' Association. He also offers advice on selecting the proper type of barbells. He advocates the use of disc-loading barbells rather than shot-loading barbells. He gives his estimates of the ultimate limits to which future lifting may progress; and, in light of the three quarters of a century which has passed since the publication of the book, the predictions make fascinating reading. Inch also advises that an aspiring lifter should add some form of light exercise such as skipping, walking or rowing to his exercise with heavy barbells and dumbbells. As for the development of maximum muscular strength, he lists and describes the three key lifts which, in his opinion, are most likely to produce this strength. In what could hardly be called a coincidence, the three lifts are very much the same as the three "powerlifts"—the squat, bench press and deadlift.

An historically significant passage of the book is contained in a section entitled, "A New Style of Lifting: An Important Discovery." This "discovery" deals with a method of lifting weights in one motion, from the floor to the shoulders or overhead, i.e., a clean or a snatch. Inch states, concerning this technique, "I had always advocated a quick 'snatch' at any weight and then to lift with great velocity right from the moment of grasping the bar-bell. I proved eventually that a much more scientific method, and one more in accord with the laws of gravity, is to lift on a totally different plan, i.e., TO TAKE ALL WEIGHTS THAT HAVE TO BE LIFTED TO THE SHOULDERS SLOWLY AT FIRST AND THEN, AT A CERTAIN POINT, QUICKLY." The historical significance of this statement is that it appears to be the first published advocacy of a lifting technique which is now used by competitive weightlifters throughout the world virtually to the exclusion of all other lifting styles. Inch stated that every pupil of his who adopted this method of lifting registered an immediate and marked improvement.



LETTERS

This issue we are again using the space that will usually be taken by the "Grapevine" to bring you more of the wonderful, newsfilled letters we've been receiving. As we said last issue, we intend to have a modest "Letters" section in every *IGH*, along with a "Grapevine." We invite your comments.

A Fellowship Subscriber

Heartfelt thanks for the copy of your new journal, and good luck with it. It fills a real void and does it superbly well.

Enclosed please find a check to cover a McLean Fellowship subscription.

All our best to you and Jan. We look forward to seeing your library when the opportunity presents itself.

Jack C. Long, M.D.
Plainview, TX

Dr. Long and his wife, another Dr. Long, have practiced medicine for approximately a half century up in the panhandle of Texas. In his salad years, Jack Long was an outstanding student of Sig Klein and his photograph appears in an issue of the short-lived magazine, Klein's Bell.

A Reminiscence About Lou Riecke

I've just finished reading and enjoying almost all of your first issue of *Iron Game History*.

IGH has a professional look and is extremely well edited. Appealing to both the academic and non-academic reader may be difficult, but if anyone can pull it off, it's you and Jan, with all your energy. I commend you for your first effort, wish you well, and enclose my subscription as an indication of my support.

The two parts of the first issue that I enjoyed the most were your statement of purpose and "The Iron Grapevine". The statement of purpose because I wanted to know what *IGH* was about, and "The Iron Grapevine" because I am interested in knowing what people that I have known or read about in the past are currently doing. I was especially grateful to be brought up to date on Lou Riecke. I first saw Lou when my dad took me to Dallas to compete in an Olympic lift meet in the '50s. I well remember seeing Lou for the first time at the weigh- in. He

was hying to make my weight class, and I remember confiding to my father that he would be sorry if he succeeded. Well, as you can imagine, he did succeed and he was not sorry. My dad and I laughed about that for years as we followed Lou in person and in the magazines making one record after another. Lou Riecke has always been one of my very favorite Olympic lifters.

Clarence Bass
Albuquerque, NM

*Clarence is too kind, particularly about our energy. We remember stopping to visit him last summer at his home at the base of a large mountain. Clarence, who has about as much bodyfat on his entire body as I have on my right forearm, told us enthusiastically about his practice of running up the mountain, and even invited us to join him in a run. Fortunately, it was late in the day and I managed to change the subject until nightfall saved me. Many readers will be familiar with his excellent books and his column in *Muscle & Fitness*.*

IGH Needed

Enjoyed the first issue of *IGH* very much. Enclosed is a check for a two-year subscription. Interestingly enough, I had written to both John Grimek and Vic Boff within the last year about starting a magazine. With the demise of *Strength & Health* there is need for a magazine that covers topics like you are covering in *IGH*. I still feel there would be a market for a magazine catering to the non-professional, non-drug using physical culturist. Well, maybe someday.

By the way, did you ever hear any more about Eric Pedersen's present whereabouts? Hope all is going well with you.

Paul Niemi
Fitchburg, MA

Does anyone know Pedersen's whereabouts?

Ronald Walker Deserves Credit

Thanks for the copy of the new magazine. Looks interesting enough to invest in a subscription, so put me on your list.

