

AOBS NEWSLETTER

The Association of Oldetime Barbell & Strongmen

An International Iron Game Organization – Organized in 1982
Vic Boff – Founder and President 1917-2002
Artie Drechsler – President 2003 – Present

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September 2024

We hope you have been enjoying your summer, with the special opportunities for outside activities the season offers. We wish you all a great fall!

In this month's newsletter, we focus on the October 1946 issue of Strength and Health. Its cover features a photo of a relative unknown, Bill Ghesquiere, of Detroit.

This issue features an article by John Grimek on how to improve your press, the results of the 1946 self-improvement contest, hand balancing articles by Gordon Venables and Bob Jones, Pudgy Stockton's Barbelles column, a report on the US's first post war international weightlifting competition with Canada, an installment of Bob Hoffman's "The Story of the York Barbell Club" and much more.

In addition to coverage of the October 1946 S&H, we have some great news about continuing progress on our revamped website, which we very much hope you'll enjoy. Among the additions there are extensive articles on Tommy Kono, John Davis, Norb Schemansky and Bob Bednarski.

We also provide news on the wonderful results of our US athletes at the Paris Olympics and on a book about Tommy Kono published in 2023 (we just heard about it).

Finally, there is the sad news of the passing of one of the Iron Game's great supporters – ,Dr.Richard Herrick – a little belated as we just learned of his passing.

Once again, my thanks go to Lou DeMarco and my wife JoAnne for their editing suggestions. As always, any remaining errors are my own. We hope you enjoy reading this issue of our newsletter. We had fun preparing it!

Yours in strength and health,

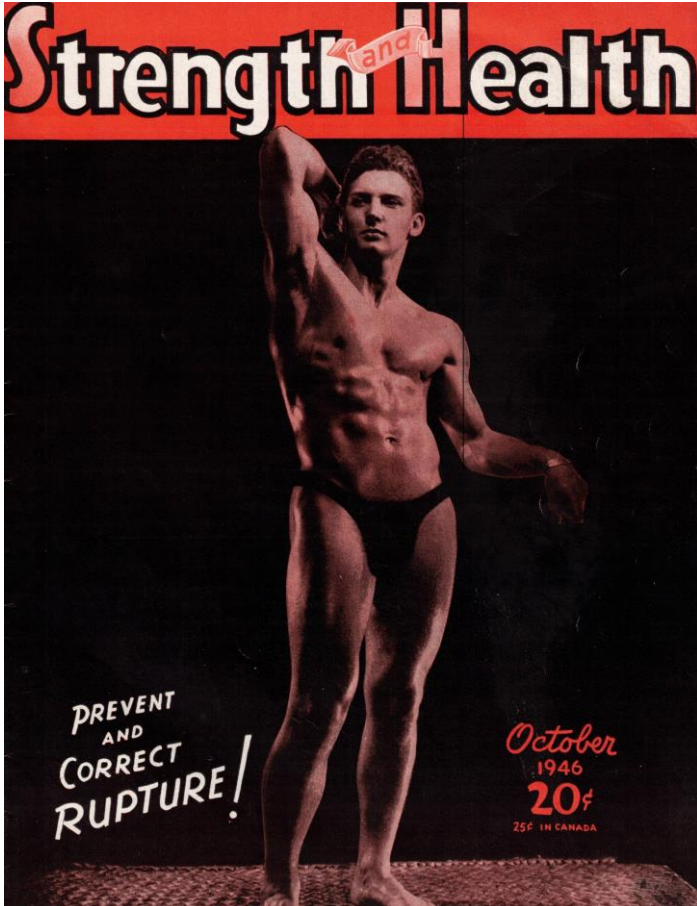


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Artie Drechsler

Strength & Health as the Iron Game Matures – October 1946

By Artie Drechsler



On the cover, Bill Ghesquiere, of Detroit

In October of 1946, verdicts were rendered at the Nuremberg Trials, sentencing 12 of the worst war criminals, all from Germany, to death by hanging. One of the most notorious of those convicted, Hermann Goring, poisoned himself to avoid execution.

Faraway Hill, was the first soap opera ever shown on a TV network. It appeared on the DuMont Television Network and was broadcast only in New York and Washington, running for 12 weeks.

The worst civilian airplane crash to date occurred on October 3. There were 39 people

aboard when the plane crashed into a Canadian hillside.

A V-2 Rocket launched from New Mexico reached an altitude of 100 miles and sent back unprecedented information on the sun, such as the first photograph of the solar ultraviolet spectrum. The Tsinghua University in China reopened after the Japanese had raided it nine years earlier. The draft in the US was ended on October 11.

President Truman ended all wartime price controls when a meat shortage threatened to occur as a result of the controls. Prices went up initially, but production soon increased dramatically.

After the Communist Party took control of mainland China in 1949, former Chinese president Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan where he ruled it as the "Republic of China" until his death in 1975.

The United Nations General Assembly met for the first time in NYC with 51 members in the UN's temporary home in Flushing Meadows, NY. The US's Atomic Energy Commission was established.

The ocean liner Queen Elizabeth made its first voyage as a luxury ocean liner (its debut in commercial use had to be delayed by its use as a troop carrier during WWII. RCA demonstrated privately the first color TV system that would be approved for use in the US.

Bob Hoffman's editorial in the October issue of S&H was titled "Strength and Health for the Business and Professional Man."

