



# **LONG & STRONG** **Throwers Journal**

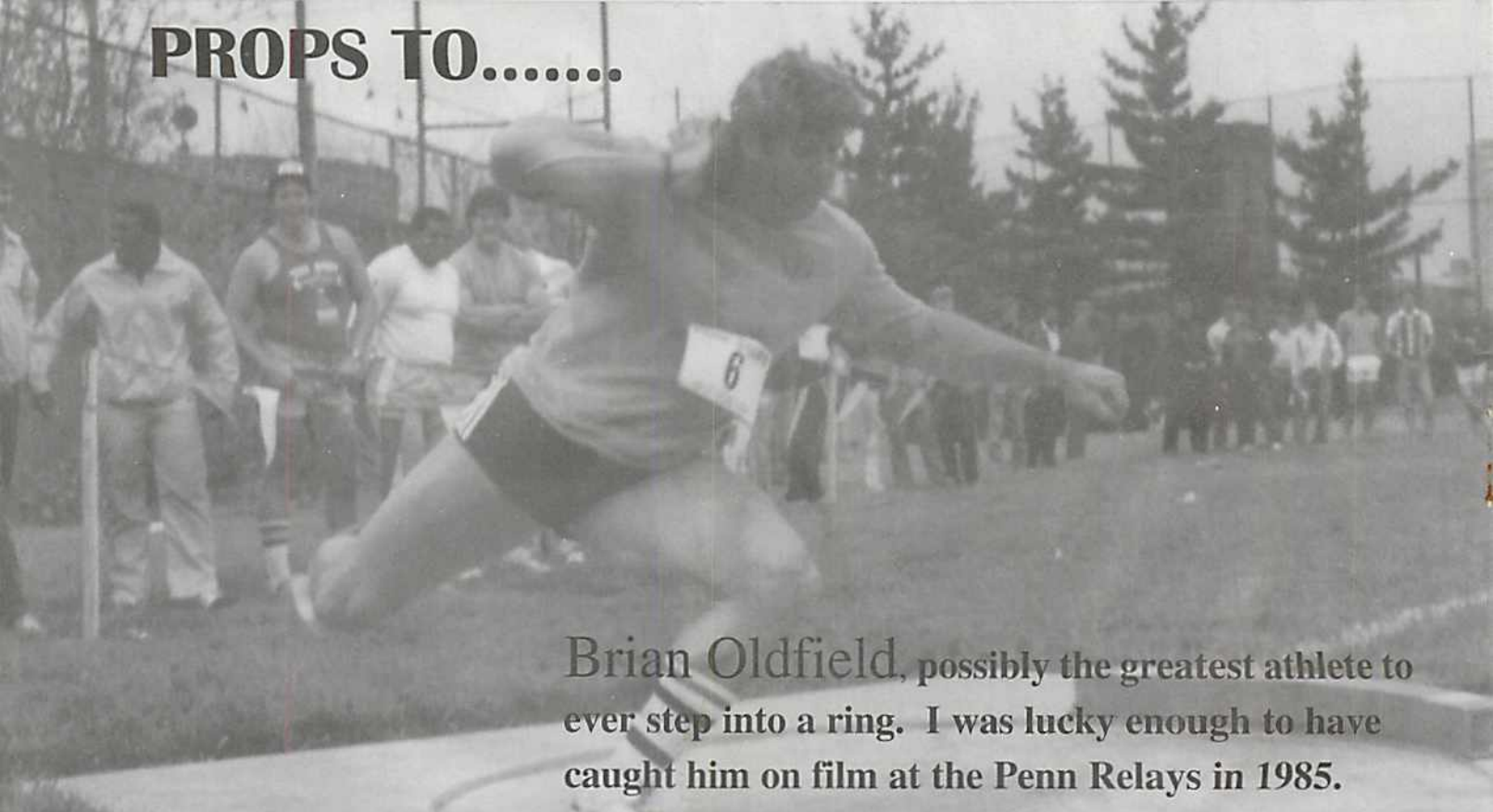
## **Inside:**

- \*Lisa Misipeka**
  - \*Nutrition and Supplements**
  - \*American Big Guys**
  - \*Weltklasse Am Rhein**
- AND MUCH MORE!**

**Interview with**  
**Lance Deal**

**April, 1999- Volume 1, Issue 4**

# PROPS TO.....



Brian Oldfield, possibly the greatest athlete to ever step into a ring. I was lucky enough to have caught him on film at the Penn Relays in 1985.

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Cover photo of Lance Deal from The Sporting Image

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## Remembering Joe Keshmiri

Every society has its elite. Those individuals that stand apart because of deeds, achievement, and/or charisma. On February 6, 1999, Masters track and field, and the throwing community in particular, lost one of its elite, when Joe Keshmiri passed away after a bout with colon cancer. I first saw Keshmiri in March of last year, on my first trip to the National Masters (Indoors) Championship in Boston. When Joe stepped into the throws area in the Reggie Lewis Center, everyone knew just who he was. I myself had heard of him, first through reports of his son Kamy who quickly rose to the top of American discus wars in the early 90s. He made an instant impression on my clubmates and myself. A pre-throw ritual mumbling that seemed equal part native tongue and profanity was recounted often by all of us. His assault on American and World Records made a more lasting impression.

Keshmiri came to the U.S. in the late 60's from his native Iran. He was the oldest of 11 kids born in poverty.

Keshmiri's athletic prowess and work ethic allowed him to overcome his modest beginnings to compete in the '60, '64' & '68 Olympics. His best finish was a 17th place in the discus. Competing in the Asian Games, he won three golds, seven silvers and two bronze medals in the shot and discus. Just last year in Boston at the National Masters Indoor Nationals, he set the shot world record at 51'9" in the 60-64 age group and then in May went on to surpass the discus (1 kg.) World Record at 195'3".

Keshmiri's success was not confined to athletics. Starting 31 years ago as an immigrant employee at the Ponderosa Hotel in Reno, he eventually came to own the hotel and enjoy further success as a contractor and real estate developer. He and his wife, Angela, became U.S. citizens in 1975.

Keshmiri was respected by his peers. Masters Champion

Larry Pratt recalls the following: "After beating Joe for the first time in my life and breaking his American age group record in the discus, he entered the Huntsman's World Games in St. George, Utah two months later where he beat me 172'0 to 176'2. Afterwards, we

shared drinks and lunch. He told me that he could be anywhere in world but chose to come to Utah and throw against me because his defeat to me brought new life and excitement to his throwing. He wanted the challenge and he beat his new friend Larry from the East. Joe was an inspiration to me. Because of him I was able to train harder and dedicate myself to throwing during the times when pain, injury and poor practices make you think of sunny beaches and blue skies. It was an honor to have known him and to have competed with and against him. I plan to dedicate my comeback season to Joe...My friend!"

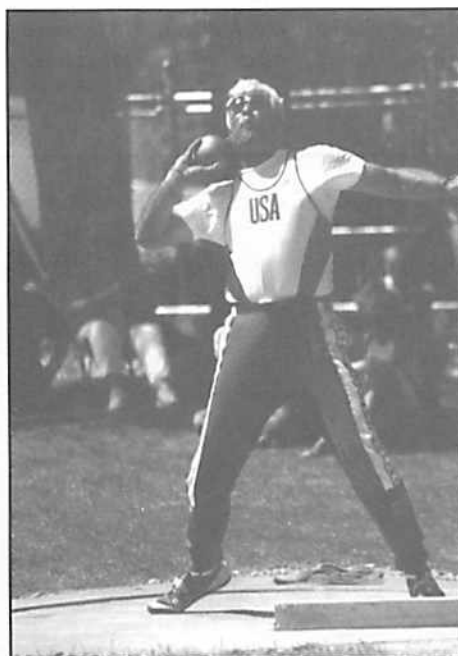
Keshmiri was also known for his generosity. Former nationally ranked shot putter and current Highland athlete Art McDermott was one such benefactor. "It was quite a surprise to hear about Joe", says McDermott. "He was a good guy. Very intense. I stayed at his hotel years back when I was out there throwing the shot in the Reno track meet and he treated

us very well. Put us up for free and fed us all on his tab. He showed us around the hotel and related the story of how he came to own the place. He said he started out there with very little.

Although the Shah of Iran used to give him a Mercedes Benz every time he won the Asia games, that came to a halt when the Shah fell. He started out at some sort of entry level position at the Ponderosa Hotel and through years of hard work, ended up buying the place out. He had a beautiful house nearby as well."

I missed a chance to speak with Joe at Boston, but did catch up with him last August at Masters Outdoor Nationals in Orono, Maine. When I pitched the possibility of doing an interview, he responded, "Sure, okay buddy." Not one to let a golden opportunity slide away, I mailed a set of questions to him

at his Reno hotel/casino shortly thereafter. I thought it odd that months passed without a response. I, and many others, never had a clue that he had been diagnosed only a month after Orono. I lost a chance for a great interview, but Joe Keshmiri's death marks the passing of one of throwing's elite and is a tremendous loss for all of us. His absence, and presence, will be felt for many years to come. God bless you Joe. \*LSTJ\*



Joe Keshmiri

Your latest LSTJ effort was another PR! The articles were outstanding. It is really a pleasure to read interviews with athletes and coaches who have insight and understanding of the throws. There is something for everyone interested in our events. I have subscribed to most of the track, throwing, weight, and sports medicine publications over the years and LSTJ is among the best already (in my opinion). Keep up the good work-I know this will be a successful venture.

**Matthew Byrnes, Iowa**

I received the LSTJ on Saturday (1/9/99). Pretty slow delivery even considering the intervening holidays. Have you considered sending the issues via 2nd class/periodical mail? I wouldn't imagine that the cost difference is substantial. I'm enjoying the magazine; the Bits and Pieces section items on coaching changes helped me identify several of *The Ring* (internet site) posters. Perhaps in some future issue you can print a summary of the throws coaches at US schools.

Keep up the good work!

**Clay Larson, California**

*Editor: You raise a good point and I have had some concerns about just this matter and am looking into improving mail service. I encourage subscribers who have delivery problems to contact me and I will make every effort to rectify their situation.*

Your magazine is a great source for the beginner as well as the advanced coach and athlete. Thanks!

**Mohamad Saatara, Throws Coach, Cal-State- Los Angeles**

Please enter my one year subscription. I really enjoyed the complimentary copy that I received. You should do more to publicize it. I mentioned it at a meet and most of the throwers never heard of it.

**Roz Katz, New York**

*Editor: Unfortunately advertising can be rather expensive. I have sent out complimentary copies to colleges and high schools with varying rates of success. Rob Lasorsa and the people at M-F Athletic have been very supportive in getting the word out. I ask all the readers to share their copy with a friend!*

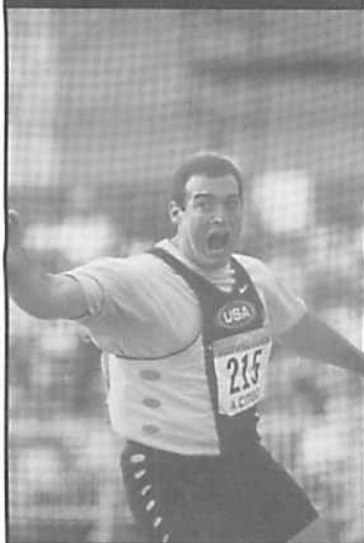
Wow! A mag devoted to throwers and throwers only! I gotta be dreamin'. Keep up the good work, your brothers in kilts love what you're doing! Let me know if I can help you out in any way.

**Mark Valenti, Pro Highland Games Competitor, High School Coach, Ohio**

*Editor: I'm always looking for contributions/ideas from our readers. If you have an idea or thought, don't be afraid to drop me a line.*

## Bits and.....

# PIECES



Andy Bloom

The Sporting Image/Tony Duffy

**John Godina** benefitted from **C.J. Hunter's** misfortune at the USATF Indoor Championships in Atlanta. Throwing in only his second competition of the season, the '98 U.S. Athlete of the Year struggled to a third-place finish. Silver medalist C.J. Hunter injured himself on his final attempt, allowing Godina to join the World Championships team....Godina made good use of his opportunity by finishing second at Worlds in Maebeshi, Japan, to the Ukraine's **Aleksandr Bagach**....**Andy Bloom's** 68-3 3/4 PR upset the form charts in his victory in Atlanta....**Terri Tunks'** victory in Atlanta over **Connie Price-Smith** (second) and **Tressa Thompson** (third) was her first USATF title....**Sven Buder** injured his calf during warm-ups at the German indoor championships and was not able to compete. **Michael Mertens** took the title in his absence....SMU weight thrower **Libor Charfreitag** defended his NCAA title with a winning throw of 22.03 (72-3.50) in Indianapolis....up and coming South African putter **Janus Roberts** has enrolled at and is competing for Southern Methodist University...**Ryan Harrison's** 73-6 at the ACC-SEC Challenge was the farthest throw ever by an American-born collegian. Harrison was denied record status because the throw was made outdoors...*Track and Field News* reported that former UCLA putter **Mark Parlin** will not attempt a comeback after shutting down last year due to hand problems. Parlin has reportedly turned his focus to career and marriage...**Jan Zelezny** is expected to return to the javelin wars after overcoming a shoulder injury that put him down in '98...**Nick Welihozkiy**, who was featured in LSTJ Volume 1, Issue 2, merited a picture (color even) in T&FN's Prep Preview section in the April '99 issue.

# Still on Top of His Game

**Editors note:** *I've had the pleasure of meeting Lance Deal on two occasions. His thoughtful manner and self-deprecating sense of humor make him the type of athlete you feel good about cheering for. Add to the mix his prowess in both the hammer and weight, and you have a truly special athlete, and human being.*

**Long & Strong:** You were very vocal before and immediately after the 1998 USATFs regarding the remote location and bad scheduling of the hammer. Do you think anyone at USATF is listening?

**Lance Deal:** After speaking at length with Duffy Mahoney and others at USATF, I believe that the situation was a combination of things that led to the miserable venues at nationals. USATF is not to blame for all of it. New Orleans was the only city to bid. Although that doesn't excuse USATF for allowing them to have a nationals in a place that can't hold a complete track meet, it is my understanding that the New Orleans organizing committee promised them a grass infield and then didn't make it happen.

The other factor was the fact that this was the first year of the three day format and there were definite bugs. The difficulties in scheduling will not go away. With six long throws plus multi's there are going to be people throwing at odd hours. One way to combat this is make the qualifying marks higher so there are fewer throwers in the field. This is a questionable fix in my mind. To keep interest in the sport the athletes need goals. The national meet is a very real goal for a lot of throwers.

"I believe the people that say I'm going down are wrong. I plan on throwing a PR in the Olympic Final in Sydney."