One lifter who has never been accorded his rightful fame was Ronald Walker. In the '30s he was outlifting everybody in the world and was no behemoth, but a trim super strong man...attested by his one arm clean of 320. I think an article on him, if enough information is available, and photographs, would be in order. Some information on him (as I remember) was in the January '37 issue of *Strength & Health*. That was the issue that introduced me to lifting. I remember I was flat on my back with pneumonia at the time, but decided that lifting would be the answer to my exercise requirements.

I met John Y. Smith back in '38 when another fellow and I took the subway from Harvard to the Boston Y.M.C.A. for a workout. Smith had just come in to watch the boys in the

weight room, and we were told that he had been the strongest man in the world. He was 72 at the time, and his lifting interests were confined only to watching.

And 72 is what I am now, and I now can understand that muscle quality degenerates with time. I could clean press 300 until I was 51 and clean jerk it for a couple more years, but now I find that I can lift about 40% to 60% of my best..depending on the lifts. From a maximum bwt. of 250, I'm down to 185, same as in college, but the contractile tissue only puts out 60% to 70% pound for pound.

Nathaniel Heard
Sarasota, FL

Pete George Heads to Bulgaria

Congratulations on the birth of *Iron Game History*. May he grow to be a powerful world-wide force in the Iron Game. And, as we all hope for our progeny, may he have a long, healthy life, outliving all who preceded him.

Being a realist, I am aware that the publishing game, whether played for profit or nonprofit, most often ends up as a financial loss for its organizers. I hope *Iron Game History* proves to be an exception and that the Iron Game community will offer enough support to allow it not only to survive but to grow and thrive. In that spirit, I am sending \$100 for a McLean Fellowship Patron's Subscription.

Every group of people, whether they be a nation, profession or sport, should be aware of and take pride in their past, and the Iron Game has matured to the point where the advent of *Iron Game History* was due. Your challenge as editors will be to maintain *Iron Game History* as an authoritative scholarly journal and as an appealing popular magazine.

Although I am delighted with the arrival of *Iron Game History*, I am saddened by the departure of *Strength & Health* and the transformation of *Iron Man*. I particularly lament the ill health of the Iron Game in the USA today. In Olympic lifting during the late 1940s and the 1950s we would not take a man on the world championship team unless he had a chance to win a medal. Now, we are elated when one of our lifters places in the top ten in his class. I realize this is not the subject of *Iron Game History*, but perhaps present day lifters may receive inspiration from reading about our past.

I must admit I was offended by your suggestion that I mutilate my copy of Vol. 1, No. 1 of *Iron Game History* by tearing out the last page. I hope that future collectors will highly prize this issue as the first of a long established journal that spread so much enlightenment.

I plan to go to Bulgaria next month. I will attend the Varna International Weightlifting Competition on the 13th to the 16th of April. I will then visit cousins in Plovdiv and Sofia. My parents were ethnic Bulgarians born in Macedonia, and my first language was Bulgarian. The facts that I have an Olympic gold medal in weightlifting and that the Bulgarians have been the first or second team in the world in the same sport for the last 10-15 years is purely coincidental. There were no lifters

of note in Bulgaria when I started lifting, and my father, who had a strong work ethic, thought it was ridiculous to do heavy labor "for no constructive purpose or pay". He forbid me to train, so I had to sneak after school to Larry Barnholth's garage (better known as the American College of Modern Weight Lifting). After I started to win national, world and Olympic titles my father thought it was OK for me to lift, but only if I continued to get A's and B's in school and maintained a part time job.

While in Sofia I will present a lecture at the medical school on obstructive sleep apnea and snoring. I have invented a device that prevents both, and I have published reports on my work in the *New England Journal of Medicine, Archives of Otolaryngology* and other medical journals. I have lectured on this subject in Sweden, Korea, Japan, and mainland China.

I will be interested to see if the random steroid testing program will have any effect on the amounts lifted in Varna.

Best wishes for many years of success with *Iron Game History*.

Peter T. George, D.D.S.
Honolulu, Hawaii

A Question of Gender

Excellent! In a word, that is my opinion of *IGH*.

I do have one small suggestion regarding the possible enhancement of *IGH*. As both men and women have contributed to the history of our iron game, I would suggest that both genders be represented on the *IGH* masthead. One way to do this, of course, would be like *The Body Builder* did in earlier years. That is, with an illustration of both Mr. America (e.g. Steve Reeves) and Ms. America (e.g. Abbye Stockton) as shown on the enclosed magazine covers.

In any case, keep up the good work!

Grover Porter, Ph.D.

Professor, Dept. of Acct. & Bus. Legal Studies
University of Alabama, Huntsville

We basically agree with Dr. Porter's suggestion but have yet to find a suitable classical engraving of a female athlete. The problem is to find a woman's figure with the detailed power of the version we used of the Farnese Hercules. But we're still looking. Any suggestions?