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He opens his editorial with the statement “The professional man, doctor, dentist, lawyer, minister, spends a great many years in study and preparation for his life's work. The medical doctor usually has at least 16 years of study and internship before he becomes a private practitioner. Other professional men study and train themselves nearly as long. Thus the young professional man is 25 to 30 years of age before he starts out entirely for himself. Even then there are years of study, years during which every spare cent of income is invested in equipment, books, years when he pays his debt. When he is far enough along to stand on his own feet financially, he is well advanced in life. Just how many years of efficient activity can he look forward to when he reaches this point in his life?”

Bob's answer is that this all depends on his mode of living, whether he's built himself a balanced life that includes self-maintenance. For his health will be determined by that effort to a great degree and the length of time he will be able to serve depends on the balance he has achieved.

His years will be more productive if he is strong and super healthy. And this will contribute to his appearance, which can be very important to one's success.

It is important that his mind be keen and not dulled by lack of sleep, the poisons of overeating, drinking alcohol or smoking, which will affect his mind and body. Instead, super health will enable great work.

He promises it will not be difficult to be super healthy if you follow strength and health building rules. He argues the time has passed when men who wish to become leaders can neglect themselves physically.

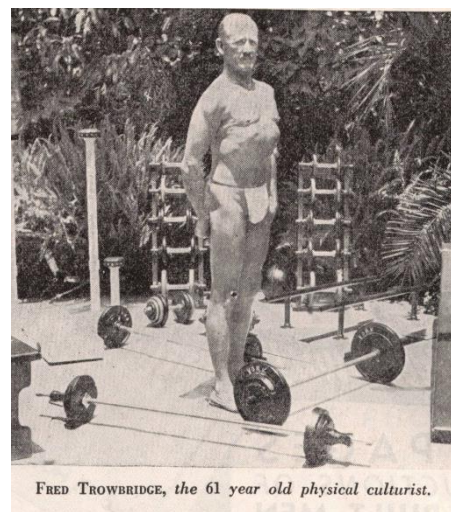
He points to Ben Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt as a few examples of those who

reached high office in this country and who were exceptional physical specimens.

While he suggests that while even mild exercise can confer benefits and is worth pursuing, he is happy to report that more and more people are taking up weight training. For instance, white collar workers are among those ordering the most weight training equipment (while in the past this was more common among blue collar workers).

They are seeing medical doctors who order barbells not only for their patients but for themselves as well. They see that more lawyers are ordering weights as well. YMCAs, schools and colleges are doing much more weight training. Even churches are ordering weight training equipment.

He closes his editorial by saying “I sincerely hope that all leaders in the world of business, the professions, the church, will learn for themselves of the multitude of benefits to be derived from weight training. Improve themselves, and pass the word on to others, so that they too will taste the joys of superb physical fitness gained in this interesting, pleasurable way.”



FRED TROWBRIDGE, the 61 year old physical culturist.

In the “Letters to the Editor” column there is a letter and picture of Fred Trowbridge (shown above). At the age of 61, Fred has quite

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physique. What is impressive about Fred's case is that he only took up weight training six years earlier, after not being active for decades. Fred's results are a testament to the benefits of weight training, even when one starts it relatively late in life.

In Gord Venables "Incredible But True" column, he reports that Grigori Novak set three new world light-heavyweight records at the recent USSR Championships. He pressed 303 lbs, snatched 286.5 lbs and lifted 363.5 lbs. in the C&J, exceeding the world record in the total by a large margin.

There is also an illustration of Tony Favardo, who has reportedly performed a handstand with his hand spaced 52" apart.

On a recent visit to York, Al Stephan pressed 198 lbs. for eight repetitions and strict curled 170 lbs. for eight reps as well.

Gord reports that he lifted in a meet in Canada 12 years earlier that was conducted with two platforms at once. Lifters and officials of today sometimes act as if the two or more platforms idea is new, when it is actually at least 90 years old.

"Improve Your Press," by John Grimek is next up in the magazine. The article is accompanied by three pictures of Steve Stanko doing a seated press, one picture with the bar on the shoulders, a second with the bar at the top of his head and a third with the bar fully locked out.

John begins his article by arguing that the press in the most controversial Olympic lift then being done. Officials often disagree with each other about where a given press is good, and the audience often disagrees with the referees.

Grimek urges that new lifters be taught to press strictly and correctly. And he argues that if you don't have a good press, you give up valuable pounds to your competitors. He also suggests that if one permits oneself to lean back while

pressing you will lose the ability to feel the difference between a good press and one that will be turned down by the judges in a competition.

When it comes to learning how to press correctly, one should take all muscles other than the arms and shoulders out of the picture (the abs, low back, hips and legs). This is best done by either doing a seated version of the press, or pressing while sitting on one's toes in the full squat.

To train the seated press John recommends sitting on a bench with no back, 13-15" high. The legs can either be placed beside the bench or extended in front of the lifter, but in no event can they be hooked or propped in a way that gives the upper body any support. Rather they must remain free.