*Lance Deal*

I truly believe that the USATF in general has the athletes best interest at heart and they are performing a thankless task. The best thing for you and me and the rest of the throwers to do is become involved in the process. Let people know you are a thrower and what that means. Be a positive influence in any way you can as far as promoting the sport. When people think track and field, they need to think running, jumping, AND throwing. It's our job to

make them include us in their plans.

**L & S:** You've said you would be in favor of changing some of the specs (weight, wire length) in order to bring the hammer inside stadiums and to make it more viewable to the general track audience. Do you see that as being a real option, something that could happen in the near future?

**LD:** My statement was that if it would get us into more infields I would be willing to throw a short and/or heavy hammer. I don't think that safety is the main concern of most meet promoters however. In Europe the major concern seems to be the health of the soccer pitch. In the U.S. the concern is the same with football fields. In pure track stadiums like Hayward the problem is more about wild throws than distance thrown. Of course in any venue it is most important to have a good cage in order to assure a safe competition at any level of ability.

I think something that would have more of an impact for all of the throws, as well as the jumps and all of track and field, is reducing the number of throws to four (three prelims and one final) in the throws and horizontal jumps and two attempts at each height in the vertical jumps. This would definitely address some of the scheduling problems talked about earlier.

**L & S:** Some folks within the sport see you as being on the downside of your career. How do you feel about that? How much longer do you see yourself competing?

**LD:** Yuri Tamm told me in 1996 that I had only two years left. He said Russian hammer throwers last only about ten years. I told him that it may be true for them, but I have never worked as hard as they did. I truly don't know when the end is. No one has ever trained like I have for as long as I have. Things that cut careers short (like drug use and chronic overtraining) have never been a part of my life. Because of this, and because I still feel good about throwing, I believe the people that say I'm going down are wrong. I plan on throwing a PR in the Olympic Final in Sydney.

**L & S:** Tell us about your health...your back, your year off, and coming back in '98.

**LD:** My back is fully healed. The year off was, in the long run, a blessing. I gained a lot of perspective on throwing, myself, and life in general. The most important thing I learned was that when the time comes, I will be able



to walk away from throwing satisfied with what I have done. I have recovered from a broken bone in my foot. By the time this is printed, I will have had surgery to put a screw in my fifth metatarsal. I am hoping that this will fix the problem well enough to resume my quest toward 2000.

**L & S:** At what point did you know the hammer was going to be your event?

**LD:** In 1985 I went to Eugene to train with Stewart Togher. I had a PR of 205'. In 4 weeks I had thrown 224'. At the time I had a discus PR of 202' 2" and was about 25th in the nation. Suddenly I was in the top 10 in the hammer. I sort of read the handwriting on the wall. Years later I was talking to Robert Weir. He summed it up perfectly. Speaking of our relative college careers he said, "you were always a hammer thrower wanting to be a discus thrower, and I was a discus thrower thinking he was a hammer thrower". Happily for both of us we finally got it right.

**L & S:** Would you describe your technique as being "standard", or have you adapted it in certain ways to fit your strengths?

**LD:** I think everyone has, or should have their own technique. I am very fortunate to have a coach that knows basic movement very well along with a feel and an eye for the hammer that is unequaled on this planet. Stewart has always said that the basics of the hammer are the same for everyone and those basics are innate in human movement. In other words, we walk upright, we should throw upright. Our strongest positions as humans are neutral anatomical positions (untwisted), therefore we should throw in these positions.

The specific idiosyncracies in one's technique have to do with personality, body type and the individual's movement history. I do things a little differently than the standard Syedkh model. Some of these differences are on purpose, some are just the way my body works compared to others. For instance, I try to stay fairly upright during the throw, I think it is more efficient than bending over. I don't try, however, to have a low wide knee in the later turns. This is something I would like to change.

**L & S:** Run us through a perfect attempt, from beginning to end.

**LD:** If my description seems sketchy it is only because I have a fairly simple view of the throw. Here goes: remember, I'm left handed. I'm standing in the front of the ring, facing 0 (away from the throw). I'm holding the handle in my right hand only. I step forward and put my right foot just to the right of center in the back of the ring. As the ball comes forward, I step to the rim with my left foot and

gently guide it forward to 0 and about eye high. As it comes back from its apex I follow its movement, put my left hand in the handle, and feel the natural pendulum that the ball wants to travel through. As it reaches the top of the pendulum (on its way backward), I feel the ball with my left hand, and guide it in a big path around my head with the low point in front of me. I'm always "seeing" 180 (direction of the throw) with the eyes in the back of my head. As the ball reaches the top of the second wind, I drop just a bit on my right leg. This will be my turning height for the rest of the throw.

As the ball comes down through 0, I stand solid and let the ball go through and past me toward 180 (it doesn't get to 180 but I try). This sets up the rest of the throw. It is just a series of turns powered more by the ball slinging through the pendulum than my putting rotational and/or up and down forces on the system. The challenges for me are staying down and letting the ball follow its natural path. On my good throws I work the ball to 180 and see the sector on every turn.

The finish is a little drop as the ball goes up in turn 4 and then a long relaxed/powerful delivery all the way to 180 (degrees not feet). Complete extension at release, very little foot movement after.

**L & S:** In Atlanta ('96 Olympics), you went from what could have been a devastating disappointment (apparently not qualifying for finals) to a silver medal and just missing the gold. Can you reflect on that competition and the emotional roller coaster it must have been?

**LD:** I'm still ambivalent about the outcome of that meet. The silver isn't bad, but I should have thrown 83M. I'm disappointed in myself for getting into the situation I was in after the 3rd throw and yet I'm very proud of that last throw. I don't have retrospect yet. It is like it happened yesterday. It's hard to be philosophical about it. The thing I'm most proud of is going to Europe afterward and throwing really far in three consecutive meets and ranking #1 in the world for 1996.

**L & S:** You are more accessible to the general throwing public than many of your peers, especially via the internet. Why so?

**LD:** Because I am addicted to e-mail! [smile] Also because I truly believe that you throw far because of hard work and determination. There are no secrets, so I'm willing to share what I know. I am also in a position where I can afford the time to sit here for a while every day (see next question).

**L & S:** Do you make your living as an athlete? Is it correct that you've ventured into the equipment/supplies end of throwing?

**LD:** I am one of the very few lucky ones who get to make a living at this crazy sport. I was fortunate to fall in love with a woman (my wife Nancy) who was willing to support us until I was good enough to earn money throwing. She also has a good enough job to get us through the times when I don't make any money. If I had to be the sole provider I wouldn't be throwing. It's too uncertain. I do have a very small steel fabrication business that I run out of my garage. I'm in the final stages of putting together a hammer to sell. New swivel, new ball, high tech handle (all very hush, hush [laugh]). Seriously, I will have a new hammer out this year plus the usual puds, wires, and handles. I am also a dealer for OTE stuff. The best way to get a hold of me is e-mail at Ideal@clipper.net (that's a lowercase L as in lance, not an I as in the Ideal thrower) or write to Lance Deal, 911 Elkay Dr. Eugene, OR, 97404.

**L & S:** Do you ever get nervous before a big competition? How do you deal with the pressure of a world championship or the Olympics?

**LD:** If I don't get nervous, I'm in trouble. I've always said, and still believe that, a big meet is a big meet. Whether it is your first state meet or the Olympic final, the same stuff is going on in your head and gut. How I deal with it is way too weird to go into in this article. Besides, the stresses that someone feels in conjunction to a meet are very individual as are the ways of dealing with those stresses. To tell you mine would not only embarrass me, it probably wouldn't do anybody much good. Let me just say that I think the psychology of sport is the most neglected, and the most important part of training for an athlete of any level.

**L & S:** Away from training/competition, how does Lance Deal spend his time?

**LD:** I have a wife and a 5 year old daughter who I love to spend time with doing all the family stuff. I like to work with wood, whether it is a remodel of my garage/house or building something in the shop. And of course, surf the net. \*LSTJ\*

## START YOUR OWN THROWERS CLUB

By Glenn Thompson

I get occasional inquiries about the Long & Strong Throwers Club. Sometimes someone is interested in joining, other times they want to find similar organizations in their locales. But very rarely do I get questions about how to start a club. There are a multitude of good reasons to found your own throwers club. Bear with me while I run through some of them.

How often do you go to a non-school meet, and there's only two throwers? By having an association and regular contact with other throwers, you know what meets everyone is attending, thus assuring you the competition that will bring out your competitive best. Do you get discouraged sometimes because you feel like you feel like an athletic loner? Belonging to a club is a great experience, be it knitting, religious, whatever. Humans are social by nature, so why shouldn't you enjoy the camaraderie and bonding that are part of belonging to an organization? Being part of a team does wonders for a thrower's morale and motivation. Ever need someone to watch your crossover step? Want to learn the spin? As a club you can organize informal practices amongst members and even non-members. It's much more productive to exchange technique tips at a practice session than during competition.

So how do I form a club? That depends on how far you

want to take it. If you wish your group to be a formally recognized organization, contact your regional USATF association regarding registration of your club. If you don't want all that, there's nothing wrong with being informal.

Either way, establish a roster, with names, addresses, phone, e-mail, etc.

Your club can be made up of your contemporaries (HS, College, Open, Masters) or a cross-section of all. Be an active club. Organize a throwers meet. How about a clinic? What about an out-of-season get-together, like a dinner/banquet?

Long & Strong got its start when our founder, Terry Shuman, took the initiative to pass out some shirts with the LONG & STRONG THROWERS CLUB on the back. The name came

from a hilarious story he had told us (if you ever come across me in person I'll be glad to share it). The recipients were just a bunch of guys who showed up on the local circuit every year. From five or six members, we have grown to 30, have a webpage, our own logos, an annual dinner, a newsletter, and this publication which bears the club's name.

We will never be Mjolinar, American Big Guys, NYAC, or NIKE, nor do I think that is our objective (we don't even have a formal leader). But we do have a focus on helping each other and having one helluva good time in the process. And that, is what it's all about. \*LSTJ\*



Terry Shuman

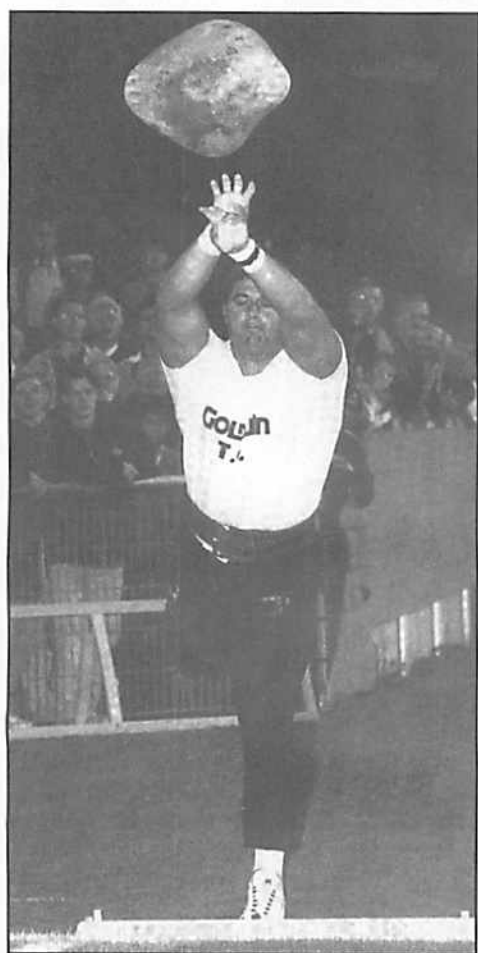


# A LITTLE SLICE OF HEAVEN

**HEAVEN:** the vault of sky overhanging the earth: the dwelling place of the Deity and the blessed.

[Webster's Dictionary]

There's an old saying, "If it sounds too good to be real...". Well my friends. I am asking you to take a leap of faith with me, because yes indeed, there is just such a place. Have I ever been there myself? Well, no, but I've seen pictures and know people who have made the pilgrimage to the place known not as Mecca, but as Rudlingen.



Randy Barnes throwing the 50 kg. stone  
greatest throwing talents on the planet.

Rudlingen is a picturesque Swiss hamlet on the German border with a population of about 600. The town overlooks the Rhine river and relies primarily on farming and its vineyards. But each year this town with all of four restaurants, a post office, a local shop and a single hotel, is invaded by some of the

with cages and floodlights.

So who is this Christian Erb, this organizer extraordinaire? For starters, he remains the Swiss national record holder in the discus at 64.04 meters. During his peak years, he competed at a bodyweight between 90 and 103 kilograms (198- 227 pounds) on a 182 cm ( 5'11 1/2" ) frame. He trained with and learned from throws luminaries such as Gezja Valent, Helena Fibringerova, Wolfgang Schmidt and Pagel. Erb is blessed to be financially secure. His family has been in the automobile business for over 70 years. At his competitive peak, he worked ten-hour days while mixing in 20 hours of training a week. "The more success I had at my work", says Erb, "the farther I threw the discus. I sometimes have a problem understanding throwers who give up the sport because of their work."

Unfortunately, Erb's career was cut short before he reached his full potential when he was paralyzed from the waist down in a serious car accident in May of 1994. But instead of growing despondent and abandoning athletics, he focused on coaching (his stable includes Swiss hammer champion Patric Suter [PR- 70.65 meters]). Says Erb, "Life has to go on, I am a fighter. As a sportsman you are used to fighting, so there was no big problem at the beginning. Of course it was tough. I lost 22 kilos in 4 weeks, and was at the clinic nearly half a year. But some of my athletes came by and I started coaching right at the clinic after 2 months. Fortunately they had a track just beside the clinic." Regarding his physical goals now, Christian says, "I swim, do wheelchair racing, but only for myself, no competition. I drive a quad and still lift weights. My goal for this year is to lift 180 kilos at 85 kilo bodyweight. I have recently done 8 x 150 kg."

He has also continued to sponsor the meet he founded, and it has grown to truly become a world-class affair. Erb was not content to just contest the shot put and discus. The hammer throw was added as well as a number of specialty events such as the 50 Kilogram Stone Throw (thrown with one or both hands over the head or shoulder), the 56 Pound Weight Throw, and the Antique Discus Throw (a 5 kilogram plate is thrown from a standing position). In an effort to complete the affair, Erb is looking into installing a tartan runway to introduce the javelin.

But its not only the competition out on the field that makes Weltklasse a first class event. It begins with sponsorship from multiple sources. The secret to securing sponsorship?





Erb learned that," First you have to start small, and you increase every year. You have to have good sponsoring documents and offer the sponsors a lot." But sometimes good salesmanship is not enough, and Erb must rely on less refined methods. "I have a business and all of the delivery companies that we work with must support the meet," Christian

confides. "I am sometimes tough with them and I tell them straight out that they lose us as a customer if they do not sponsor." Erb also offers a luncheon at the meet from one of the finest gourmet restaurants in the area. Sponsors can invite nine guests at a rate of \$2,000 per group. This V.I.P. area comes with some choice real estate, as it is situated on a platform beside the shotput circle.