Love of Iron Game Eternal

It is enlightening to see something being offered to those of us who appreciate some form of diversity in what we are given in today's PC magazines.

Times change—the war, the draft—oddities and strangeness of the late '60s. Life sidetracks you at times. But some things always return and the love for the sport lives eternal. The backward thinking thrown at you [in the old days] by the uninformed and ill-mannered only fueled you on to do what you felt was right. Hell!—it felt good to do it—and you looked great to boot. If one endured the horrors of becoming

-in no particular order—musclebound, uncoordinated and—my all time favorite, “queer”—then one had to wonder what the early patrons of the sport contended with.

Roger Gelman
Forest Hills, NY

Last of a Generation

I would be delighted to receive future copies of *Iron Game History*.

For many years now I have opened *Ironman* and my first interest has been to read how my contemporaries are getting on. Alas, Willoughby, Klein, Steinborn, Paschall, Berry, Sansone (Tony), Jowett, Liederman, Podolak, and many others have died. When Hackenschmidt died it was almost the last of that generation which would include Pullum, Inch, Aston, Peglar, Sandow, Calvert, etc, many of whom I knew personally.

Wishing you and Jan health and happiness,
Joseph E. Assirati
London, England

We visited Joe Assirati in London back in the early '80s and, to us, he epitomized Physical Culture. He was very knowledgeable about all aspects of the game and he had been a real allrounder in his competitive years. Although he was approximately 80 years of age when we visited, he was wonderfully active, and every morning he would go for a walk interspersed with vigorous calisthenics, walking, as he said, at his “tallest and broadest.” His cousin, the professional wrestler, Bert Assirati, was one of the strongest men in the world in the 1930s '40s and '50s and he is still exercising with heavy dumbbells. Joe's brother, Charles, who died recently at 78, was England's version of Tony Sansone, modeling for the artists who produced some of London's most famous public statues.

Muscle Beach Newsletter

Thanks for your note and copy of *Iron Game History*. Although my main effort for the Muscle Beach Alumni Association has been the Gymnastic and Acrobatic History of Muscle Beach, the lifters and bodybuilders were all a part of that em.

I have been doing a lot of traveling of late for my *International Gymnastics* magazine and my involvement with the US Sports Acrobatics Federation and have got behind in the production of the MBAA Newsletter, but hope to get an edition out in the near future.

I wish you well with your *IGH*...Both Vic Boff and Joe Roark have given you a good base to work from as you carry the torch forward. I will send some MBAA data on to you when possible. However, most of my efforts have been pictorial and I know your space is limited for photos. . . A mention of the MBAA would be appreciated from time to time. . . Thanks.

Glenn M. Sundby
P.O. Box 7, Santa Monica, CA. 90406

Glenn Sundby has played a big role in bringing many of the old muscle beach boys (and girls) together and anyone interested in his publication can reach him at the above address.

Casey's Big Bench

It was good hearing from you.

I try to visit Pearl in Oregon a couple of times a year. He is a great man and a true friend. He is really amazing. He works out at 3:30 AM every morning except Sunday. He is now 59 but looks about 45. I really hit some great workouts with him. Was up there Thanksgiving and Christmas.

As for my current status, I retired from police work in 1982. Had about 14 years (all on the street) and retired on a medical—ulcer, blood pressure and arthritis. My knees and right elbow got banged up pretty bad while in a pursuit. Crashed the police unit. Was divorced in 1981. Raised my son by myself. He is now 22. For the most part I just kickback and take it easy on the 32 acres I own in Lucerne Valley.

I was impressed with your journal. Enclosed is a money order for a subscription. As for breaking the 600 I really can't give you much information that already has not been printed. I did cut back on my workouts and increased my bodyweight before the contest. The 620 I did was very easy and I felt that I could have done three reps with it. I felt I was good for about 650-660. The AAU officials said that a 4th attempt wouldn't count as a record so I saved my energy for the squat.

Pat Casey
Lucerne Valley, Ca

Pat Casey was, as most readers know, the first man to officially bench press both 500 and 600 pounds.

Liederman's Other Side

Your new publication is interesting—a sub is enclosed. Perhaps this book [Liederman's *The Unfinished Song of Achmed Mohammed*] would be of interest. Earle Liederman had writing talent as you will note, aside from his iron game efforts. He did a radio show also. This was after the wipe-out depression which closed his mail-order biz. The radio work was a program for lonely women and Earle wrote all his material

Mr. George Redpath
San Diego, Ca

George Redpath has been active in the game in a variety of ways for many, many years and we do appreciate Liederman's unusual book of verse. It is an interesting and rare addition to the Collection.