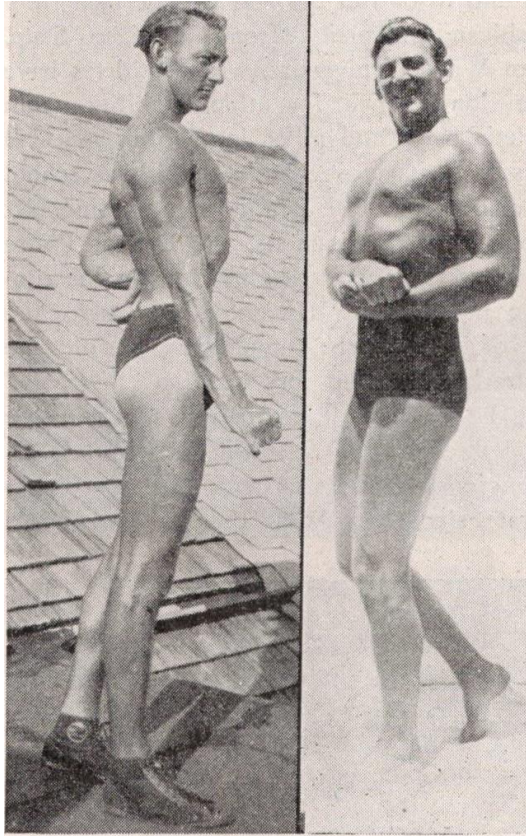
He warns it may be hard to balance oneself in such a position initially, so using spotters can be helpful. He feels this exercise is equally beneficial whether it is done with dumbbells or a barbell.

He says that two to three sets of 6-10 reps are ideal for muscular development. For maximum weight and competition performance sets of one to three reps are better.

He closes by arguing that the seated press or press while in the full squat, sitting on one's toes are very productive and that readers can prove this by trying it themselves.

Editor's note; I tried seated presses early in my career and found that sitting on a bench with my back upright led to extreme tension in my lower back, actually leading to a back injury (an injury that I was admittedly prone to since my youth). Consequently, I gave up on the seated press early in my career, although I have no doubt that if you can do them without it affecting your back they are likely quite effective.

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LOUIS EBERLY, *before and after.*

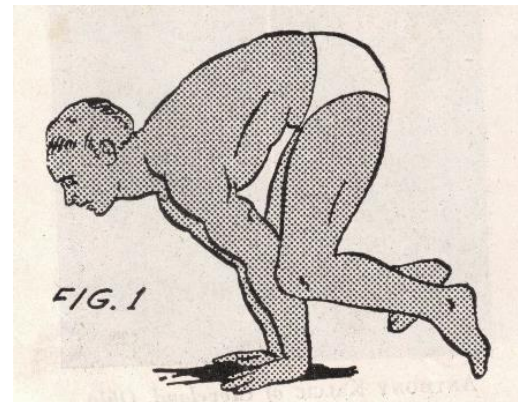
In a special letter to the editor presentation titled "right system produces desired results" the editor presents pictures and a letter received from Louis Eberly. The pictures show Eberly after a year of training with another course. At that time he weighed 145 lbs at a height of five feet 10 inches. Now after training on the York system for the past 12 years he's increased his bodyweight to a muscular 190 lbs. At this bodyweight he was recently able to do 6 repetitions in the chin with a 90 lb. boy hanging from his waist. This was witnessed by Jake Hitchens, of the York Barbell Company.

Some results of the 1946 Self-Improvement Contest, although these are not final. A number of remarkable stories and pictures are included. Perhaps the most impressive case is that of Bob Heinz of S. Charleston, West Virginia. Charles is a 6'5" basketball player who increased his bodyweight by a muscular 41 lb., from 171 lb. to 212 lb. He's benefitted so much from his

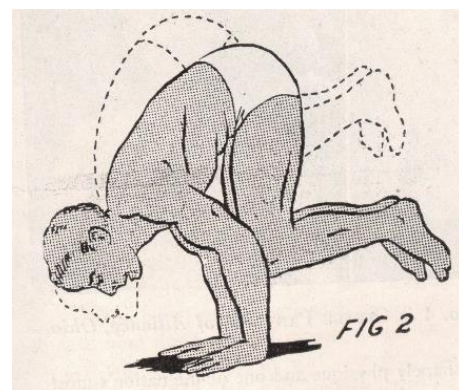
training that he is now dreaming of totaling 1000 lb. in a weightlifting competition.

In an article titled press up into a handstand Gordon Venables includes illustrations of how to perform this feat and instructions for building a piece of equipment that he believes will help in the learning process. He mentions having presented an article on how to kick up into a handstand in a prior issue of the magazine and now he intends to show readers how to press up into a handstand.

He provides the following instructions and pictures to illustrate how one should train for the press up into a handstand.



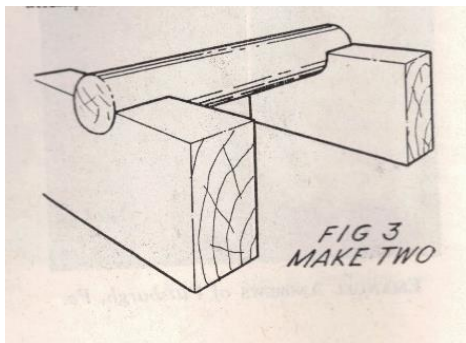
You begin by leaning forward with the body crouched over straight arms and the knees outside the arms, until you can comfortably hold your balance on straight arms in this position.