Christian Erb

There is a professionally done meet program containing nearly 90 pages of meet information, athlete biographies, photos, and advertisements. Athletes are enticed by prize money of \$2,000 for first place, \$1,000 for second, and \$500 for third (as well as medals). There is also a prize for team competition among the participating nations. There is regional television coverage, and coverage on Czech TV as well.

Over the years, the list of competitors at Weltklasse reads like a who's-who in the throws world: Randy Barnes, Olga Kuzenkova, Paolo Dal Soglio, Aleksander Bagach, Romas Ubartus, Konstantin Astapkovich, Heinz Weiss, Judith Oakes, Vita Pavlish, Adam Setliff, Andy Bloom, Michaela Melinte, Allesandro Andrei, Zdenka Silhava (former world record holder in the discus), Igor Nikulin, and many, many more. Retired discus thrower (and former world record holder) Ludvik Danek enjoyed his 1998 stint as the Czechoslovakian team leader so much that he organized a Czech Republic Stone Put, Antique Discus Throw, and 35pound weight throw championships. Unfortunately, Danek passed away from a heart attack only two months later.

As for the future, Erb hopes to "attract more spectators and grow every year. Maybe to highlight it with a sprint, man against horse

or something new in that direction. Implement the Highland Games, or anything that attracts alot of spectators. World records alone are not a guarantee for having lots of spectators. I need some Swiss throwers as well, which could be under the best, but since Werner [Gunthor] retired it will be difficult. I was even thinking of letting Werner

throw once more with a light shot. I've even considered the idea of playing music during the competition." In a spirit of true creativeness [applauded by the author] Erb adds, "you have to make the throws more attractive, so last year I had Miss Switzerland giving out the medals. I'll make sure that something spectacular is happening. Once I run out of ideas, it will be the

end of the meet."

To all those doubters, non-believers, and other assorted throws atheists and agnostics, I offer Weltklasse am Rhein as proof of such a heavenly place. The rings may not be made of gold, and athletes may not have wings, but Christian Erb is sitting on a throne in scenic Switzerland overlooking the proceedings, and he is pleased.

**HEAVEN:** a celestial place where implements never land and throwers reign supreme. [Long & Strong Unabridged Dictionary] \*LSTJ\*

## Meet Records

### WOMEN

DISCUS	Elina Zvereva		65.64 ('97)
ANTIQUE DISCUS (2.5 KG)	Yanina Korolchik	Belarus	30.76 ('98) WR
SHOT PUT	Vita Pavlish	Ukraine	21.00 ('98)
HAMMER	Michaela Melinte	Romania	71.24 ('97)

### MEN

DISCUS	Virgilius Alekna	Lithuania	67.66 ('97)
SHOT PUT	Randy Barnes	U.S.A.	22.40 ('96)
HAMMER	Igor Astapkovisch	Belarus	79.55 ('97)
ANTIQUE DISCUS (5.0 KG)	Michael Mollenbeck	Germany	30.40 ('98)
50 LB. STONE	Miroslav Menc	Czech	5.32 ('98)
56 LB. WT	Vasily Sidorenko	Czech	15.54 ('97)

## A View From Rudlingen

*I asked a few participants to give their thoughts on the Weltklasse experience.*

### ANDY BLOOM

I was thoroughly impressed with the meet. It was amazing to be in a place that catered to the throwers and had fantastic fan support. It would have been impossible to ask for anything else from Christian (other than maybe a tail wind in the disc). He went way beyond what a typical meet promoter would do, even going so far as to allow some athletes to live with him for a few days, and letting Adam Setliff and I lift in his house prior to the competition. I was also excited to meet the people who were there. It was an honor to meet Wolfgang Schmidt and Ludvig Danek and I am happy to say that I had the opportunity to speak with Danek before he passed away this fall.

I think it speaks volumes about a competition when people are willing to fly late at night from the European Championships to compete in Rudlingen the next day after not qualifying for the final at the Europeans. Several discus throwers did this and Christian accommodated all of them. He runs one of the best meets from an athlete's and a fan's perspective that I have been to.

### COR BOOYSEN (South Africa)

From a 2kg disc and 7.26kg shot point of view, I think the feeling among the throwers is pretty much the same as in a normal track meet. Everyone more or less knows each other and the competition is the same. [Yuri] Belonog tries to beat [Aleksandr] Bagach and [Andy] Bloom tries to beat them all as per usual track meet. The attention to the event, however, is much more intense as everybody at the meet is looking at only you when you enter the circle, because what you are about to do is the only thing happening at the meet. This is nice because you feel much more appreciated compared to a normal meet.

As for the non-standard events, they are great fun too. It is very relaxed, except for the one or two guys who have really prepared for it and just came to beat the best throwers in a event they never do. You also feel that the playing fields are somewhat leveled as nobody has done it before and you try and beat guys like Bagach or Barnes or Andrei in events like the stone put or 5kg disc. In the other standard events you don't try to beat them because you know you're a 18m thrower and they are 20.50m throwers so what's the point? But in these events you always feel you've got a chance to beat them. After a throw you'll think about it and ask some of the other competitors how they think you can improve. For instance, Andy and I exchanged some ideas regarding the 5kg disc and it proved to better our distances.

Afterwards everyone eats together and you make new friends and then you go back home and tell the guys you actually saw Randy Barnes and what you think of him and all the other big names concentrated at one place. There is no chance I would ever again see Andrei, [Randy] Barnes, [Adam] Nelson, Bloom, [Kevin] Toth, [Paolo] Dal Soglio, Luciano Zerbini, [Miroslav] Menc, Belonog and many more at one meet, all together. Then you also have all the top hammer and disc throwers and the women in all the events. I think it is the biggest concentration of big names in throwing you will ever have at one meet and it is much more relaxed than a major champs where nobody speaks to each other until afterward.

### ADAM NELSON

Weltklasse is possibly the greatest throwers meet I've ever been to. It's only throws, and Christian is terrific. I want to go back next year, and I hope that we can get all the top throwers there next year. It's a very well educated crowd and it's the first "thrower's meet" I've been to with fireworks. Special guests often include Wolfgang Schmidt and Randy Barnes. The circles are fast and the throws are huge. \*LSTJ\*



Randy Barnes

Courtesy of Christian Ebb

# Class Act in And Out of the Circle

*It's my great pleasure to present the following interview with up and coming hammer thrower Lisa Misipeka. Lisa graduated in 1998 from the University of South Carolina and is stepping into the world of post-collegiate competition. Lisa's international credibility was established this past summer by invitations to the Goodwill Games and Weltklasse am Rhein (see page 7).*

**Long & Strong:** Tell us about your home (American Samoa) and contrast that with what you see here in the States.

**Lisa Misipeka:** American Samoa is an island in the Pacific very near the Equator. It is a territory of the United States, just like Puerto Rico. My father was born in American Samoa and I stayed there while I was very young for a very short time. American Samoa has a population of about 60,000 islanders. The Island of American Samoa is beautiful. The homes are all established on one road, the only road in American Samoa. If you do not live on ground level near the road, you live anywhere you can build your home on the mountain. The ocean crashes about 100 feet from all the ground level homes. The homes are not your typical homes either. They do not have central heat and air conditioning. Instead, they have windows without the glass, where they allow the ocean breeze to cool their hot days and nights. Since there is not a real winter season, they do not have to worry about closing their windows on a cool night, there are none! I was recently back in American Samoa for the South Pacific Mini Games, which several Islands participate in. For example, Guam, Saipan, Fiji, Tahiti, New Caledonia, etc. The Games were great. American Samoa got its first football stadium/track during these games. Now, I am going to set up some kind of clinics for the kids in American Samoa at this stadium, so they can be exposed to sports other than American football, volleyball, rugby, etc. Hopefully, you can take a visit there some time soon to personally experience the island hospitality.

**L & S:** What is your athletic background? How did you get started in track and field?

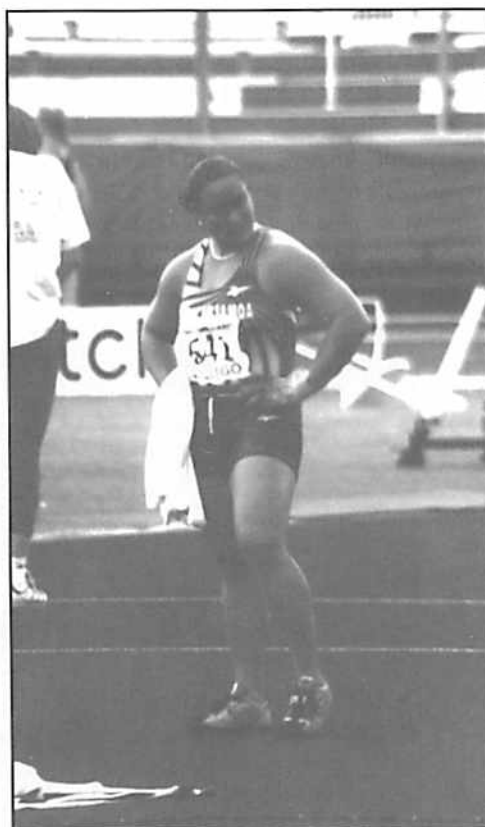
**LM:** My athletic background begins in the fifth grade. I was, and still am, a basketball fanatic. I come from a very athletic family and love sports. My father was my coach in everything. I loved having my father as my coach. He was and still is the #1 person in my life. I played varsity basketball, volleyball, and track. The only reason I got into track and field in high school was because it was an off season for basketball, and I couldn't connect the bat with the ball in softball. My eighth grade physical education teacher, Mr. Ross, got me interested in the shot put. It was close to the end of the junior high year, and field day was coming up. Everyone had a track event but me. Being that I have always been a "healthy" girl, Mr. Ross asked if I wanted to try the shot put, so I did, and from then on until I graduated from college, I put the shot, as well as the discus, the weight, and the hammer. I even gave the javelin a chance, but I think it was too light for me (ha ha).

**L & S:** Did you have any sports idols growing up?

**LM:** My biggest sports idol growing up was my father, Fancy Misipeka (yes, that is his real name.) My father played everything and could play everything great. He was a huge football star in American Samoa and then in Hawaii. He had to move to

Hawaii for more exposure to college scouts. You do not really see many scouts in American Samoa. He received a full scholarship to play at the University of Riverside, California, but the first year he was there, they dropped the football program. Terrible as it may seem, perhaps this happened so that my father could meet my mother and have me (Ya!) But most definitely, my father without a doubt was, and still is, my biggest sports idol, character idol, and parent idol I could ever have.

**L & S:** Why did you choose the University of South Carolina?



Misipeka takes a break at Goodwill '98



**LM:** I chose the University of South Carolina (USC) because they had the most qualified coach. Coach [Larry] Judge had great ideas, great accomplishments with the athletes he had at the time, and they were offering me a five-year full scholarship. Even though I could have stayed closer to home and played both basketball and track and field in Washington, I had to choose one sport. All my life I had a different sport to excel in, one after the other. Now, in college, I wanted to give my all to one sport. Although, I enjoyed basketball much more, I figured I would have to depend on teammates to make it a great season. In track and field, if I failed, it was all because of my lack of effort. And if I succeeded, it was because I worked my butt off. I could only go as far as I wanted to, and not as far as a team would take me.

**L & S:** You scored in the shot put, discus and hammer at NCAA's. Many of us have trouble mastering one event. How do you manage to excel at three?

**LM:** I think the main reason I was able to excel in three events was because I had a great coach who really knew his stuff, and I had great discipline. My parents worked hard with me and my brothers to make sure we were well-rounded individuals. Not only would we be jocks and jockettes, but also great students and people. Perhaps my hard work ethic helped me to handle practicing at least two events a day, or practicing at 5:45 in the morning to get one event and lifting out of the way, so I could come back and practice after school again for my next two events. The faith I have in the Lord and my strong background is what helped me to succeed in all that I did.

**L & S:** What are your post-collegiate plans, both athletically and professionally? Will you focus on the hammer?

**LM:** My post collegiate plans are now in action. I am training with coach Mike Sergent at USC, working a morning job to keep my mind on other things, and working with the Education Department in American Samoa to help set up clinics and track meets there for the kids. I am solely throwing the hammer with a very little bit of focus on the weight. I am going to compete in the weight only to strengthen my hammer. I hope to compete in the 2000 Olympics, and be competitive. My goal is to medal in the 2000 Olympics, and then begin my career as a teacher. I love sports and everything about it, but I also want a career and family. I do not want to be 30 years old before I have my first child. I love children and want to have a big,

strong, and healthy family one day.

**L & S:** Tell us about your weight-training philosophy. What are your best-to-date max lifts?

**LM:** My weight training philosophy is do what my coach tells me to!! I leave it up to Coach Sergent, because he is extremely knowledgeable in this department. He makes out awesome hammer specific workouts for me, we discuss them, and then I do them. It seems to work out fine in this order. My best marks are as follows:

Bench Press: 260 lbs. x 1  
Squat: 405 lbs. x 4  
Power Clean: 260 lbs. x 1  
Push Jerk: 250 lbs. x 3

**L & S:** Can you give us some technique fundamentals for each of the three events?

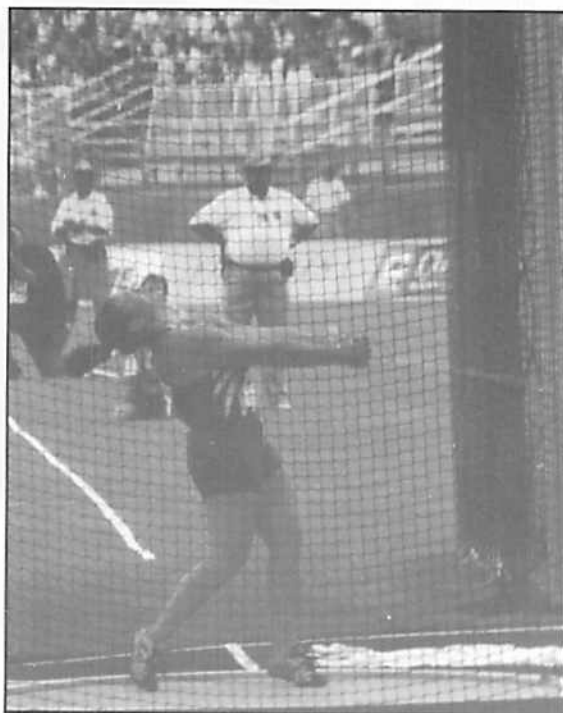
**LM:** My best advice for the:

**Shot Put:** In the spin, as soon as your left foot touches the ground in the power position of full technique, everything is to explode up! It is like doing cleans, you better be explosive and quick for maximum performance.