Words From An Historian

Thanks for your letter and for the very welcome copy of *Iron Game History*. I wish you much success! I certainly like the looks of Vol. I, No 1. I know that the amount of work it takes to put it out must be daunting, but I am equally sure that you are equal to the task. After all, if you don't do it, who will?

How often have we sung that refrain?

David Chapman
Los Angeles, California

*Dave Chapman has proven over the last several years to be a valuable addition to the ranks of iron game historians. He is an avid collector and his articles about past lifters and bodybuilders in **Iron Man** are always well researched.*

Word About Sipes

I spoke with you on the phone the night I received my first issue of **Iron Game History** and I promised you two things: the first was a "Where Are They Now" about Chuck Sipes. That is enclosed along with a picture book I thought you might enjoy. The quality is not the best, but I think those forearms still come through. The second item was a video tape of the first two Mr Olympia contests. I'm still working on that; so consider it forthcoming.

As I told you on the phone, I truly believe you are filling a much needed gap in the iron game. I wish you the best of luck and certainly hope the response is every bit as overwhelming as it deserves.

As an aside. I began my Institute as a consulting firm to combat the advertising hype and over exaggeration that the uninformed person is confronted with today. FREE WEIGHTS FOREVER!!!!!!!!!!!!

Norm Komich
Beverly, Mass.

We hope to include the article about Chuck Sipes in a future issue.

Bill Clark On The Road

I'm ashamed to be so slow in writing and sending a check. As you may have noted, weightlifting has taken a back seat the past two years with me. The loss of my life's savings in a gym didn't help matters and moving to the Braves and new responsibilities has consumed lots of time.

I enjoyed your initial **IGH**. If I have missed No. 2 by being so slow, please get it to me. I save 'em all. Spend far too much for such things. Between lifting publications and omithological journals, I'm always broke. Hang in there.

Bill Clark
Columbia, Missouri

Almost 80 And Still Posing

Received my second issue of **IGH**. So glad I subscribed, it brings back memories of people I spent time with and even trained with years ago.

In about one year I will be an octogenarian and am still posing at contests in Atlantic City, Showboats, Atlantics,

Resorts International, Trump, Valley Forge Convention Center, etc.; just to show youths what can be done by sensible training and good nutrition. I usually give a short talk about physical training and bring out how it helps to make life worth while.

I realize there are still some youths that don't regard old people as old fogeys so let us old-timers help them in every way we can.

Hope to see you again at the old-timers annual dinner and reunion Sept. 22 in New York.

Ted Keppler
Beverly, New Jersey

Another Fellowship Subscriber

Enclosed is a money order for fifty (50) dollars in support of this wonderful undertaking. I would suppose you found me through my subscription with Joe Roark. Nice that people of like mind can cooperate in such a venture. My background is relevant to interest in this field. Never an athlete of note, I did attain modest goals of above average strength & physique. I was even praised by Russ Warner for a frame similar to (Ahem)! Steve Reeves. The similarity extends to being born in 1947, the year Reeves won Mr. A. Further along my junior college track coach was a student teacher and coach of Reeves at Castlewort H.S. in Oakland in 1944. This contact led me to people like Paul Martin, Pacific Coast heavyweight champion in 1930; and mentor to Ed Yarick. As you well know the Oakland Community has been fertile ground for strength sport. The aforementioned Steve Reeves, Clarence Ross, Jack Delinger, Roy Hilligen (for a while), Jack LaLanne, Tommy Kono, Art Walge, Joe Corsi, Norman Marks, and more recently Mike Dayton.

Kevin O'Rourke
Oakland, California

Eiferman Speaks

Many thanks for your new magazine. I toured America from 1948 to 1975 doing over 15,000 schools in 49 states (not Alaska due to transportation). It was all prearranged & scheduled so I could visit schools. In each school I'd lecture and do human feats of strength and then have 15 minutes of music with trumpet and harmonica. And in the Elementary Schools, puppets and more music. There was no money in it because road expenses and lodging and traveling often were so high that nothing was left and I had to work in Health Clubs in the summer in Beverly Hills to get by. I loved it so much. I cared nothing about money at that time as I was single and had no responsibilities.

I hope you let me know if you folks get to Vegas. I sold my gym about 11/2 years ago and just do youth and senior citizen programs.

George Eiferman

We hope to devote an entire article in the future about the remarkable career of George Eiferman.

Suggestions and Corrections

The *IGH* newsletter format is well done, the pale yellow paper is a relaxing tone, the type size can be made a bit smaller for better space utilization but just a bit.