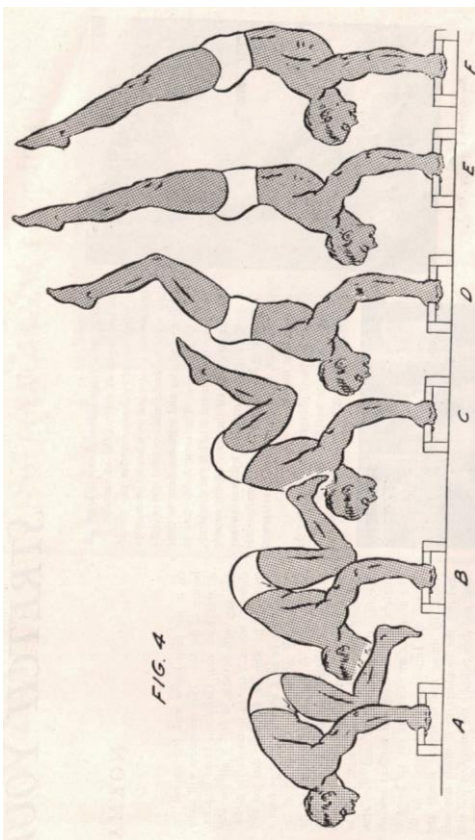
Then you move to more advanced version of the exercise, in which you assume a similar position

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but with the arms are outside the knees. Once you are able to do this you begin to use the “floor bars” apparatus that Bob illustrates and describes.



Using that device with the bars placed parallel to each other, about shoulder width apart, you grasp the bars and then lean forward without bending the arm until you are balanced over the bars. Then, while maintaining the balanced position you begin to straighten the body and legs more and more, until you reach a full handstand.



The sequence shown with the article makes the process clearer. Once you have mastered this process with the floor bars, you begin to work on it with the hands on the floor instead of the bars.

Ultimately, you can begin to try balancing on other kinds of objects with your hands at various widths etcetera.

He thinks it will take the average person about a month to go through this process, but the actual time will vary quite a bit from person to person.

Next up in the magazine is Article 4 in the Bob Jones series “The Toughest One I Know”. This article is about performing a handstands on the kind of supports that can move around when you are moving into and support yourself in a handstand.

Examples of this are the kind of “wires” used for tight rope walking, trapezes, swing seats, Roman Rings, rocking chairs and such.

He suggests learning handstands on objects that can move be commenced with learning the stunt on Roman Rings (the kinds of rings used in gymnastic competitions).

He feels this feat is easier to perform than the rest, because one has the rope set that supports that can offer support side to side and forward and back, if the balancer touches them with the arms.

He believes balancing on a rocking chair is also a relatively easy balance, as the rocking chair tends to center your support in a limited space, once you get accustomed to it wobbling initially. In contrast, balancing on a trapeze bar or a wire is much more difficult because those objects have a greater ability to move while you are getting into and holding the balance.

Bob goes on to describe other versions of this feat, but I must say the article is more than a little disappointing from the how-to perspective.

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It is much more about what has been done or might be done, versus how to do any of the balances he mentions. So the article has very limited value for those seeking to learn how to do these feats.

In an article titled "Stretch Your Muscles", Norman Fay begins by saying many fellows have powerful and muscular bulk on their bodies but don't have the sweeping lines on the prize-winning physique.

He believes this is at least partially because such men don't achieve a full range of motion when they are training, because they don't have the flexibility to do so.

When trying to achieve a full range of motion in at least some exercises, many beginners find they can't reach it. This is a problem because it's not what exercises you do but how you do them that brings results.

While an expert often performs as exercises in a smooth manner the beginner often has jerky movements because they don't know all the fine points of performing an exercise.

When performing an exercise, one should concentrate one's mind on what muscles you wish to work and see that the weight pulls the muscles and stretches them to their limit of extension. This is true in trying to reach fully extended positions, but also as one contracts the muscles to lift the weight up. Instead, you want to pull all the way up so the muscle is completely contracted and cannot go any further.

The accompanying photos in the article show a model using the resistance of an immovable object to facilitate various stretches. According to the author, this enables one to bring out the muscles and spread and lengthen them to take on classical lines.

The author reports that Mercer Adams, in his writings on Sandow, said that Sandow would often stand against a pole, wall, rail, or some other stationary object so he could stretch and warm up his muscles.

Sandow would also contract his muscles to music for hours at a time. This enabled him to get control over his movements for his posing.



Stretching exercise No. 1

In photos accompanying the article, such as the one above, a model is shown pulling against the doorknob with his lats while his feet rest against the bottom of the door. The author promises that this movement will spread the latissimus dorsi muscles and make the back look wider, as well as bringing out the lower part of the muscle.

Another exercise shown is holding on to vertical poles about the width of door or a little narrow or one can actually use a doorway placed in the hands shoulder height one on each side taking a step forward and trying to force your way through the doorway while holding the door frame. As you do this you take a deep breath. He claims you'll feel wonderful stretch across the chest there were really two things for your factor roles and shoulders. This movement is to be done slowly with plenty of effort and eventually you'll be able to do it with considerable effort put behind this stretch. He recommends doing it 10 to 15 times or until you feel tired. He recommends taking a big breath

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between the stretch to maximize the effect on the red box.



A third exercise involves standing with one's back to the door. Grasping the door knob from there, one tries to stretch the chest and shoulders using the door as resistance. You try to straighten up on one side and then the other to achieve a stretch.

Two other exercises while holding a vertical pole are demonstrated as well. The model shown has reportedly been using the author's methods and displays a fine physique.