**Discus:** Do not try so hard!! The discus is so much technique and grace, that you have got to have a much more relaxed aggression in order to throw far. This relaxed aggression is not easy, but can only come with practicing it during practice and not only at meets.

**Hammer:** Drive the hammer with your legs more so than your upper body. So many times when I first started, I tried to go fast and throw the hammer with my arms and shoulders-

**WRONG!** After five years, I finally understand that driving the ball is really with your whole body and staying low, not just taking the hammer and swinging the heck out of it. The hammer is very similar to *discus* in that you have got to be patient!



Misipeka in action

Glenn Thompson

**L & S:** You are not as tall as many of your competitors, but this does not seem to hamper you competitively. Is your height actually an advantage?

**LM:** I think that God makes everyone equal. He may not have given me the height, but he sure did bless me with the ability to get extremely fast and low with four turns. You have to work with what you've got, not with what the next woman's got. I am short, but I love it. I am low to the ground and have great coordination. So, it is only an advantage if I can use my height and get across the ring like greased lightning.

**L & S:** In each of those events, technique-wise, who do you most admire/try to emulate?

**LM:** Other athletes I admire:

Shot Put-I most admire Eileen Vanisi. Eileen is Tongan and has made Pacific Islanders proud. She was an awesome spinner who I always wanted to be as cool as.

Hammer-I most admire Dawn Ellerbe. She is my closet friend, my strength, my teammate, and now- my competition. But she will always be the first three in that order.

**L & S:** What does Lisa Misipeka like to do when not training/competing?

**LM:** When I am not training, I am either eating, sleeping, or spending wonderful hours with my great boyfriend, Bryant. I still enjoy playing basketball, and relaxing.

**L & S:** Any general words of wisdom for our readers?

**LM:** For anyone reading, the only thing I am really sure of is that if you have a strong faith in God and his capabilities, then you will do great things. If there is a time that you may not do so great and someone else does, it is because that is how God meant it to be. If you train your hardest and just come up a little short of a record or a personal goal, then its OK. **BE HAPPY FOR YOURSELF WHEN YOU DO GREAT THINGS, BUT ALSO FOR OTHERS WHEN THEY DO GREAT THINGS, TOO.** There is no better feeling then sharing a great moment.  
\*LSTJ\*

Glenn:

I wanted to let you know that I have observed all of her weight room bests first hand, and wanted to give you a few more details regarding her athleticism. She has been tested in the vertical jump on a vertex at 25". I also do the Max Jones Test Quadrathlon with my athletes. Lisa's marks in the past year are as follows: 30m Sprint - 4.10sec, Standing Long Jump - 8'-4" , Standing triple hop - 24'-3.5" , Overhead Shot Throw ( 4k) - 55'-9.25".

*Mike Sargent, Throws Coach, University of South Carolina*

## American Big Guys/Gary England

# GET BIG OR GET LOST

By Glenn Thompson

Everyone knows someone like Gary England. You know, the type that seemingly everyone knows. The guy who has a thousand and one stories, and leaves you in stitches every time. The kinda guy that has a boundless energy, which is seemingly absorbed by those around him. The type of person that gives endlessly to others, seeking little in return.

And it's exactly that spirit that Gary England brings to American Big Guys (ABG), the throwers club he founded in 1988. For the last ten years ABG has been one of the premier throwing teams in the nation. The club has had a colorful and distinguished roster over the years. Members have included Olympic medalists, World-Record holders, and national champions. England started ABG in response to a shift by the major track clubs to sprinting and distance running, which in turn drew away sponsorship money from the shoe companies. The concept was to unify throwers under some banner other than "Unattached".

ABG originally focused on a small number of elite throwers. Since England's wallet was the club's primary financial resource, activities were limited to National Championships. From these efforts, sprouted the Traveling Big Guys party. The party takes place at the site of USATF Outdoor Nationals each year and got its reputation as much from the number of hotels they were thrown out of, as for the number of great throwers in attendance.

In 1990 England formed American Big Guys Apparel, Inc. The company served the big and tall market for a year and a half before financial problems caused its demise in 1992. England relocated to Orlando, Florida in 1994 and began a slow team expansion phase. ABG now features a tiered-team approach. The National team consists of athletes who have reached NCAA Division I or USATF National Championships standards within the last four years. All former Olympians, National champions and American or World Record holders are automatic qualifiers, as are National Masters Champions. Team members in 1998 included shot putters Steve Albert, Brad Mears, Brett Noon, and Greg Tafaralis, discus throwers Greg Hart and David Rodely, javelin throwers Erika Wheeler, Kristen Schultz, Roald Bradstock, Tom Petranoff, and David Stephens, and hammer thrower Jud Logan. Past team members include Mike Stulce, Edie Boyer and Randy Barnes.

All athletes that miss the national team standards are

eligible for the ABG State and Local team programs. These members are eligible to access the fund raising program, receive the team newsletter, receive an invite to the Traveling Big Guys Party, and purchase team apparel at a discounted rate.



In 1997, ABG started a developmental program called the Little Big Guys and Junior Big Guys for youth and Junior Olympics competition. Officials, coaches, statisticians, and medical personnel with an interest in Big Guys activities are also encouraged to join the team.

England wears many hats. He was trained in industrial design, and primarily designs weight training equipment. Gary focuses his designs on practical uses, such as the new medicine ball bench design for ProStar Fitness Equipment that you can find him "modeling" in the 1999 OnTrack catalog. You may already use a Gary England design produced by York Barbell. He is the Florida sales manager for OnTrack Track and Field Equipment. When I visited him in Orlando in December of last year, he was in the process of laying out the new weight room for the Tennessee Titans. He designed the prototypes upon which the current Nike throws shoes are based. He helped to develop the stadium layout at the University of Indiana-Indianapolis, the site of multiple national championships. He's also been putting together the National Masters Uniform Program and is currently in the process of getting ABG wear into retail outlets nationwide.

A few of his business associations are:

**InSport-** Team uniform sponsors for the club. Unless a team member has an apparel contract, the team uniform for the Little Big Guys up through the Masters is InSport. Through OnTrack, InSport is the apparel for the USA Masters uniform.

**Med Sport Laboratories-** Official nutritional supplement suppliers for the club. Med Sport is a cosponsor of the Traveling Big Guys Party. They supply product to the teams A-List athletes, set team members up as distributors, and sell at a substantial discount to all ABG members. England heads up MedSports marketing for Track and Field, Weightlifting and Crew divisions.

**ProStar Sports-** England is the lead designer for this strength equipment manufacturer. He is also their at-large sales representative, world wide. Through his company, England and Associates, he has been setting up throwers as



distributors of ProStar all over the world for the last year. Associates include Brian Oldfield, Gregg Hart, Lance Deal, Andy Bloom, Soggi Einarrsson, Tom Petranoff and Dave Rodely. England is always looking for new associates all over the country. (If anyone is interested they can contact England at: E-mail: ABG77@aol.com, Phone: 407-812-9019, or office: P.O. Box 547325, Orlando, FL 32854)

England was also the last director of the World Throwers Organization (WTO), the original governing body for the Weight Pentathlon. He has kept the logo and name alive for revival of the organization once his apparel company comes up to major profitability. He plans on using ABG and the WTO for cross marketing payoffs.

But England's credentials are much more than coaching (stints at Auburn, Kansas, Villanova, and University of Central Florida), administration, and business. His roots are as a competitor. He won the NCAA Indoor Championship in the shot put in 1977, weighing a mere 238 pounds. He followed that up with a second place at NCAA outdoors that spring, with then world record holder Terry Albritton halting his quest for a sweep. Gary is blessed with great blood lines. He is the son of former University of Indiana- Indianapolis coach Jerry England. The senior England spent many years producing Division II All-Americans (such as Andy Richardson, Division II shot put record holder) and 1988 Discus Olympian Randy Heisler, (221'10"). Jerry also won two national masters championships in the hammer.

Gary's life hit an unexpected downturn when his wife of four years, Nicky (who he had met while coaching at Kansas), passed unexpectedly just after Christmas of 1997. The loss devastated him, and continues to haunt him. Whenever Nicky is mentioned, the sense of loss registers instantly in his eyes, voice, and even body language. Upon her passing, messages of support poured in from all corners of the track and field world. And true to his character, he has put the pieces back together and continued on in her absence.

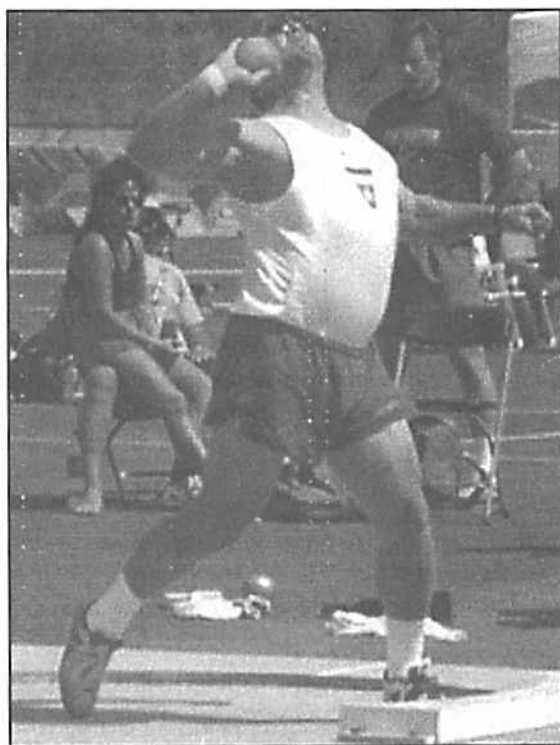
England will never be confused for a wallflower. He's seen a great deal over the years and understands the politics of elite level track and field. If he has an opinion, he's not afraid to let it rip. For example, in the 1994 ABG newsletter, he offered the following opinion of the suspension of the 1992 Olympic shot put champ: "Mike Stulce

tested positive in Europe for one metabolite of a substance found only in Japan. A horse s— call any way you look at it."

England has stepped on a few toes along the way, but his allies greatly outnumber adversaries. Dave Kunkle, coaching protege and close friend, offers the following testimonial: "When I first met Gary, I was only 19 years old and in my first year of coaching. Being 19, I was a typical know-it-all, cocky teenager. But when this guy, who was selling clothes at the Golden South meet, told me how to coach my athletes, I thought, 'who the hell is this guy, Gary England?' Well, I soon found out. Gary is one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet, and would do anything for you. I owe much of my success to him, and I could never repay him for the things he has done to help me. There is only one Gary England (thank God). Very few people have a love for the throws like he does, or have the

knowledge that he does.

And it is not just me he has helped. He has assisted many coaches and athletes and will continue to be a resource."



Gary England

One of England's greatest triumphs was organizing the 1990 Throws Summit. The achievement was as much from his raising capital, as it was the coaches and athletes gathered there. "I hit TAC (predecessor to USATF) from nine different angles in my fund raising", says England. "By hitting them in so many ways at one time, they had no idea how much money I was really spending. In all I spent \$72,000 on the summit and I do believe it was a defining moment in U.S.

throwing history. The 80's had all been about hiding secrets, fueled by a cultural shift to the right, increasing drug publicity and the inability of some administrators, coaches and athletes to adapt to changing times. By bringing so many coaches together and sharing ideas and lifting a beer in a toast to the glory of throwing, ideas began to be exchanged nationwide and has lead to the strong position the U.S. holds in the international throwing community."

Never one to let any grass grow under his feet, England has big plans for the future. ABG plans to recruit aggressively the next two years. "We have expanded into the Masters, Juniors, and Youth areas, and expect to draw a solid base

of athletes from across the spectrum", says England. "There are no national teams that promote the throws. Marketing will be the key to growth. We will be showing a more visible presence through the media, our own web site, and a push to absorb other clubs. We are in the final negotiations with Klub Keihas to merge right now. Klub Keihaus is a North Carolina club run by Jeff Gorski (new USATF Javelin Chairman) and is primarily a javelin-oriented organization with some of the top US throwers, such as Linda Lypson-Bluetrich, Rob Curtis and Curt Schaefer. "The club will stay autonomous, sharing common resources and the advantages of buying for larger groups," says England.

England sees a synergy between ABG and his business interests. "I plan to use revenue from the growth in membership to fund the Big Guys Series of Throwing Videos, featuring team members and ABG national coaches in the series. I will bring it out on Video and CD-ROM. I will then use those profits to fund the next larger project. I am on a continuous search for small and medium size corporate funding. Entry level is \$200.00 for co-sponsorship of the Traveling Big Guys Party. From there I am open to suggestions and negotiations. Of course, if the apparel company goes big fast, it would fund the National team and use the entire team as a base marketing theme for it's advertising program. It's a win-win scenario."

Should the master plan fall into place, England hopes to contract most of the throwers, "including the studs", in the U.S.A. Says England, "at that point in time I would effectively control one third of the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Team. I would bring enough of my team members to the [USATF] convention and use them in the right way to gain control of the areas of the organization that we can actually effect positive change for the throws. When you control one third of the sport, you can wield power and can effect change. Until then, I'll continue to set up the infrastructure. My end vision is becoming the dominant Track and Field Team in the U.S.A. by serving the throwers from the cradle to the grave with a full line of products, services, and information. I want to maintain a national team so dominant in the throws that if there were a team championship, we would win by complete domination of the throws places one through eight."

So if you are at a meet, and come across a thrower/coach/spectator with a crowd around and who looks and sounds just like [Roseanne and Blues Brothers 2000 actor] John Goodman, you've probably stumbled across Gary England. And if you're smart, you'll lend an ear. You'll probably be better for the experience.

**Editor's Note:** *I can testify for the hospitality of Gary England. Upon our first phone conversation in November of 1998, he offered me a free stay at his home in Orlando during the USATF Convention the following month. Once in Orlando, I expected to be spending a few days with Gary at the convention. But its a little much to expect him to stay in one place for any length of time. He ran me over to the convention my first day, left me in the care of team member Steve Albert (9<sup>th</sup> ranked U.S. shot putter in 1998) and was off to his office. But this is only an account of the pace that he keeps.*

*What kind of person is he? Busy as always, he was off to Sarasota Friday evening where he was serving as meet director for the Florida Senior Games the next day. Having known me for all of 48 hours or so, he left me with the use of his home and "vehicle" (Florida's lack of state inspections keeps his van on the road). His virtually blind trust is the one thing I'll always remember about him. \*LSTJ\**



Tony Duffy

A special thanks to Tony Duffy and Gervaise McCraw, of The Sporting Image, for giving me access to their photos and keeping in mind my start-up status when billing me....YOU'RE THE BEST!