I saw Lou Riecke make his World's Record 325 lbs. snatch in 1964 at the Los Angeles YMCA. It was perfection of movement. I think this was the 1964 National YMCA Championships. After Riecke made the 181 lb. class record he seemed unsure what to do. Norbert Schemansky who also lifted at the meet grabbed Lou Riecke by one arm and led him to the weigh-in area for bodyweight and barbell weight verification. 'Ski' made sure Lou Riecke would get official recognition for his great lift. As you folks at *IGH* know many Weight-lifting and Power-lifting records of the past have been sloppily recorded and often sent in too late for official acceptance, etc.

Vol. I No. 1 *IGH* report on the Muscle Beach Weight Club Reunion should read "Santa Monica, Calif." instead of "Venice Beach, Calif." The "Dungeon" mentioned in the same article was the former Vic Tanny (4th and Broadway, Santa Monica, Calif.) gymnasium located in the basement at that corner for many years. That corner is now inhabited by a new red brick bank building. Oldtimers may remember the wall paintings of various sports which covered most walls in the "Dungeon" during the Vic Tanny days.

Henry L. Duval
Santa Monica, California

Oerter the Nonpareil

I have always been a naturally strong and quick person which I realized as a kid just 'horsin' around with buddies. It seemed that I could always throw harder, run faster and lift more easily than anyone else. This led me to jobs on 'bull' gangs that would unload heavy equipment off trucks or carry heavier than normal loads of construction materials as the floors of various skyscrapers were being poured.

With these abilities or perhaps 'instincts' it was natural to start lifting with a few friends in my father's garage in the early 50's. I was fortunate in that two of my friends of German descent had fathers who had lifted in competitive events back in the old country as kids and still had the 'weights' in their cellars. To this day I can still feel the finely machined Olympic bars and well balanced plates. My weights in the garage consisted of two York 110 lb. starter sets plus some homemade benches, pulleys, squat racks etc.

At about the same time I started going into Queens, New York where Lou Degni had a gym. It was the old sweat box type with plenty of weight, homemade racks that did not break, poor light, lousy showers, few mirrors, solid dumbbells and plenty of folks who worked their butts off. No one was there to impress anyone else and to this day I prefer that

environment. New York has always had a tradition of lifting clubs because the basis for such things came from Europe. Queens and Long Island in particular have always been a good place for weight gyms.

I guess what I'm saying is that it was quite natural for me to incorporate lifting into my training regimen for the weight throws. The Northeast has always had a tradition of throwing and weight lifting events and the two have been fused together since the latter part of the last century. With this regional background and the weight throwing tradition of the club I competed for (New York Athletic Club), I found the attitude that lifting for athletics being a big negative to be nonsense. The coaches at Kansas University in 1954 thought that an athlete would become bound' or in some mysterious way lose his athletic ability by lifting. They did manage to scrape up a few hundred pounds of weights to satisfy my requests but it was a reluctant agreement on their part. It wasn't until I returned home summers or graduated that I was able to get back to full lifting and have my distances move out to where they should be.

Well that's the early days. I have always stressed a heavy overall body building program. An athlete allows too many weak links to exist if the lifting becomes specific to the event. By working all things with speed and good weight, the breaking points are minimized and an athlete can maintain his event for decades.

Al Oerter
West Islip, New York

*We asked Al to provide some information about his early days of lifting and this letter only touches the surface of what we hope to bring to the pages of *IGH* in the future.*

We continue this issue with a listing of significant happenings—mainly dates of birth or death—during the months generally covered by the current issue. If you have additions or corrections for future issues, please send them either to our offices at the University of Texas or to Joe Roark at the address listed at the end of this issue’s “Roark Report.”

July 1:

1963-powerlifting no longer controlled by Olympic lifting committee

July 2:

1845 Prof. Louis Attila (Durlacher) born. Died March 15, 1924
1984 Oscar State died; born Apr 26, 1922

July 3:

1950 Armand Tanny won Mr. USA

July 4:

1939 Roland Essmaker won Mr. America and Joe Abbenda was born-he would win Mr. A in 1962

1941 Sergio Oliva born

1952 Beverly Jocher won Miss Muscle Beach

July 5:

1862 Franz "Cyclops" Bienkowski born

1912 John Terpak born

1955 Paul Anderson Day

July 6:

1959 Diana and Joe Weider separate-were wed in Jan 1947; daughter born in 1958

July 7:

1950 Jack Walsh backlifts 4235 lbs.

July 8:

1837 Donald Dinnie born; died Apr 2, 1916

1909 Joe Miller born

1917 Jules Bacon born

July 9:

1983 George Greenwood died

July 11:

1969 George F. Jowett died, born Dec 23, 1891

July 13:

1941 W.L. Travis died; born Feb 21, 1876

1984 John Davis died, born Jan 12, 1921

July 14:

1941 Les Stockton wed Pudgy Eville

July 16:

1946 Alan Stephen and Frank Kay appeared on Bob Wright's "Human Interest in the News" TV show on WKBK. Was first instance in which posing and weightlifting were televised in America.