The next article in the magazine is a continuation of Bob Hoffman's "The Story of the York Barbell Club". Bob begins his article by saying that the year 1932 was a big year for the York club. For it was during that year that the club really began to attain considerable fame.

In addition to regular local competitions, York Barbell hosted the National Championships for the first time. It also marked the first year in which York won it's first National Championships as a team, something it did for the 15th time at the time just before this issue of the magazine was published.

Readers may recall that in his last report Bob mentioned a car accident that he and his wife we're involved in in Bridgeport PA. He divulges here that he was debilitated for some time after the accident, and that only through weight training was he able to rehabilitate himself.

Hoffman says the York team was training regularly together and discovered, often through trial and error, many keys to better performances.

On discovery was that the more pressing they did, the better they got. So many of them began to train their presses five or six days per week, while continuing to snatch and C&J three times per week.

He says that then, as now, the most difficult part of the process of learning to lift was learning to step forward. Readers may recall that the split style was the dominant style for snatch, the clean and the jerk at that time, so mastering the act of bringing the front foot well forward was essential. He, as the coach, would tell them how far forward they had stepped.

They learned that since a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, pulling the bar straight up and "smart stepping" forward in the split was key.

According to Bob, in that era the rules published in England permitted the lifter to grasp the barbell no wider than shoulder width in any of the competition lifts, which had a negative effect on one's ability to lift the highest possible, especially in the snatch.

They practiced snatches for five repetitions until they could not perform that many with a given weight, at which point they switched to lower repetitions. They performed many of their snatches from the hang position and endeavored to pull the bar as high as possible (e.g., "through the ceiling").

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In the clean he recommended starting with a deadlift but then continuing to lift the bar to a point approximately six inches above the position of a completed deadlift, then to keep pulling six inches higher, finally sharply stepping into the split.

Through their regular training, the team members continued to improve. Even experienced newcomers to the team experienced surges in their competitive performances.

When York won the Nationals, it marked both the beginning of a dynasty for their team, but also the end of a different era.

Because of the number of athletes competing, and the long hours the championship took, the 1932 Nationals was to mark the last time a National Championship would ever be held in one day.

The next article in the magazine is titled "Muscles Once Gained Stay With You", by Frank Sundel. The author argues that not only does weight training not make you clumsy, slow or muscle bound, or increase heart's size in an unhealthy way, but its positive effects stay with you from some time after you cease training.

As support for his contention, he cites the case of Dominick Ingegneri, a neighbor of his. While presently occupied in construction work, Dominick weight trained regularly for some years.

Now, although hasn't trained for years, he still possesses a remarkable physique. Now aged 42, Dominick began training when he was 14 years old. At that time he was small for his age and skinny. After being bullied by other boys he vowed to increase his strength so that he would never be a victim again.

When he started his training he weighed only 100 lb., but over a period of years he grew much more muscular, until he reached muscular 200 lb. in bodyweight.

During this time, his family had moved from NYC to a town to the north of the city -Mt. Kisco. He eventually had the opportunity to return to NYC and he looked up some of the boys who had bullied him when it was younger. Upon seeing them, he realized they had not improved much in their stature, while he had grown dramatically in size and strength and his initial desire to get even with some of them vanished. He felt sorry for them.

While in NYC, he travelled to Coney Island to see Warren Linclon Travis perform. He subsequently met Travis and when the famous strongman saw how strong the boy was he offered him a job with his show, which the boy gratefully accepted as Travis had become a hero to him.

He learned much from Travis and could even match some of the strongman's feats eventually. But the 80 show per week schedule Travis maintained began to bother the boy and he resolved to return home.

After doing that, he bought a 400 lb. barbell set. Using that set he improved his strength considerably and was able to perform a wide variety of impressive feats, including and 225 lb. military press and a 600 lb. deadlift.

However, over time, he began to devote most of his attention to his fast growing family, and to his occupation in the lumber business, giving up his barbell training.

Nevertheless, more than 20 years after his abandonment of weight training, he retains and admirable physique and possesses impressive strength.

In his "Behind the Scenes" column Harry Paschall recognizes that many did not like this prior column on those he called "exercisers", those who exercised with resistance too light to generate a serious training effect. He promises this month to shine a light on others who are lifting weight but not exercising effectively, or

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whose appearance is not boosting the image of the sport.

He concludes that those who are able to lift heavy weights despite their frail appearance, and those who are overweight but claim their size is necessary in order for them to lift the weights they do, are not the best representatives of the sport.

He argues the former can sometimes hurt the reputation of the sport by suggesting to observers that there must be “nothing to it”. Those outside the sport conclude if such slender athletes can lift so much the weights they are lifting must not be very heavy, or that there is trick to it.

On the hand, overweight athletes who argue they need such bulk to lift heavy weights make the sport less attractive. Moreover, their contention is not true, as well build champions as men like Davis and Stanko demonstrate.

It is clear that Harry favors athletes who are both strong and look the part.

In his article “The Prevention and Correction of Hernias”, Bob Hoffman argues that not only does weight training not cause hernias (he’s never known any weight trainer who developed a hernia while lifting) but it can help to prevent and treat them.

After providing some information on the causes and nature of hernias, he argues that some exercises can help to prevent the development of hernias. He promises to present some information on the subject in the next issue of the magazine.

An article authored by Ray Van Cleef reports that “American Wins International Contest”. His article covers the recent North American Championships, which were the first such championships conducted after WWII interrupted them.