# FOCUS, FOCUS, FOCUS

By Glenn Thompson

Unassuming might be a term used to describe University of Arizona sophomore Esko Mikkola. Friends describe him as very modest, the type who would never brag about his performances or achievements. But brag he definitely could. He excelled as a youth at soccer and cross country skiing. He was the junior national champion of Finland in Greco-Roman style wrestling, once even beating an eventual world junior champion. But you might know him for his most recent achievement, taking the 1998 NCAA javelin title last summer in Buffalo with a personal record of 81.86 meters (268'7").

Mikkola's choice of the javelin is no surprise, considering he comes from a relatively small nation with a long tradition of spear throwing. "I think that of all the track and field events, Finnish people like the javelin most," he says. "Every summer there are several javelin competitions which are televised in their entirety in Finland. We have always had good javelin throwers, both men and women, and they are quite popular people in Finland. For example, there is Seppo Raty, who medaled six times in the Olympic Games, World Championships and European Championships. His personality reflects the rugged individualism of Finland, where he is a great national hero. When Seppo is throwing in the Finnish Championships or in the Finland-Sweden meet, the stadium usually goes completely crazy."

Mikkola found his way to U. of A. via the recommendation of a friend, hammer thrower Tapio Kolunsarka, who had attended the university before him. Says Mikkola, "I have been satisfied. The weather, facilities and coaching are excellent here." He takes full advantage of the climate that Arizona offers. "In Finland, I would have to throw unsharpened javelins to thick cloths which are hanging down from the ceiling in indoor sports halls. Those throwing places are often very busy, so it is more difficult to do very concentrated technical training there. I would say that I am concentrating more on technical training here in Arizona."

There are many attributes that contribute to Mikkola's success. Flexibility is one component, which is illustrated

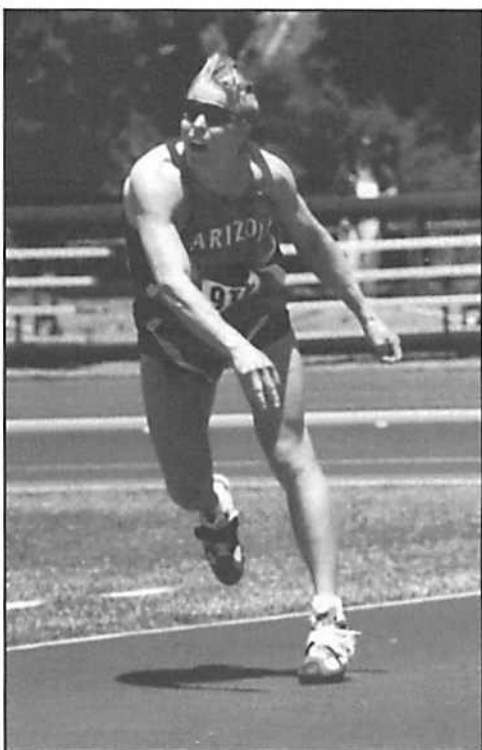
by his ability to nearly touch the ground with a medicine ball while doing standing medball throws. Another element is his focus. Says teammate and friend Christian Banken, "Everything Esko does, he does it one hundred percent. Last week, we were throwing the javelin and were practicing our blocks. Esko suddenly said, 'Hmmm, it doesn't hurt when I am blocking. I have to block harder.' This seems to be Esko in a nutshell, always wanting to make things more perfect."

Throwing is very much a mental game for Mikkola. Banken relates another story: "One time, I was having a conversation with Esko, and in the middle of our conversation, he suddenly starts to gaze out in front of him. He then stretches his hand backwards, as in a javelin position, and has the same expression on his face as he has in major competitions. I suddenly realize that he is in his own little javelin world. I don't even think he knew I was there. After maybe 5 seconds of watching him standing in that position, I said, 'Esko?' He snapped out of it, realized what he had done, and became pretty embarrassed. I still have no clue exactly what he was thinking, but it was obvious he was pondering some kind of technique."

Mikkola knew that he had a bright future when he was nineteen. That year he did not start throwing until May, and wound up with the seventh best mark on the World Junior list. It was at this point that he focused on the spear and put the other sports on the backburner.

When asked what he and coach Mike Maynard work on from a technical standpoint, Mikkola offers the following: "I want to

start with a rhythmical, slightly accelerating running. After I hit my mark on the runway, I try to stay as sideways as possible during my crossovers all the way to the end. I even try to land my block leg slightly sideways and keep the blocking stride short and quick. The block leg should stay as straight as possible. In the end I try to reach the javelin arm far back and up. The left arm closes the upper body when the quick turn of the right hip begins the throw. I like to pick a point in the front where I aim the throw. A



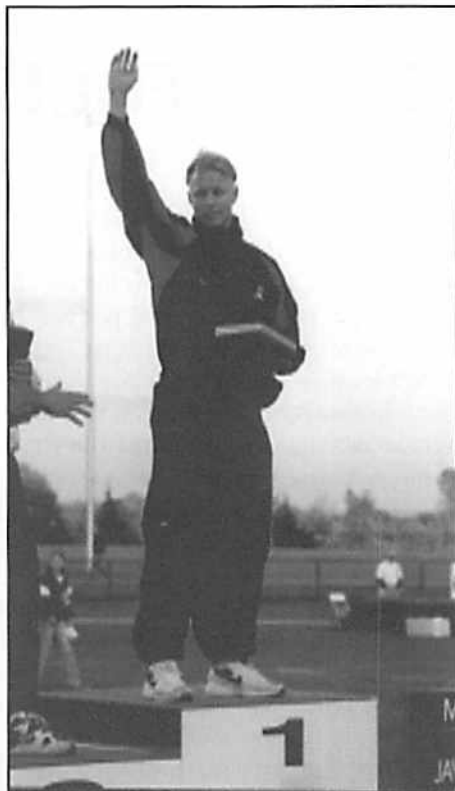
Esko Mikkola



loud barking is also an important part of the throw!"

Mikkola's 1998 NCAA win was considered a major breakthrough by many, but he has a different perspective on the competition. "I did not have very much pressure on me in the NCAAAs. I guess that competition doesn't mean as much to me as it does for the Americans. I just had a craving to throw. In the first warmup, I was just supposed to do a little picking, but the easy throws were far over 70 meters, so I thought that I was ready to throw. In the second warm up before competition, I just needed one throw. In the first round of the competition I just tried to throw a very easy, but technically sound throw to start the competition. That was 76.94 meters, which I thought would have been enough to win. I think the throw looked very easy, because my Finnish friend who was also in the competition was angry at me after seeing the throw, thinking that I came to the championships and was not serious." Mikkola did not wait long however, to turn up the heat on the competition. "In the second round I tried to put more power to the throw but maintain the technique," he says. "That was a perfect throw for me, 81.86 meters. After that I just tried too much and mixed up my technique."

Mikkola has a plan for the future. "I'm going to graduate in May of 2000 and be a microelectronics engineer," he says. "However until the Sydney Olympics I'm just going to do schoolwork and javelin training. After that I don't have plans yet, I don't know in which country I'm going to work. I hope the javelin will still play a big role in my life." \*LSTJ\*



Mikkola on the awards stand at '98 NCAAAs

Jon Alquist

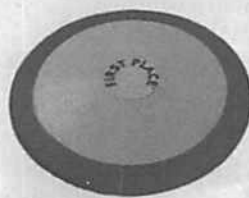
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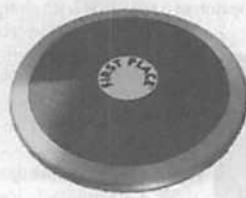
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# THE RIGHT TO LEFT RHYTHM GLIDE

BY JOHN SMITH AND CONNIE PRICE-SMITH

*Editors Note: Connie Price-Smith, three-time Olympian and winner of 21 national titles, teams up with her husband/coach John Smith, a former 65' putter himself, to give some insight into glide technique.*

## 1.) STARTING POSITION: (Upright position to lowest point of shot to right leg push off)

A.) There are many variations of the start. Connie prefers to start upright, then "T" into a horizontal position with a strong loading of the right leg. At the "T" position the shot should be at its lowest point and well behind the right knee. The shoulders are relaxed as the swing leg is brought inward and then extended outward towards the toeboard. There is a **flat-footed push-off over the right heel, but not directed from the right heel**. The left arm is held back, anticipating a long smooth opening as right foot contact is made.

## 2.) PROPER TIMING OF THE RIGHT TO LEFT RHYTHM GLIDE: (Glide phase to transition phase)

A.) This separates the great throws from the good throws. A good glider will start square to the back of the circle. As the athlete leaves the back of the circle with a good left leg kick followed by a good right foot push off, the critical timing of the throw is about to happen. As right foot contact is made (**10:00-11:00 o'clock position with little to no settling of the right leg**) within the front half of the ring, the (if you are 6'0" tall or less) right shoulder and ball stays in a locked position (**rt. elbow at 2: 00-3:00 o'clock position and the ball at the 12:00- 1:00 o'clock position, with the ball still behind the right foot**), as the left leg is still airborne. The transition phase of the

right to left is about to take place with great speed and precise timing. As forward momentum from the glide travels forward, left foot contact is made. At this moment there is a simultaneous action of the left grounding and blocking (which will promote lift and constant ball movement) and a forward upward firing of the ball of the right foot, right leg, hip and shoulder as the left arm has pre-opened and leads the system. In many cases, if done properly, you will see a backward "C" position during the first moments of the delivery phase. Training this timing can even be worked on during the standing throw training, to teach the proper chain of technical events.

## 3) DELIVERY PHASE: (From planting of left leg to delivery of shot)

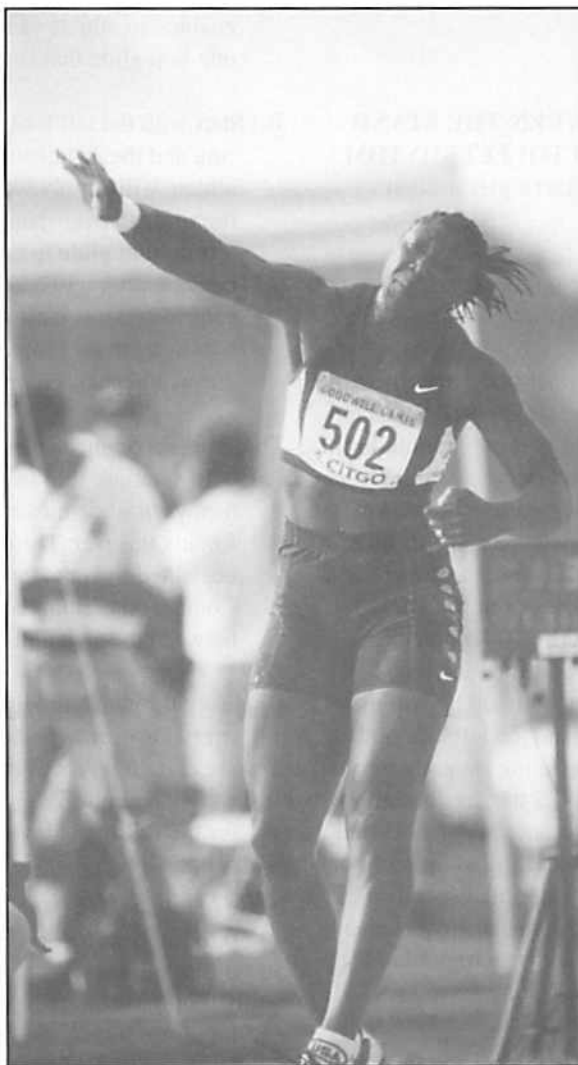
A.) When the left leg grounds and makes contact, the forward-upward turning of the right side (foot, knee, hip, and shoulder) creates a big muscular tension in the upper body. The shot starts to leave the neck as the right hip starts to face the throwing field. The delivery is made with full extension of legs and throwing arm, while the legs stay grounded as long as possible. When a good release is achieved, the right shoulder will be above the right ear; (high elbow and shoulder tilt) which creates, maintains and lengthens the upward ball path.

## RIGHT-LEFT PROGRESSION DRILLS:

### 1.) SPECIFIC STANDING THROWS: (To learn the right to left transition and timing)

A.) Standing throw starting from a left foot toe touching position from a stationary power position.

B.) Standing throw with feet



Connie Price-Smith

together and walking back into a power position with left toe touching and immediately shifting back to front foot while the throw is being made.

C.) Standing throw with feet together, walk back into power position, left foot comes 4-8 inches off the ground, initiate the right leg and hip forward then up when left foot contact is made. I call this a teeter-totter standing throw, and this will get an athlete familiar with the right-left rhythm. This is a very natural motion for most athletes who have a background in throwing things besides the shot and discus. You will find this right-left rhythm in throwing activities such as tossing a baseball or football, and is seen a lot in baseball batting.

D.) *You do not want to teach a stationary left foot grounded double support phase from a standing position. This sets up an unequal amount of weight distribution between the right and left leg and puts the center of gravity too far forward and prevents the right hip from properly finishing. Doing this from a stand does not look bad to the eye, but will be a disaster during a moving full glide. These standing throws are designed to mimic the right to left transition of the full movement.*

## 2.) BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE STANDING THROW AND THE RIGHT TO LEFT RHYTHM FULL GLIDE MOVEMENT: (Start and transition training, the two-hop drill)

- A.) The two-hop throw drill will set up the working mechanics of the right to left rhythm glide.
- B.) This drill starts with a normal upper body over the power leg starting position. The athlete will balance over his right leg with his left leg off the ground. From this position he will bring his left thigh next to his right thigh and extend the left leg out but not down. Extending the left downwards will cause the thrower to stand up. As the left leg extends out, the athlete will push off the ball of the right foot, or flat footed, 2-3 feet forward, and land in a 10:00-11:00 o'clock foot position on the ball of his/her right foot and then repeat the process. After the second hop he will use the right to left rhythm and ground the left side and throw similar to what I describe in the standing throw. What is great about this drill is if a thrower doesn't stay over their right leg, they cannot make the second hop because their bodyweight is falling to the front of the ring prematurely. Besides being great specific plyometric work, this drill teaches the critical element of constant ball movement, which is so important to the performance of a throw.

C.) You do not want to teach a heel takeoff from the starting position because this drives the center of

gravity too far forward. This makes it very hard for most throwers to pull the leg under in time to reinitiate the right leg and hip throwing action before the body weight slides forward. In most cases the ball comes to a stop and the weight slides forward and the athlete makes the throw with their rear end hanging out. A flatfooted or ball of the foot start is preferable. You do not teach a pre-rotated foot. It is recommended for throwers to land on the ball of the foot at a 10:00-11:00 o'clock foot position. You do not teach a simultaneous landing of the right and left feet in the glide shotput. This for sure will bring the ball to a stop and usually will yield only 1-2 feet on standing throw to full throw differential distance. I know this goes against common USA teaching methods but the research is common knowledge in former Eastern Bloc countries. And if you haven't noticed lately, the USA doesn't have any world class gliders except for Connie and Terri Tunks.