July 18:

1949 George Redpath opened his gym in Los Angeles

1985 Bob Hoffman died, born Nov. 9, 1898

July 20:

1882 Karl Swoboda born (or born July 28?); died April 1933

1936 Jack Kent bent pressed the Rolandow Dumbell

July 21:

1924 Dudley Allen Sargent died, born Sept. 28, 1849

1941 or 1942 Chuck Fish born

July 23:

1906 Arthur Saxon bent pressed 386 lbs.

1927 Sig Klein featured for the first time by Ripley in *The Saturday Evening Post*

July 26:

1930 Robert "Buster" McShane born; died?

July 27:

1914 Tom Bruno born; died Apr. 5, 1984

July 28:

1911 Tony Terlazzo born; died Mar. 26, 1966

July 29:

1896 Joseph Moquin born

1982 Harold Sakata died; Born Jan 7, 1920

July 31:

1898 the first world weightlifting championships

Aug 2:

1878 George Hackenschmidt born; died Feb. 19, 1968

1955 Bruce Randall reached a bodyweight of 401 lbs

Aug 5:

1891 Percy Hunt born; died?

1901 Andre Rolet born; died?

Aug 6:

1921 Arthur Saxon died, born Apr. 28, 1878

Aug 8:

1863 Angus MacAskill died, age 38 or 39

Aug 9:

1904 Leo Gaudreau born.

1949 Ivan Padoubny died, age 78

Aug 10:

1749 Thomas Topham died of self-inflicted wounds; born 1710

1905 J.C. Hise born; died Sept. 26, 1972

1986 Mac Batchelor died; born May 24, 1910

Aug 11:

1778 Friedrich Ludwig "Father" Jahn born; died Oct. 15, 1852

1917 Abbye "Pudgy" Stockton born

1931 Doris Barrilleaux born

Aug 14:

1916 Orville Wertzbaugher born

1934 Bruce White born

Aug 16:

1863 Anton Riha born

1868 Bernarr MacFadden born; died Oct. 12, 1955

1912 Barton Horvath born

Aug 17:

1866 Charles Batta born; died June 7, 1939

1935 Charles Poire died; born 1866

1983 Dave Matlin died

Aug 18:

1946 Boyer Coe born

Aug 19:

1909 Walter Podolak born; died Feb. 16, 1984

1978 Charles Richards died

Aug 20:

1922 Irwin "Zabo" Koszewski born

Aug 21:

1910 Bob Peoples born

1916 Dave Mayor born

1916 Eddie Harrison born

1924 Joe Pitman born

1968 Bob Hasse died

Aug 22:

1962 Charles Rigoulot died; born Nov. 3, 1903

Aug 25:

1906 Hans Streyer died; born 1849

Aug 27:

1868 John Grunn Marx born; died 1912

1905 Andrew Jackson born

Aug 29:

1960 Ben Weider married

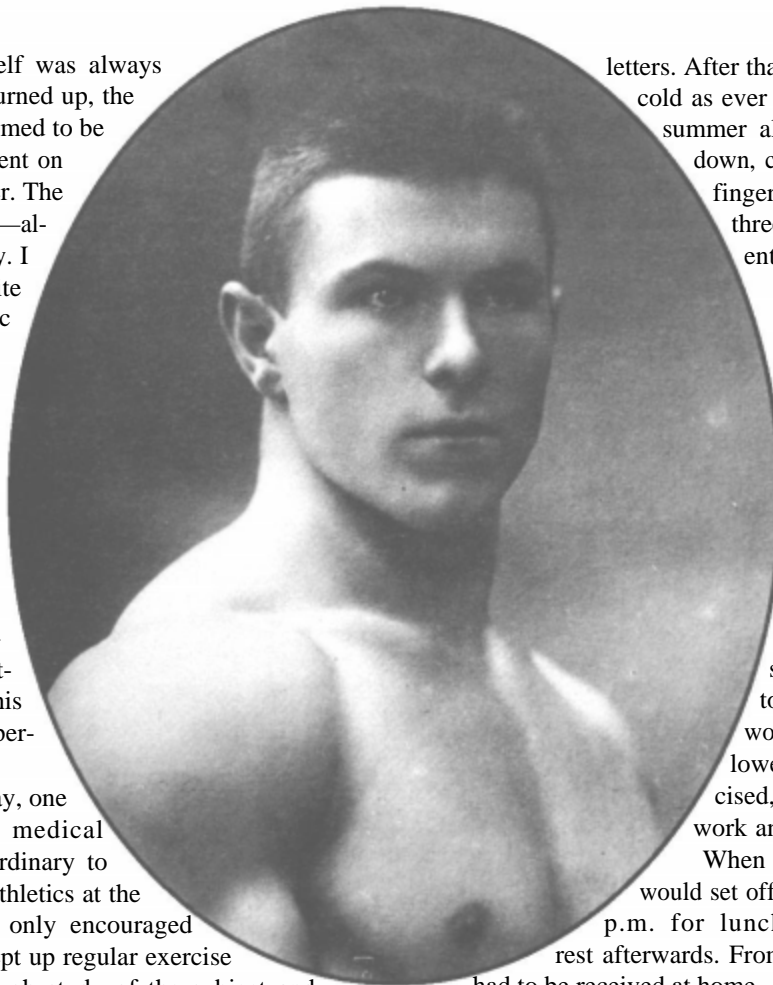
1960 W.A. Pullum died; born Apr. 8, 1868