This competition took place in Montreal on August 31st and September 2nd. There were a number of good performances, but the outstanding battle of the competition was the much anticipate middleweight competition, which pitted up and coming Stan Stanczyk against Frank Spellman and John Terpak.

Frank had an off day, missing his first two attempts in the press, so that put him out of the running in the total. Stanczyk managed to win the competition after Terpak missed the 330 lb. jerk he cleaned in an effort to defeat Stan. His win assured, Stan made a good attempt with 340 lb. but was unable to negotiate the clean.

A number of posing exhibitions, strength and balancing feats rounded out the program and apparently left the nearly 2000 spectators quite satisfied with the competition.

Followers of Pudgy Stockton’s “Barbelles” column are treated to an article in which Pudgy herself demonstrates all of the exercises.

The focus of her article is on exercises that develop the upper body, which lags behind the lower body in many women. Pudgy suggests that the upper body building process should begin with work on the posture. However, one looks at present, poor posture only makes improvements in the upper body more difficult to achieve. Good diet and posture form the foundations for progress in the development of the upper body. With those in place, the miracle of progressive resistance exercise can flourish.

Readers are asked to remember that excessive exercise tears down tissue rather than builds it, but no exercise results in atrophy and deterioration, so just the right amount of training is needed.

The three foundations of progressive exercise are: how to do exercise, the number of repetitions employed and the weight used. To assure success, she recommends that readers follow the instructions she provides closely. She

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counsels that the program she is about to present is not designed for all the muscles of the body. Rather the program is designed to develop the shoulders and fill out upper chest hollows.

The equipment needed to perform the exercises Pudgy prescribes for in this article are: a pair of adjustable dumbbells, a light barbell and a bench or box 12-18 inches high.

In each exercise you begin with a weight that enables you to correctly perform 10 repetitions. And each exercise should be done for those 10 repetitions, followed by a short rest, then a second set of 10. If a dumbbell feels too heavy, one should use 1.25 lb plates held in each hand instead.

In succeeding workouts, you try to add a rep to each set if possible. When following this kind of progression, once you are able to do 15 reps correctly, add weight. However, only increase the weight to something you can do 10 repetitions with.

Stockton says this program can be done separately, or if it is performed with a more complete program, one can drop the second set of each exercise, so you won't overdo it overall.

The first exercise in the program is the bent arm pullover using dumbbells, with the palms reversed, so they are facing the body as one would position them for a curl.

The second exercise is the straight arm pullover using dumbbells as well, but this time with the palms facing forward.

The third exercise is a bent arm pullover with a the light barbell on a "low" bench (low is not defined but perhaps it is the 12" height referred to earlier as the lower end of the bench height range initially provided by the author). This exercise begins with the barbell on the chest, then keeping the elbows shoulders width and held high, with the arms bent at 90 degrees. The weight is then lowered past the head, to touch

the floor if possible, after which it is pulled back to its starting position on the chest to complete the rep.

Next up is the alternate front raise standing, with the palms facing the body. Keeping the elbows locked and body straight, raise the arms alternately, such that when the right arm is going up, the left is coming down, and vice versa.

The fifth exercise is the alternate pullover while lying on the bench (arms are held straight throughout and the dumbbell is lowered to the waist and raised until the dumbbell is lowered to the height of the head).

This is followed by the lateral raise while standing, with the dumbbells starting at the thighs, and the palms facing the thighs. Then raise the dumbbells overhead, lower them to the starting position, and repeat.

Next is the lying fly exercise with dumbbells, starting with them above the chest, the dumbbells are held on bent arms throughout. Then they are lowered as far as comfortably possible with the palms facing up and returned to their starting position, using the muscles of the chest and shoulders.

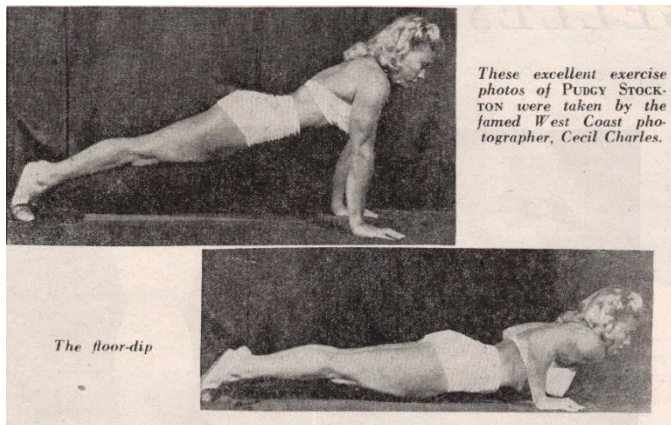
This exercise is followed by the side raise with dumbbells, with the torso held parallel to the ground or nearly so (not below parallel). Light dumbbells are brought from a position where the palms are facing each other. With the elbows locked the dumbbells are brought up as high as possible, but not past the shoulders, where they are held for two counts, then lowered to their starting position. Don't cheat by using the back to propel the bells up.

The last exercise in the series is the standard pushup, done with the body held straight and rigid, the hands positioned at about the level of the shoulders. If you cannot do a pushup with the full weight of the body, do them from the knees. If you can't do that, start by doing

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pushups against a wall, while stand 3-4 feet from the wall. Once you are able to do 20 of them that way, you should be able to move on to the on the knees version and progress from there.