## 3.) THE WALK-IN, RIGHT TO LEFT RHYTHM GLIDE. (A dynamic start drill with transition)

- A.) This method of gliding is used to teach a proper takeoff using a stretch reflex of the power leg. This enables an athlete to mimic the two-hop glide into a one-hop glide that is competition ready.
- B.) Start with the left foot forward in the second half of the ring and the right foot sitting behind the left. The athlete will simply walk their power leg to the back of the ring, go over their power leg, and make a right to left rhythm glide in one entire fluid motion. This can be done after a two-hop throw to retain and mimic the central nervous patterns that were developed with the two-hop throw. From this technical teaching of the throw, a regular competition glide can be developed.

Throwing recommendations:

- A.) 10-15 standing throws per practice, with 30-40 full throws or glide movements are a good amount of work for any thrower. Throwing today seems to be more neglected than the throwers of the 60's and the 70's. Connie, on certain days, has taken up to 150 throws between the shot and discus with good results.
- B.) Heavy throwing and light throwing should be done with every thrower, especially in the off-season. I like to see certain levels of throwers handle certain overweight and underweight implements. This is what I do for the following levels of throwing.

## SHOT 12LB HIGH SCHOOL BOYS

40-50 foot thrower	13lb, 12lb, 11lb, 10lb
50-60 foot thrower	14lb, 13lb, 12lb, 11lb, 10lb
60-65 foot thrower	15lb, 14lb, 13lb, 12lb, 11lb, 10lb
65-70 foot thrower	16lb, 14lb, 12lb, 11lb



**SHOT16LB THROWERS**

40-50 foot thrower	16lb, 15lb, 14lb
50-60 foot thrower	17lb, 16lb, 15lb, 14lb
60-65 foot thrower	18lb, 17lb, 16lb, 15lb, 14lb
65-70 foot thrower	19lb, 18-17-16-15lb

**SHOT 4K ALL LEVELS WOMEN**

20-30 foot thrower	4kg, 8lb, 7lb, 6lb
30-35 foot thrower	4kg, 8lb, 7lb, 6lb
35-40 foot thrower	10lb, 4kg, 8lb, 7lb
40-45 foot thrower	10lb, 4kg, 8lb, 7lb
45-50 foot thrower	10lb, 4kg, 8lb, 7lb
50-55 foot thrower	11lb, 10lb, 4kg, 8lb, 7lb
55-60 foot thrower	11lb, 10lb, 4kg, 8lb, 7lb
60-65 foot thrower	12lb-11-10-4kg-8lb-7lb
65-70 foot thrower	6k-12lb-11-10-4kg-8lb

C.) Throwing light implements is a very important aspect of throwing. When an athlete is training, he or she is not throwing under the same conditions as a competition. If training is done correctly, the body should feel better in a competition environment. You prepare for a 2-5% better body by doing speed work with a light implement. Connie takes 60-70% of all in-season throws with an 8lb. and 7lb. shot. The 8lb in practice is closer to the speed requirements of a competition.

Technique can be more closely maintained in a competition environment by training with light implements. The simple fact is that a body can't throw further unless the nervous system pathways have been trained to move faster.

- D.) Heavy implements are used for development of specific strength and some technical positioning feedback of the throw. Training with heavy implements is done more in the off-season than during the season. Like lifting heavy and light both have their place in training.
- E.) When deciding what technical aspects to train in a daily throwing workout, try to pick the most important technical point that needs work and design your drill work around that aspect. For example, if you have an athlete that can't keep his weight over his power leg during the glide, then an entire two hop throw practice with a towel in the left hand being held by the coach may be the practice for that day. Technique builds upon itself. Once one important technical point is accomplished, then the next point can be started. Don't work several points together. It usually causes technical disasters unless you are working with a very talented athlete. \*LSTJ\*

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# SUPPLEMENTING THE STRENGTH ATHLETE

**By Greg Long, AAU Mr. Universe**

Whichever athletic discipline you may pursue, getting stronger is the key to improving performance. As a bodybuilder I want to get stronger so I can get bigger and win more contests. Throwers want to get stronger so they can throw farther and win more meets. Stronger muscles mean more power and speed. Besides lifting weights and doing various drills, what else can we do to promote strength short of taking anabolic steroids? How about supplements? Do they really deliver? The truth is that no legal supplement will have the effect it could if the athlete doesn't have sound nutrition, proper training habits (both in the gym and on the field), and appropriate rest. Some supplements can help make up for small deficiencies in these areas but the idea is to use them to add to what you're doing right, not to make up for what you're doing wrong. Assuming you train properly and get adequate rest lets first discuss diet and dietary supplements.

Dietary supplements are the most important. I consider these foods more than supplements. In 25 years of training athletes of all disciplines, I've found that most don't get adequate protein. There have been numerous studies lately that show that people who train rigorously need more protein than sedentary people or even those who train moderately. I find that 1.5-2.5 grams of protein for each pound of lean body weight is good for males and 1-1.5 grams/lb. of lean mass for women is good for females. The first supplement you should consider is a good quality whey protein. It has the highest biological value (the rate at which it can be broken down, absorbed and utilized by the body), of any protein source. One or two drinks per day along with other sources such as lean chicken, turkey, fish and egg whites, will ensure you get enough to rebuild damaged tissue and stay in positive nitrogen balance. I like Optimum Nutrition whey. It has all the necessary BCAAs (branched chain amino acids) and glutamine. Both of these supplements have been shown in studies to prevent muscle breakdown, support the immune system and decrease perception of fatigue. If you take a whey protein without them added you should take them as supplements. There are other quality whey powders on the market but I can sell this one to my customers at a better price.

Carbohydrates and fats are also part of the equation. Most athletes need anywhere from 2-4 grams per pound of lean mass. Some need more, some need less. Oatmeal, whole grain bread, sweet potatoes, vegetables, beans and a small amount of fruit are good supply. Try to avoid as many white flour products, over processed foods and simple sugars as possible.

Fats are needed for all metabolic functions of the body as well as providing protection for internal organs and proper functioning of the brain and nervous system. They also act as an alternate fuel source when carbohydrate stores have been depleted. Ten to twenty percent of your daily calories should come from fats. You'll get saturated fats if you eat animal flesh, but the majority should come from vegetable sources. The omega fats found in fish are important, as are EFAs (essential fatty acids) found in flax seed, olive and canola oils. Nuts are also a good source of unsaturated fats too.

The last quick point I'll make about diet is calories. Everyone has different caloric needs depending on such factors as age, sex, weight, activity level, etc. These caloric needs must be met if you want to see increases in size, strength and performance. If your calories are too low for more than a few days you'll start to see negative effects (this is assuming that you are an athlete and not carrying more than 15% body fat if you're male, 20% if you're female). If you are overweight you can drop some calories from carbohydrates to get leaner, but I'm not going to discuss losing weight here.

The only other dietary supplement I recommend is a good multiple vitamin/mineral formula. Unless you eat a good variety and quantity of vegetables every day you're probably deficient in some vitamins and minerals. Pioneer Bioscience and TwinLabs both make good products.

In short, make sure you're getting enough good quality protein (whey should be included), carbs and fats to meet your caloric and performance needs and take a good multi vitamin/mineral supplement. If your dietary habits are bad or deficient, don't bother to read on until they are. No supplement can make up for bad eating habits. Don't forget to drink lots of water!

Now for performance enhancing supplements. This is a subject that overwhelms me, even after 38 years of training. I'm not going to cover all the popular supplements on the market today. It would just take too much time and space for one article. What I will do is go over those which have significant or at least favorable scientific backing. Aside from creatine, which has been proven effective and will benefit most people, the rest have some favorable science behind them but the data is inconclusive. Sound basis exists for it's effects and it appears to work in certain individuals. Any I don't mention are products that in my opinion have shown themselves to be ineffective, have little or no science to back their claims, or which I feel are insignificant compared to the products that are out today. This of course is my opinion only. I have many customers who swear by products I have found to be useless. It becomes a very individual choice. I will let you know if I use the product, have used it or know people who



use it with positive results. These are solely my honest opinions and points of view. Others may disagree. I'll also mention brands that I sell and/or use myself. I will not go into any scientific jargon as far as what it's made from, how it's made, why it does what it does etc. You can easily do your own research-I don't have the space.

**Creatine Monohydrate-** I love it and it works. Much research has demonstrated increased strength, power and the ability to recover faster. It may also promote protein synthesis over the long haul. Muscle cramping has been a concern so make sure you drink lots of water. Quick weight gains are mostly due to water retention in the muscle and other tissues. The cost has dropped a lot since it first came out. I use and sell Eclipse 2000. Dose: 3-5 grams/day. The loading phase has been found to be unnecessary.

**DMG (N,N-dimethylglycine)-** It's not so popular today but I've used it for years. Terrific energy increases. Keeps me from feeling fatigued before the work out is over. The only brand that I know lives up to expectations is SPARK from Pioneer Bioscience. Dose: 1000mg. on training days.

**HMB (B-hydroxy-B-methylbutyrate)-** I don't use it but I know people that do with positive results. Some published studies have shown HMB works quickly. In a study with two groups of football players the group taking HMB while training vigorously gained more lean mass in the first four weeks than the group not taking HMB. After 6 weeks of training the gains leveled off in the HMB group, and after that the gains were no different than in the group not taking HMB. Still, HMB decreased the rise in markers of muscle protein breakdown while training. It would probably work best taken in cycles (2 months on, 2 months off). EAS makes a quality product. Dose: 3-5 grams./day.

**\*Tribulus Terrestris-** This definitely works as an herbal alternative to steroids. Unlike Androstendione it doesn't shut down your bodies natural hormone production while you're using it (so they say). I know a woman who's taking it and making great strength gains. For best results though you have to take more than the recommended dose on the box. Also, the only good stuff is Tribestan by Sopharma. Anything else is a cheap derivative. It's expensive and like Andro, it seems people aren't willing to spend the money. Dose: 750-1200mg./day.

**\*19-Norandrostendiol, \*19-Norandrostendione-** These seem to be quite effective in increasing testosterone levels. They were really popular after the Mark McGwire endorsement (he was a great ball player before he started Andro), but don't seem to be popular now with all the dope testers saying they're drugs and not supplements. I think this, plus the fact that like the Tribulus a bunch of confusing gibberish about a bunch of different numbered andro products has put people off. The 19-Norandros are the ones to take but again, they're expensive. I know one guy personally who is using it and I have seen definite

results in the people I know who use it. Peak Performance or Kaizen(Canadian) are good. Dose: 100 mg./day.

\*These are both legal to buy but can cause positive results in doping control tests for athletes.

**DHEA(Dehydroepiandrosterone)-** Supposed to increase vigor and testosterone levels in men over 40. Some of my older customers swear by it and I've seen positive results in certain individuals. Definitely won't do anything for younger guys. I haven't tried it. Yet. I sell Ultimate Nutrition brand. Dose:25-100mg./day.

**Chondroitin/Glucosamine compounds (for joints)-** Both anti-inflammatory, these are supposed to help repair joint tissues and retain joint health. I just started using them a month ago and I like the results. After so many years of heavy training my joints are getting worn. My knees especially don't seem to hurt quite as much and my wife's shoulder injury doesn't nag at her while she's training like it used to. A lot of the guys in the gym are doing it. I have to give it more time though to see if my joints definitely have strengthened. You have to take it for 3 or 4 weeks before you see significant results. This stuff is expensive but not as much as surgery. I use and sell Joint Protector by Twin Labs. Dose:4 capsules/day.

These all appear to be quite effective supplements. Some others that have favorable research are OKG (ornithine-alpha-ketoglutarate), Taurine, Alanine and CLA (conjugated linoleic acid). There are a few older ones that I still take from time to time such as Boron and Devils Claw. Old products usually lose the limelight to new ones but this doesn't mean they're not good. These three products by Pioneer Bioscience are excellent. A lot of other companies sell them but I like Pioneer best. As you can see I could go on and on, but haven't the time or space to do it.

Here are some tips to help you through the supplement maze.

1. Do your own research. Most products have little science behind them. Look for studies written by scientists.
2. Stick with reputable companies. For every good one there are 10 hucksters with bogus products looking to get your money.
3. Do one supplement at a time. Give it at least a month's trial and do it as directed. Don't change your diet or exercise habits while you're testing a supplement. If don't see or feel the result it claims to have, move on.
4. Generally speaking, most quality supplements are fairly expensive to manufacture. If you always go for the cheapest item on the shelf you will probably be disappointed.

**(See Supplements on page 28)**



**Alistair Gunn**

## HOME GROWN HIGHLANDER

**Editors Note:** *Alistair Gunn is a veteran of the international Heavy Athletics circuit. Born and bred in Scotland, Gunn has a deep appreciation of what the Highland Games are all about.*

**Long & Strong:** What was your athletic background before Heavy Athletics?

**Alistair Gunn:** I had no throwing background apart from soccer and rugby in school. I took part in the children's races at the local Highland Games, to which I looked forward to each year as you could win a small cash prize, which seemed quite large when I was a kid. At 16 I started playing about with the shot and weight for height.

**L&S:** I understand you come from a family of Highlanders.

**AG:** I come from a family of farmers, which obviously helps in the natural strength that I have. Again the local Highland Games comes to the fore when my granddad and his brothers competed against each other and all the local lads that day. About 80 years ago in the running, jumping and heavy events there were only a few heavy events (light and heavy shot and light and heavy hammer). It was only later in the 1950's that the caber and weights were introduced. My father competed in the 50's and 60's but only competed locally as the roads weren't so good back then and travelling took so much longer. My father competed mostly in the heavy events and also in wrestling, which was very popular as the crowds enjoyed seeing the big men wrestle at the end of the day.

**L&S:** In a sport of huge men, in terms of poundage you are at a disadvantage (5'10", 240 pounds). To what do you attribute your success?

**AG:** I don't really think that I am at a disadvantage, as everyone has to throw the same weights. I am slightly smaller than some throwers, but I try to make that up with speed, better technique and

timing. All the time I am learning and still improving my PR's every year in most of the heavy events.

**L&S:** Is there a physical price to pay for competing in Heavy Athletics?

**AG:** The physical price that I have to pay is when I am in training. Getting up in the morning and the first few steps down the stairs is when I really feel my joints, but in the off season everything feels good and returns back to normal.