The Doctor himself was always busy, yet, the moment he turned up, the room and everyone in it seemed to be transformed, and training went on more energetically than ever. The man was unique in his way—always so unselfish and kindly. I never met anyone else quite like him. His was the magic wand which inspired us all. At times he would talk to us and, though his eyes might look tired, his body was always well poised and erect, while he dropped a word of praise here and encouragement there. Then the strong and the weak, the phlegmatic and the energetic, would all stand to attention and pay tribute to his singular and enlightened personality.

He was, by the way, one of Leningrad's leading medical men, being Physician-in-Ordinary to the Tsar. He had taken to athletics at the age of forty-one and not only encouraged others to follow suit but kept up regular exercise himself. He made a thorough study of the subject and systematized weightlifting. But though practicing what he preached, he seldom paid attention to see that his advice was followed. His mental outlook was mostly concerned with record lifts. Everything about the man was striking—movements, stride and manner of speech. Friend Guido Meyer, one of the strongest amateurs in Russia, used to imitate him to perfection saying: "All I want is record lifts, more record lifts, and still more record lifts, so hump yourselves and get busy."

No, he didn't coach me either in weightlifting or wrestling. In fact, the latter didn't interest him much, and I was just left to carry on in my own way. But he had decided views about nourishment and told us to leave condiments, sauces, beer, wine and liqueur out of it altogether. Smoking he considered to be definitely harmful. As for sleep, he thought eight hours out of the twenty-four ought to be enough for anyone. Every night when he went to bed, he wrote on a card what time he was to be called next morning, and the servant, an old Caucasian, would knock at the door at the hour indicated.

Once dressed, he had breakfast—bread, butter and tea—and then went through his correspondence and replied to



letters. After that, he'd have a cold bath, as cold as ever he could get it, winter and summer alike. He'd step into it, sit down, cover nose and ears with his fingers, and then lean backwards three times, immersing himself entirely. Getting out of the bath, he wouldn't use either soap or towel, but started lifting weights. After twenty or thirty minutes of this, varying the movements as much as possible so as to bring every single muscle into play, he was soon well warmed up and dry. He never stood still or sat down between exercises, but walked up and down. For some eighteen months we took our baths together—he would have his first, and I followed—then, while we exercised, he'd tell me stories of his work and experiences.

When that was over, the doctor would set off to visit out-patients, return p.m. for luncheon and for an hour's rest afterwards. From 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. patients had to be received at home. At 7 p.m. he dined, and at 8 p.m. resumed medical practice which might last until one o'clock in the morning. During this evening session, he often had as many as a hundred to attend to, mostly of the poorer classes.

As far as he could, he systematised his professional work; many of his prescriptions were already written out so as to avoid the loss of time entailed in copying them. Practically all his patients knew him as he knew them. Men and women entered his study prepared for an examination and no time was lost. In one corner was a weighing machine with a chair hanging on the scale, and he could overlook this from his seat behind the writing table.

He was indeed a great hearted man, not only attending to poorer patients without making any charge, but frequently paying out of his own pockets for their medicines. His mental activity was on a par with his physical energy. At the age of sixty-three, in spite of the immense amount of work he got through, he claimed to be more vigorous than he had been at forty. This he attributed to constant exercise with heavy weights.

The Roark Report

The Need for References

Joe Roark



There is no such book. Therefore, you cannot use it to check references about who was on the cover of which muscle magazine when, or which 1949 magazines covered the World Weightlifting Championships. Those questions, along with thousands of others, are not easily referenced.

If you have a large collection of old muscle magazines, you can generally fumble through them to locate and/or verify certain statements which are presented in the modern muscle magazines when they refer to history. If you have no access to such a collection, you can just fumble.

Recently, Larry Scott was quoted in an interview as having been inspired by a 1955 cover photo of George Payne on a copy of *Muscle Builder* magazine. Now, frankly, the name George Payne is new to me—so I assumed George Paine was the coverperson to whom Scott referred; and, not having the book that doesn't exist, I checked my files...