Pudgy ends her instructions by suggesting these exercises be performed three to four times per week.



She closes her article by recommending readers do not accept a body they are unhappy with – rather they should work to improve it. As usual, at the close of the article, readers are invited to write to Pudgy with any questions.

After this article, the magazine reports on a number of weightlifting competitions held around the US and the world. There are more competitions of this type than have been reported for some time, perhaps owing to the return to normal after the war.

One report happens to be about a pressing competition between Harold Zinkin and Walt Marcyan in which they ended at the same weight – 250 lb. Both had outstanding physiques and strength. In later years Harold and Walt each developed multi-station exercise machines, so they were competitors in later life as well.

In the closing article of the magazine, the “Your Training Problems”, one reader says he is stymied in terms of his progress. He is actually,

losing weight and strength, even though he is training regularly. He describes his current program, which contains a limited number of exercises, done in sets of very high repetitions.

The editor responds that he believes there are two possible reasons for the declines the reader is experiencing. The first is he is doing too many reps (the reader reported doing 30 reps in some exercises and as many as 90 reps in the squat). The second problem he sees is a lack of variety in his training, in terms of exercises. A more well round program is recommended.

Two Lifters From the USA Won Medals at the Olympic Games Paris – Olivia Reeves and Hampton Morris

Lifters from the US had wonderful performances at the Olympics in Paris overall. Wes Kitts, competing in this second Olympics, in the 102 kg. category, placed 8th. Jourdan Delacruz, competing in the 49 kg. category, at her second Olympics. placed 5th. Mary Theisen-Lappen, competing in her first Olympics at the age of 33, also placed 5th, in the +81 kg category.



Hampton Morris, shown above, competing in the 61 kg. category, won a fabulous bronze medal. In so doing he became the first male US

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athlete to medal in the Olympics since the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984.

After registering two successful snatches, ending with a 126 kg. third attempt, he sat in 5th place, well behind the leaders at that point.

But he demonstrated both great poise and bravery in the C&J. After he unexpectedly missed his first attempt jerk at 168 kg., when his back foot slipped in the split (a number of athletes found the platform slippery) he elected to increase the weight for his second attempt to 172 kg.

Starting his second attempt in a different area of the platform (in front of the spot that seemed slippery on his first attempt) he made what would prove to be a brilliant and crucial success, as that lift assured him of at least a bronze medal at that point.

After clinching the bronze medal, he saved his last attempt for a lift that would give him the silver medal. That turned out to be 178 kg., 2 kg. in excess of his own World Record. Undaunted by the challenge he faced, he cleaned this enormous weight, only to miss the jerk. What a wonderful performance for this exciting young lifter (he is still categorized as a Junior – age 20 and under lifter).

It was a great day for him and his coach – his father. What a great testament to this father/son team that trained in their garage in preparation for the Games. Hampton didn't train in a sports institute, with access to the support of sports scientists, medical staff and the training stipends that many of Hampton's competitors have.

He and his father have proven once again what some of us already knew – you don't have to get fancy to win medals and break records, you need to dream great things, and train hard but intelligently.

Warmest congratulations to Morris and his father. I'm one of many who can't wait to see

what great accomplishments lie in his future. We wish him great success!



The greatest performance for the USA at the Paris Games was that of Olivia Reeves, who I wrote about in the last issue of this newsletter.

Despite all the expectations placed on her before she competed in her first Olympics, she came through to win the gold medal and become the 2024 Olympic champion by a 5 kg. margin. She made five out of six her attempts and nearly increasing her winning margin to 10 kg., after cleaning 150 kg. on her last attempt but missing the jerk.

It was a day of great celebration for Olivia, her coach Steve Fauer, and her family. Her outstanding lifting marked the first time an American lifter had won a gold medal in 24 years – since the inaugural Olympic weightlifting event for women at the 2000 Sydney Games.

Olivia's triumph for the US, has a very interesting and important back story. She grew up in a sports-oriented family (her parents used to own a CrossFit gym). Early on, Olivia and her parents realized that she enjoyed the lifting part of the CrossFit regimen, not so much the

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cardio part, so she decided to focus on weightlifting and soon began to win national age group events.

She's been coached in weightlifting from nearly the beginning, by Steve Fauer, a coach with a long career coaching Olympic lifting. Having had the experience of pushing his lifters to train longer and harder, then having quite a few drop out of the sport, he followed a different approach with Olivia. He had her training only three days a week, and only once a day on those days. Most of today's coaches would see that as heresy, as most of the best lifters around the world train six days a week, twice a day.

Yet Olivia blossomed under Steve's lesser is more approach. She continued to train two hours per training day, three times a week for years as she improved her performances. She only added a fourth day of training (for 1.5 hours) in the year's run up to the Games. She does train at a high intensity during most of her workouts (heavy to maximum weights after she has warmed up).

This highly unorthodox approach to training (relative to the rest of the world today) certainly sets Olivia apart. And as word gets around about it, her approach has the potential to change the training of other lifters around the world – a much needed change from my perspective and that of many others (Tommy Kono being one of the most vocal on this subject throughout his coaching life).

Another thing to know about Olivia is her unique approach to preparing for a competition (and I assume training) lift. She typically walks on to the stage with a smile on her face. While others are yelling, slapping their thighs, signaling to the audience that they want more cheering, Olivia goes to work with no fanfare, although just before a lift it is obvious that she is deeply focused on what she is about to do.