**L&S:** What is your competitive schedule like each year?

**AG:** It has been pretty busy each year but I'm now trying to cut down to about 25 games per season as the body takes longer to recover the older you get. I was doing over 40 games each year for about 10 years. When competing in America, I try to get a few days off to get over the jet lag. I used to go to Fergus in Canada and fly in the night before the games, compete on the Saturday and fly home on the Sunday. It must of have suited me because I won there five times.

**L&S:** I understand you live in a very northern part of Scotland. How does it affect your training.

**AG:** Where I live, you have to learn to live with the weather as it rains a lot. I train whenever there is a break. The wind is very strong; I am always throwing against it,



Alistair Gunn

Scott Weiser

so maybe that is why my throwing goes so well in the summer when it is calm and sunny. I have never trained anywhere else so I wouldn't know if it has affected my training. I lift in my weights shed with no heating, so I have to keep going so I don't get cold. My workouts last about 75-90 minutes. I have a rectangular concrete throwing area to practice from and if I land on the grassy area I know I have fouled. I find that if I throw off grass behind a trig, I wouldn't know if I had fouled or not from the side and that is what happens to a lot of good throws at the games.

**L&S:** Can you describe your weight training philosophy and some of the routines you use?

Do you use a lot of Highland-specific lifts?

**AG:** I have no real philosophy about weight training. I start weight training about the beginning of January, working up to heavier training at the end of the month. February is when I then start throwing once or twice a week to ease myself out of the boredom of weights. I don't usually keep doing weights after May, but because of the distances that are being achieved the last two years, I'm thinking of doing them once or twice a week during the throwing season. About five years ago I started to train legs one day, and then upper body next, and then pulls the next. I would train three days in a row and have one or two days rest, depending on how I felt after a heavy workout., and then train three days again. It helps me a lot in my strength and my distances in throwing. The routines are quite basic: snatch grip deadlift, high pulls to chest, deadlift shrug, dumbbell press, bench press, alternate dumbbell press, alternate dumbbell ham curls, front squats and leg extensions.

I use a swingbell (that's what I call it), which is 18" bar on which I put 40kg to 70kg in the middle, with hard grips at each side. I use this to imitate the caber throw. I also swing a dumbbell like the 56 pound weight for height, which is very tiring after a few sets.

**L&S:** What are some of your personal bests in the primary lifts?

**AG:** My best lifts are not very impressive:

Bench Press.	185 kgs	1998
	140 for 2 sets	1998

Front squat	200 kgs.	1999
Back squat	230 kgs.	years ago
Dead lift	230 kgs.	years ago
Clean & Jerk	140 kgs.	1995
Power clean from hang	135 kgs x 5	1995

**L&S:** Are you a celebrity in Scotland? Where do the Highland Events rank in terms of the popular sports?

**AG:** No I'm not a celebrity but I'm quite well known around the towns where games are held as most villages and towns around Scotland have a games every year. I have been on national TV on some game shows doing challenges that they give me to do, such as hitting targets with hammers at 110, 120, 130 feet with 10 throws at 3 different targets.

After soccer and rugby the Highland Games are the third most popular watched sport, ahead of amateur athletics.

**L&S:** What is your favorite event and why?

**AG:** My favorite event changes from year to year. I concentrate on different events each year and when you get big distances on PR's, you feel satisfied about the work you have put in. But probably my favorite event is the caber. When you toss a large caber when no one else does, you get a tremendous cheer from the crowd and that's a great feeling as a lot of caber tossers will tell you.



Gunn works the sheaf

**L&S:** What do you consider to be the highlight of your Highland career?

**AG:** I have not really thought of anything yet that I would call my highlight. I still feel I'm improving in my throwing. If anything, it would have been my season in 1995 when I was throwing well in every event and won 27 games that season, including four world championships and the Scottish championship.

**L&S:** What do you do when not competing?

**AG:** The past few years, when I have been competing we have been having children, so that takes a lot of free time looking after them. I have been extending the house for the growing family. I have three children now. Their birthdays are two weeks apart between the three of them, and exactly three years between their ages (1, 4 and 7). That is what I do in my spare time when I'm not training.  
\*LSTJ\*

# THE "THROW BY" DRILL

By Scott Weiser, Throws Coach, Lafayette College (PA)

Being a hammer thrower of smaller stature, I understand the frustrations of college throwers who must labor with throwing the 35 lb. weight. For those of us that power clean under 400 pounds, we must use more of the balls energy in accelerating to a strong finish. To do this, one must attain the skill/habit of letting the ball run to the left or enter the turn first. The increasing downward angle of the ball after 180 will accelerate the ball through the course of three turns. I, and many others, have in vain tried to "help" the weight accelerate by either pulling with the left side (drag style- not typically the technique used or preferred) or pushing with the right side (counter rotation- typically the technique of choice), only to expend an unbelievable amount of energy to throw far under what your capabilities might be.

Before I explain the "Throw By" drill, I must first lend credit to Jud Logan for inspiring me to develop and use this drill. Jud was trying to explain a certain element of the turn and took an M-F Converta-Ball and asked me to hold the cord. We were indoors, and with a low ceiling the ball could not be wound around one's head. He then took the ball and threw it past my left leg and I was to turn with it. The drill gets the athlete to feel the weight ahead of himself and it leading the thrower in the rotation. This drill is used by my throwers at Lafayette and by other coaches that I have come in contact with, and have had positive effects. For all I know, Jud or some other coach/thrower came up with the drill long ago and I'm the last moron to think of it. For my sake, I hope I'm not a moron.

At Lafayette I advocate a pitch or sling start to throw the weight. I do not deal with tremendously strong athletes and the pitch has always been, for me, the easiest way to get the ball into a flat, controlled entry with speed that is not too high. The ball is cast with the left hand only from the left side up and to the middle of the body and over and back on the right. The ball's path makes a "V" all the way back and to the right it will rise to approximately top of stomach level and their right hand must pass the left leg and the thrower then begins to turn. The problem comes when a beginner will not push the ball effectively left, does not have the patience to wait for the ball to go left, pulls with the left side, or just does not know where the ball should be. The athlete needs to feel the ball passing the throwers left side, entering the turn first, and taking the thrower around to single support. Here is where the "Throw By" drill comes in.

The athlete stands in the back of the circle with the weight in both hands and in a ready position to turn (knees bent,

hips under shoulders, back rounded ,and shoulders pushed forward or arms long and VERY RELAXED). The coach will then take the weight and move the ball back and forth at stomach level and when the ball is to the throwers right and the thrower is ready, the coach then throws the ball past the mid-line to of the throwers body. The ball will quickly pass the thrower's left leg and this is when the thrower must turn after the ball and soon after pick up the right foot at approximately 90 degrees. The thrower will most likely not be able to complete all turns and throw far off this drill, but he/she will feel what it is like to have the ball enter the turn first and move the throwers body around (counter rotation) instead of the thrower moving the ball around the turn (Drag style). Once this drill has been done enough times, the thrower remembers the feeling. Have the thrower try to reproduce the feeling on his/her own. Whether you use the pitch/sling or wind start, this drill is applicable.

It is not important how far you throw from a drill because you are not going to use a drill in competition. The drill must then be used to develop a skill or expose an athlete to a feeling of correct execution. It is hard to put yourself into a situation to feel what correct movement is in the hammer or weight. This drill lets the coach put the athlete into that situation of correct movement. It is not important how fast one turns or how far one throws from this drill, but that the drill helps the thrower immediately understand what the coach is talking about and what the thrower must achieve in the technique.\*LSTJ\*

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF LSTJ:

We'll have an interview with Finnish javelinist Mikaela Ingberg. Inberg was the fifth ranked in the 1998 world rankings.





**CAROL FINSRUD**

## A LITTLE UNFINISHED BUSINESS

By Glenn Thompson

It is often said that we regret most not what we attempt, but what we do not. For Texan discus thrower Carol Finsrud, there was a gnawing feeling that she had walked away from the circle before her time. "There wasn't much structure in place to continue competing after college, except for the

junior." It couldn't have been too difficult, as in her first meet back, she surpassed her collegiate best of 161' by eight feet. "This of course was great incentive to continue throwing", says Finsrud. Her return campaign in 1988 was topped by a personal best of 172' 5". She missed qualify-

ing for that year's Olympic Trials by a single inch.

But she had only just begun her comeback. At the age of 34, she placed 6th at the 1991 TAC Nationals with a personal record of 181' 7". She also

**THEN...**



**... AND NOW**



Finsrud as a collegian at the University of Texas, and as she appears now.

elite athletes. So I quit throwing" says Finsrud. She took her competitiveness in another direction instead. "I had just started lifting weights towards the end of my collegiate career in 1979 and I found that I really enjoyed lifting. I did some powerlifting, but I really liked Olympic lifting so I began competing in that discipline." And to no great surprise, she found success in that arena. After competing in weightlifting meets at the local level, she competed in two National Weightlifting Championships. In 1986 she placed third, and in 1987 placed fourth in her weight class. Her best lifts were 60kg in the snatch and 85kg in the clean and jerk.

Despite her success in weightlifting, Finsrud knew she had some unfinished business in track and field. "I never felt that I had reached my potential in throwing the discus. I decided that I didn't want to have the regret of not trying again. So nine years after college, at the age of 31, I started throwing the discus again. I started throwing and I haven't competed in weightlifting since."

The challenges of being a post-collegiate thrower were many. Finsrud says, "It was not easy to get out and practice after working all day, especially since I did not have a coach. It was even harder to go to a collegiate invitational track meet with athletes at least ten years my

accomplished her goals of qualifying and participating in the Olympic Trials of 1992 and 1996. In 1993, at the age of 36, she discovered Masters Track & Field. She also started competing in the shot put, which gave her a new challenge. And over the last few years she has added the hammer, javelin and the weight throw, further challenging her time management skills and energy levels.

Finsrud graduated from the University of Texas in 1981 with a degree in Geology. After finding work in her desired field scarce, she went to work full-time for the University Interscholastic League, where she's been ever since. She says, "It has been a nice place to work in that my employers allow me some flexibility in my schedule to accommodate my training. They are also very supportive in my endeavors and they allow me to take off when I need to for my competitions. This is certainly not the career that I had chosen, yet if I had become a geologist I'm not sure that I would have gone back to throwing."

Carol knew the throwing bug had bit her in high school. She says, "I still remember my sophomore year in high school at a track meet where I saw girls throwing the discus for the first time. I knew immediately that I wanted to do that, and that I could do it well. Our school did not own a discus, so I did not start throwing the discus until my junior year. I won the Minnesota State Championship that year and repeated my senior year with a state record, and

placed third in the state in the shot put."

What advice does Carol give to those who want to continue their throwing careers after college?

"It's really hard to throw by yourself, especially just out of college when one is used to a coach and a team setting", she says. "The best of course, would be if he or she could stay near his or her school and continue to throw with his or her coach. If this is not possible, find someone that has throwing knowledge to watch from time to time. Videotaping is also very helpful, especially if one trains primarily by herself."

One of the primary keys to Carol's post-collegiate success has been the emergence of weight lifting as an accepted form of training for women. "I transferred to the University of Texas from Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell, Montana", says Finsrud. "The weight program at the University of Texas was not yet very receptive to women in the weightroom. I met my husband Mike Graham when I started training at his gym (The Texas Athletic Club) my first year at the University of Texas. He was not only was receptive to women lifting weights, he was also very supportive and encouraging with my throwing." Graham's support during her second throws career included buying books and tapes on throwing and picking the brains of coaches they met, in the process becoming a very knowledgeable himself. Carol lists her coaches throughout high school and college as influences, but says "I think that I have been the main influence on my throwing career. Self motivation and the desire to throw well have been my main influences."

### Finsrud...THEN and NOW

EVENT	COLLEGIATE BESTS	POST-COLLEGIATE BESTS
Discus:	161'0"	185' 3 1/2", 1995 (age 38)
Shot Put:	43'9"	45' 4 1/2", 1996 (age 39)
Hammer:	N/A	127' 3", 1998 (age 41)
Javelin:	N/A	119' 6", 1998 (age 41)
20 lb wt:	N/A	44' 2 3/4", 1998 (age 41)
35 lb wt:	N/A	28' 7", 1998 (age 41)
56 lb wt:	N/A	17' 4 1/2", 1998 (age 41)

As for her future plans, she sees herself competing against collegians for a few more years then playing it by ear. Finsrud puts her age and skill level in perspective when she reflects on an encounter in 1998. "Last spring, when I was at the Texas A&M Invitational, I was talking with a fellow athlete before the start of the shot put competition. We figured out that I was older than her mother. She thought it was great that I was out there competing. She also wished that she could have been in as good of shape as I was, and thrown as far as I did."

Finsrud attributes her continued success to "Persistence, athletic ability, and my hunger to perform the 'effortless throw' that one never forgets." Sounds like more unfinished business. \*LSTJ\*

## SUPPLEMENTS (Continued from Page 23)

5. Always cycle your supplements. The human body will adjust and adapt eventually to anything different you do to it. Two or three months on, with a month or two off throughout the year will keep your body receptive and really let you know if the product is effective.
6. THERE IS NO MAGIC PILL. If a supplement helps you even 10 or 20% consider it a good product and worth the money. If you expect to turn into Superperson, then keep your bucks in your pocket.
7. Consult your physician before starting on any new supplement routine (not that they will know any more than you do but I gotta say it), as well as your growing athletic body.

Companies that I feel are reputable and which I sell: Pioneer Bioscience, Optimum Nutrition, Eclipse 2000, Twin Lab, and EAS. I do deal with other companies for particular items but these make up the bulk of my inventory. GOODLUCK!

\*\*\*

Greg Long is the owner of Greg Long's Gym in Feasterville, PA.

He's 50 years old and has been bodybuilding for 38 years. Greg is celebrating his 22nd year as a gym owner along with his brother Dennis. In those 22 years he has worked with athletes of all ages, and from all sports disciplines. He's given seminars to many high school football teams including Bensalem, Central Bucks West, and Council Rock. He's worked with the Archbishop Ryan swimmers, boxer Marvis Frazier, and former Eagles Mike Reichenbach and Reggie Wilkes. Greg is always getting men and women ready for bodybuilding and power lifting contests and even Highland Games competitions. When he's not getting others ready for contests, Greg is training for his own contests. In 30 years of competing he's won just about every title from the Mr. Philadelphia to the Mr. Universe and is now training for the NPC Masters Nationals in Pittsburgh, PA in July. Although Greg competes in the over 40 divisions in some contests for the magazine exposure, he still wins contests in the open division with the 20 and 30 year olds. YOU GO GREG!!! Greg can be reached via e-mail at LongsGym@erols.com.