What I learned was that no one named George Payne ever appeared on the cover of *Muscle Builder* magazine in 1955 or any other year, nor on any of the other thousands of covers I have filed. George Paine appeared on the June 1952 *Your Physique*. So who inspired Larry Scott? Jimmy Payne? His only 1955 cover appearance was on May's *Muscle Power*. Now there are many mags not filed in my system, but it can be ascertained that no one named George Payne appeared on the cover of *Muscle Builder*.

So what? So, it is becoming easier for incorrect references to slip into the current muscle literature because there are so few current writers with access to the resources they need to check dusty facts.

In the next issue of *IGH* this space will present a chronology of when certain muscle magazines began publishing, when publication ended, and how many issues constitute a complete collection of each title. The list will be complete for some titles, incomplete for others, and will begin in the late 1800's.

As I begin this process, I am making an unabashed appeal for your help in composing the chronology. If you have knowledge of any newsletter, magazine, regional lifting report etc.—no matter how small its circulation or how brief its printed life—please share that info with me and I will pass it on, with credit, to the readers of *IGH*. Perhaps in this way a main

body of literature can begin to be catalogued, perhaps even collected into one reference source.

Collecting can be confusing. Some examples: If you have issue 1:1 of Weider's former magazine, *Demi-Gods*, you have February 1966 with Frank Hollfeder on the cover. Or, you have the March 1961 issue with Larry Scott on the cover. *Demi-Gods*, apparently, had two runs separated by five years from beginning to beginning. Can you supply partial or complete info on this title? Also, do you know when the following titles began or ended, or how many issues complete a collection of a title?

—Walt Baptiste and his wife published *You*, according to S&H (July 1955, p. 65). *You* was "a very interesting little newspaper" concerning the spiritual and mental as well as the physical.

—*Iron Man* in January 1950 referred to Chester Teegarden's monthly bulletin from the YMCA in Berkeley, CA.

—Irvin Johnson (later known as Rhea H. Blair) published his own news bulletin and it apparently had two publishing runs - one circa the summer of 1952.

—Dick Fowler published an intermountain newsletter of weightlifting around the Salt Lake City area.

—by 1959 Lew Dick and Steve Rapp planned to issue a newsheet. Did they? Have you any copies? And on and on the list can go.

Now, you may be thinking, why not just contact the persons involved, or their relatives? Sounds easy, and in some cases I have tried. Usually I am questioned as to why I would be interested in such remote knowledge, and rather than being flattered that memories are being revived, the family members meet my efforts with distrust.

On the other hand, some contacts have seemed hopeful, only to prove useless. I have received answers ranging from the fact that a warehouse fire destroyed all stock copies of *Muscle Digest*, to two editors who each promised me sets of their former newsletters—one saying it was on his desk as we spoke and he would mail it (he never did)—to an editor who did not know the history of his own magazines, to an editor who "had all those materials" in storage.

Indeed, sometimes the staff at a magazine does not know the history of that magazine. For instance, *Health and Strength*, in most mentions of its beginnings, is usually referred to as having an early 1890's start, usually 1892. But

H&S has offered other starting dates through the years. Historian David Chapman has never seen an issue of *H&S* earlier than March 1900 and that is a volume #2 issue. In my own collection, vol 2:9 is December 1900. Not even the British Museum has an issue earlier than 1900. So perhaps when the June 5, 1947 issue of *H&S* refers fondly to the “Old Mag” being published since 1899, that was correct. But two months later, in 1947, *H&S* refers to itself as having been published for 55 years (1892). By 1953 it still mentions 55 years (1898) and by 1962, 65 years of publishing(1898).

More recently, *Muscle Training Illustrated* has continued to mislabel its issues since the April 1985 number, which was #121 but was designated by *MTI* as #122. The error continues to the present. And collectors are aware that *MTI* published nothing between December 1969 and October 1970. Similarly, *Muscle Mug International* from Canada, which will present issue #100 in September 1990, did not publish be-

tween December 1977 and November 1978.

If you have issue 1:3 of *Muscle Builder* take your pick. Each of the following is 1:3—October 1953, May 1958, June 1958, and September 1958. So you see the difficulty in arranging chronologies for the printed pumping pulp. Will you help?

Send me a postcard or letter at P.O. Box J, St. Joseph, IL 61873, listing the publications on which you can supply information. I will reply to let you know if we have the info already or if we need additional info. Let's pool our references and catalog Dave Hall's *The Barbell*, and both *The Strongman* publications, and the *Trevor Bulletin* and the dozens of other less well-known periodicals that have been a part of our sport's history. And please do not assume we have info on a given title. We would rather have redundant info than none.

Thanks for your help, and the sooner you write, the more complete the chronology in the August issue will be.