Then, after a successful lift, a wonderful smile beams across her face and she literally often

skips off the platform, like someone without a care in the world. Her demeanor is one of pure joy (which weightlifting can and should be). It is truly charismatic!

Beyond being an Olympic champion, she is an inspiration to all of us in the weightlifting community. We wish her great success in the future, a future I personally can't wait to see.

A Biography of Tommy Kono is Published

We only recently learned of the publication of a biography of Tommy Kono, written by John Fair in 2023.

Tommy was one of my boyhood heroes who later became a close friend. Those who attended our AOBs events over the years had several opportunities to meet Tommy, as he attended the 1990 gala when he was honored with the AOBs's highest achievement award, and many subsequent events, each time making the long trip from Hawaii to join us.

He was the person responsible for our beginning to offer seminars prior to our dinner, and he became the first one to make such a presentation at our annual event.

The author of the biography, John Fair, obviously did a lot research for the book he did on Tommy. And he clearly admires Tommy. That comes through in many ways in the text. Such admiration is well deserved and we applaud John for displaying it.

In addition, there are many previously unpublished details on Tommy's life in the book, and it covers Kono's life from his early childhood to his passing.

In my view, the book is flawed in some respects by John's tendency (demonstrated in his history of Bob Hoffman and York Barbell) to interview only those who support his point of view, or to rely on some written partial record of an incident when he could have contacted the source,

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For instance, he recounts on an incident at a USA Weightlifting Board meeting, where he reports that Tommy and I abstained on a motion to extend coach Lyn Jones' contract with the USAW.

Instead, Tommy and I were the only two Board members to vote against the motion to renew Jones' contract. That negative vote likely cost us both positions at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, which Jones seemed to have much influence on staffing (at least one Board member told me Lyn made it clear to him that anyone who didn't vote for his contract renewal would not be invited to serve at the Games). Contacting me could have averted such an error.

There are a number of other factual errors in the book, which, in all fairness, happens in almost any biography.

But a persistent theme in this book is John's continued (from his previous book on York Barbell) depiction of Bob Hoffman as a dishonest and essentially evil person with virtually no redeeming qualities. In contrast, with this view, many would argue that Bob did more than any other person in US, if not world, history to support the development of weightlifting as a sport and a fitness tool.

The fact is that Tommy Kono, a victim of Bob Hoffman's alleged poor character according to John, always spoke well of, and admired Bob seems to influence John not at all. Nor did the fact that Tommy was loyal to Bob throughout Bob's life and after he died.

Should we believe John's assessment of Bob's character, a man who appears to have had no personal relationship with Bob, over a man who was an intimate associate over decades, a man with the character of Tommy Kono? I go with Tommy's call on this – not even close.

However, in fairness and genuine gratitude, we have to thank John for preserving Tommy's memory through his work, a clear labor of love.

A record of Tommy's life was incredibly worthy of preserving, even if that record has its flaws, and we applaud John for making such a wonderful record. Thank you John.

Progress on Our Website

We are continuing our development of our new website **Weightlifting.Org** which has all of the old AOBS specific material and more, and can now be found at: **Weightlifting.org/aobs/**

The rest of the site focuses on Olympic-style Weightlifting, with both historical and educational (how to lift) sections. The historical section includes results of all the Senior Nationals ever held, from 1928 through 2024, a partial history of American Records on the site (at this point only from 2018 forward but eventually we hope to offer a complete history) and links to sites with World Records.

I'm gradually publishing expanded updated versions of my previous articles on weightlifters that were originally published in Weightlifting USA, So far, we've published articles on Tony Terlazzo, Karyn Marshall, Tommy Kono, John Davis, Norb Schemansky and Bob Bednarski on the site. You can find them at:

<https://weightlifting.org/us-world-and-olympic-champions/>.

We hope you enjoy the new content on our site, as well as what we add as we move forward, both on the AOBS and the sport of Weightlifting.

The Passing of Richard Herrick MD



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We were saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. Richard Herrick, at the age of 79.

He was active as a competitor in weightlifting and powerlifting for many years, but really made his mark as a physician, especially in the area of orthopaedic surgery and hand surgery.

In addition to professional services he provided in that area, he volunteered to provide his services to many sports organizations over a period of more than 50 years, including several Olympic Games, where he tended to weightlifters competing in the Games.

He and his wife of 59 years, Stella, were also officials and they assisted in countless events in that capacity.

Our condolences go out to Richard's family and friends.

Supporting the AOBS and Weightlifting.Org

Your donations are what keep this newsletter, and the broader charitable work of Weightlifting.org (of which the AOBS is part), going.

Your tax deductible donation is appreciated by the athletes we support, as it enables us to provide them with travel expenses and equipment used by our athletes training in our center. And it will help to finance our new weightlifting in the schools program (described on our Community Weightlifting page).

You can mail donation to our mailing address:
AOBS
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Albertson, NY 11507

Our web address is now:
www.WeightLifting.Org., where you can find everything AOBS on the first line of the "History" dropdown tab. That brings you to the <https://weightlifting.org/aobs/> page.

You can make an online donation at the "Support Us" tab, or by going directly to that page: <https://Weightlifting.org/support-us/>

You can make donation there, using a credit card or PayPal. Thanks in advance for your support.