\*LSTJ\*



# LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR WEIGHT TRAINING

By Mike Graham (Husband/Strength Coach of Carol Finsrud)

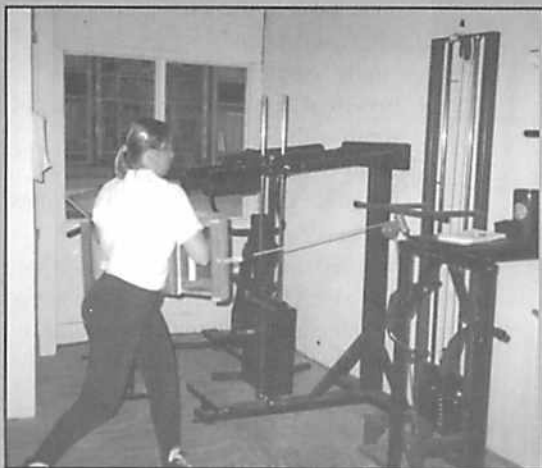
I have been Carol's strength coach since the fall of 1977 when her coach at the University of Texas, Jack Daniels, brought her and several other throwers and jumpers to my gym to train. Her strength training has been based upon my belief that the value of training is based upon the fact that a healthy athlete who remains uninjured can practice longer, more often, and more intensely, and can thereby become a better athlete.

I do not believe that the goal of strength training for the athlete should be the development of maximum strength and power as demonstrated by how much weight can be lifted in weightroom exercises. The goal of strength training for athletes other than weightlifters, powerlifters and bodybuilders should be the development of balanced strength and power throughout the entire body, giving it a base from which to work which will allow it to withstand the stress of hard training and competition without breaking down. A good thrower becomes a better thrower by throwing. Far too many athletes injure themselves in the weightroom hindering, if not ending, their athletic careers as they labor under the false belief that more strength and power will always make them better athletes. A base of strength and power that is carefully developed with long range goals rather than short sighted maximum workouts will enable the athlete to develop to his/her full potential with a minimum of downtime due to injuries.

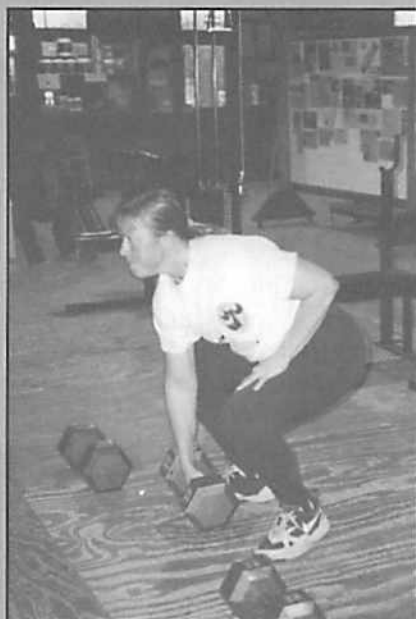
Carol's strength training is based on basic core exercises with a variety of other exercises added on occasion aimed at developing the entire body. Carol works very hard with heavy weights but she does not risk her throwing by attempting gut-limit "max" attempts. Carol generally trains with weights three times a week varying the exercises every workout in order to prevent overuse problems

and to insure that the smaller support muscles will be developed along with the major "power" muscles.

For the all-important torque muscles of the torso, Carol uses the Turn Machine, lying leg side raises and twisting jumps. We use very little plyometric training because the throws themselves provide plenty of dynamic stress—to add the stress of plyometrics invites injury and we feel that the risks outweigh the benefits. The development of throwing ability on a high level takes consistent work over a long period of time—if it is rushed too much, or the training too intense, the results will be hindered in the long run. From a high school State Champion and record holder in 1974, to Masters World Champion twenty five years later, Carol has remained almost totally injury free and at the top of her game through consistent, hard and smart training in the field and in the gym.



Courtesy of Carol Finsrud



Courtesy of Carol Finsrud

Here's a look at some of the exercises and training ranges used in Carol's training:

Back Squat — up to 315/335 for a single, reps in the 3 to 10 range with 225 to 295

Front Squat — up to 225/255 for a single, One-leg Leg Press, Two-leg Leg Press, Weighted Step-ups

Partial Deadlift (knees up) up to 245/265 for 6 reps, Dumbbell Hang Clean and Push Press up to 75s for a single

Barbell Hang Clean up to 205 for 3 reps, Wide-grip and Close-grip Lat Pulldowns, Low Pulley Rows

Barbell Push Press up to 155/165 for a single, Dumbbell Standing Press up to 65 for a single, Dumbbell Incline Press up to 70/75 for a single, Barbell Incline Press up to 185/195 for a single \*LSTJ\*



# Louisiana Lightning

*One of the bright young stars on the scholastic (and soon to be collegiate) scene is Reggie Griffith. Griffith was ranked nationally in both the shot put (65-10 1/2) and discus (190-3) as a junior in 1998. Reggie recently took a few minutes to talk about his training, coaches, and more.*

**Long & Strong:** What was your first exposure to throwing? At what point did you realize that you had what it took to succeed at very high levels?

**Reggie Griffith:** My first participation in track was in seventh grade, after I quit soccer. I really started throwing in eighth grade. Scott Peterson (Former shot put All-American from Louisiana State University) started working with me and I really enjoyed it. I was good for my local area, but was still pretty small. The point when I really started to believe I could compete with every one else in the nation was the first year Tom Pukstys (USATF javelin champion) started working with me. Scott had moved away and Tom had moved to Baton Rouge. The summer following my sophomore year I hit 59-1 in the shot at the Junior Olympics.

**L & S:** Do you participate in other sports outside of track and field?

**RG:** The only sport I participate in is track and field. I played football in middle school, but I had an injury my freshmen year that kept me out the whole season. This is when I decided to stick with throwing.

**L & S:** Which event do you prefer, and why?

**RG:** I like both the shot and the discus. It usually works out that when one is not going so well, the other is going great. The shot would probably be my favorite since I have had more success with it. I try to train the shot and the discus equally, but I always end up spending more time on the shot.

**L & S:** What is your height and weight?

**RG:** I am 6 feet tall and 245 pounds.

**L & S:** You are not large by elite thrower standards. Many lighter prep athletes struggle when they bump up to the larger implements. Do you imagine yourself putting on additional weight at the collegiate level?

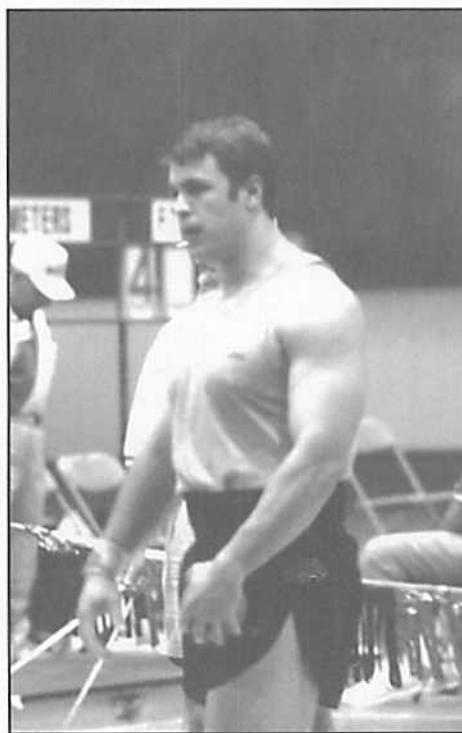
**RG:** I think I will put on some weight, but I will never be a large thrower. Andy Bloom and Adam Nelson are not very big and they are doing great. I see myself throwing at about the same size as they are right now. I do not think the adjustment to the larger implement will be a big problem. I will just have to use strength and speed to throw the big implements.

**L & S:** What is your weight training philosophy?

**RG:** I weight train very hard. It is one of the major reasons I have been successful in my throwing. I lift five days a week, taking Friday and Saturday off. I do all the major lifts once a week, (bench, incline, dead lift, reverse bench, squat, clean "pulls", snatches, jerks). I lift by myself at my house. I have a weight room with a Smith machine and other exercise equipment and I do Olympic lifts in the garage. During my early years of throwing we worked on mainly strength, but that has always come easily. Tom helped to put athleticism with my strength and that was when I started to throw far.

**L & S:** I understand that you've committed to the University of Texas. Tell us about your choice.

**RG:** Yes, I signed with UT. I felt it was the best place for me. They have a great program and I felt like I would fit in great there. I have known coach [Dan] Pfaff (head coach) since he was at LSU and I believe he is the best coach for me. Coach [Bubba] Thornton is a great field coach and he really helped me to realize UT was the right place for me. The other two schools I visited made the decision very difficult. The University of North Carolina and Georgia were great places. The coaches were great and I had a good time on my visits. I am looking forward to throwing for UT next year.



Reggie Griffith

Courtesy of Reggie Griffith

**L & S:** What are some of your future goals, career-wise and athletically?

**RG:** My goals for this year are 70 feet in the shot and 200 feet in the discus. Last year my goals were 65 feet and 190 feet and I got those. I am going to do everything I can to reach my goals this year. I have a stress fracture which may keep me out of the first few indoors but I will be ready for this season. In college my goal is a NCAA championship in either the shot or disc; both would be nice. I am not sure what I want to do for a living, but coaching track is definitely a possibility. I will major in kinesiology at UT and I will also choose a minor.

**L & S:** You mentioned Tom Pukstys working with you. Many might wonder what a javelin thrower would have to offer a SP/DT'er. Tell us how you have benefited from your relationship with Tom.

**RG:** Tom knows all the throwing events very well. He was the throws coach at Brown University and has been around a lot of great throwers. He has helped with my technique a lot, but the biggest part of my training he has helped with is in my athleticism and explosion. If Tom does not know something he calls and finds out for me. He has been great and I would not have thrown nearly as far without his help.

**L & S:** What advice would you give to throwers who do not have the benefit of the great coaching you have had?

**RG:** Those throwers who do not have a good coach available should watch films, instructional videos and videos of world class throwers. Video taping yourself and comparing it to other throwers is a great training tool.  
\*LSTJ\*

## The Linear Shot

By Jerry "Moose" Miller

When putting the shot, one should use the instinctive natural response of catching balance. If you have ever dropped a cat, you have seen the quickness with which an animal body will respond to catch its balance. You should practice to perfection without a shot and then with progressively heavier shots gradually arriving at the official weight. Overweight shots can cause timing problems so lift weights for strength.

Cradle the shot as if you were holding a baby and tuck its head in at the nape of your neck. Stand perpendicular to the direction of your put. Swing the left leg up to the left and then behind the right leg. As your body falls off balance sideways and forward, "punt" the left leg for the sky. You must apply great concentration to this "punting", doing it as if there were nothing else to follow. The force of this punt will scoot the right (still perpendicular) foot across the circle behind the still airborne left leg and land the foot off balance on its outside. The better you have performed this task, as if it were a little dance, the farther ahead of the shot the right leg will get at the shot. You don't have to think of anything at this point because you will be like a cat seeking to maintain its balance. If you did nothing, you would fall back on your right elbow, but the forward momentum and your need to maintain balance will lift you and the shot up on a parabolic curve at a 45-degree angle, reversing you around and landing you back on the right foot. \*LSTJ\*

## BACK ISSUE(S)

I still have copies of the second (September '98) and third (January '99) issues on hand. They are available for \$5.50 an issue, or at the standard \$5.00 if you wish to start your subscription with either issue. The first issue is out of print.

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# FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING...

## So...what about them Yankees?

by: The Literalist

At this writing, it's still cold up here in the northland. The returning ducks and geese, however, are signaling the coming warm season and hence, spring sports...but I view this season with mixed feelings. My older son is a high school senior who, despite promising sophomore and junior years (which included conference records and a trip to States), will probably be concluding his track and field career in late May. He will join the majority of the athletes of the class of '99 who, though perhaps talented, will not be counted in the statistically miniscule percentage that compete beyond high school. He'll move on with life, most likely play some league softball...and we'll certainly continue to hunt and fish together...but, I'll sorely miss watching my boy participate in what has always been a favorite sport of mine.

Happily for us sports-parents, we have another child whose adventures we'll follow. Our younger son is an eighth-grader who is also a multi-sport guy: A linebacker who was moved to quarterback because of his arm...and a pitcher with decent speed and a good mix of throws. My wife is a big sports fan. During school and, until recently, she played competitive softball. She enjoys a variety of athletics but her main love is...baseball.

A few years back, when our big guy switched from spring ball to the field events, all her actions led me to believe she had handled the adjustment with very little long-term emotional damage. Though I don't loathe baseball and, indeed, was a fair catcher back in my youth, I have always been a track man. This is the only sports-related friction between my wife and me. I simply can't get enthused about a game in which the players are so delicate that a base-runner can call time out, stopping action, so he can dust off his pants. Conversely, she finds watching a track meet to be about as thrilling as studying for a driver's test.

One sunny day at the conclusion of a meet last year, we were all shagging the disc for big brother as he fired off some practice tosses. Number 2-son tried a few throws and sailed one out there pretty good. This was when I realized that his mother had a hidden hideous dark side...understandable only to the hounds of Hell...and, perhaps, Edgar Allen Poe. Now this is a good woman, a competent and compassionate nurse, a lover of all God's creatures, a friend to the friendless...but something snapped at my words:

"Geez, Mick, nice throw! You know, you could be real good in the discu..."

I was nearly knocked down by a searing heat on the back of my head. At my words, my wife, who was turned away from us, had swiveled her head 180 degrees much like the possessed girl in the movie "The Exorcist". She spewed green bile...and fire-red eyes bulged from their sockets. Though stunned at the time, I vividly recall her inhuman, nearly reptilian hiss...

"THIS CHILD is a BASEBALL PLAYER! In the name of the underworld God of Forced Celebacy, I COMMAND YOU: LEAVE HIM ALONE!"

I instantly understood that certain sensitive parts of my anatomy were in great peril if I didn't hustle our young knuckleballer away from this den of iniquity. In a daze I babbled about it being time to go as I shooed him out of the ring. When the fog lifted and I returned to my senses, we were riding home in the family van, my wife smiling sweetly while the boys chattered happily in the back. Despite her serene countenance, I don't think the scissors-motion she kept making with her middle and index fingers was my imagination. Nothing more was said of the incident and, until now, I have never disclosed it to anyone...

Just last week, a package from Ebay arrived. A peek at the contents revealed new baseball spikes and a toe guard for our young pitcher. Oh sure, we'll go to all the track meets this year and we'll cheer and root for our weightman and the rest of the thinclads. But the hoorahs won't be as loud and lusty as those that I'll emit at the baseball park this spring. Sitting beside my applauding and photo-snapping wife, I'll be in charge of the water bottle, I'll whistle at every pitch...but most importantly...I'll be protecting the balls.

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